
A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

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Abstract This paper provides a contrastive analysis of adverbs in English and Albanian, focusing on their formation, syntactic functions, degrees, positioning, and semantic classifications. Using a descriptive and contrastive methodology, this study examines the similarities and differences in how adverbs function in these two Indo-European languages. Contrastive linguistics, as a methodology, allows for the comparison of linguistic features across languages, offering insights into how structures in one language may differ from or resemble those in another. Learning grammar is quite important for acquiring any language, as it provides the rules and framework for effective communication. A deep understanding of grammatical components, such as adverbs, is crucial for learners when acquiring a new language. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of adverbs in English and Albanian by showing their unique morphological and syntactical characteristics.

Keywords: English and Albanian adverbs, grammar, contrastive analysis, linguistic similarities, linguistic differences

1. INTRODUCTION

Adverbs are a fundamental part of speech that modifies verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs to provide more information about time, manner, place, frequency, or degree. In both Albanian and English languages, adverbs play a crucial role in sentence construction by influencing the meaning and flow of communication. Despite their similarities across languages, adverbs in English and Albanian show considerable differences in terms of formation, syntactic order, and semantic classification. Contrastive analysis belongs to the field of comparative linguistics, which aims at "comparing languages in order to determine potential errors for the ultimate purpose of isolating what needs to be learned and what does not need to be learned in a second-language learning situation" (Gass&Selinker2008, as cited in Djiguimkoudré, 2020, p. 81) Building on this, contrastive analysis also plays an important role in understanding the relationship between the languages that a learner knows or acquires, as it examines how differences and similarities between languages can affect language learning. Contrastive analysis is considered the first major theory that explores the relationship between languages a learner knows or acquires (Spahiu, 2021, p. 11).

The aim of this paper is to provide a contrastive analysis of adverbs in English and Albanian, focusing on their formation, function, degree, order, and semantic classification. By comparing these two languages, the paper seeks to identify similarities and differences, offering insights into the linguistic structures of adverbs in both languages. The study aims to show how contrastive analysis can facilitate better understanding of adverbs when learning either of the two languages. This study employs a qualitative contrastive analysis methodology, based on data from a range of linguistic resources, including dictionaries, language grammar books, and relevant language studies. Adverbs in both languages will be examined in terms of their formation, such as affixation and compounding, as well as their syntactic placement in sentences. The study will also analyze the semantic roles of these adverbs, such as how they modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs, and the nuances of their meaning in different contexts. By identifying similarities and differences, the paper aims to shed light on how these adverbs function within their respective languages.

2. THE NATURE OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN LANGUAGES

Defining adverbs is not a difficult task in either English or Albanian. Many definitions exist regarding adverbs. According to Murphy (2019), "Adverbs tell us about a verb, how somebody does something or how something happens" (p. 2012). Kabashi (2000) views adverbs as modifiers, as they modify or add information to the meaning of verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. In Albanian, "an adverb is a part of speech that denotes a feature of the action or state, the circumstances in which the action takes place, or the degree or intensity of a quality or circumstance" (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 357). Beci (2010) also considers adverbs to be words that primarily complete the verb by indicating place, manner, time, and quantity.

In English, adverbs are an open word class, which means new adverbs can be created and added to the language over time. *The Cambridge Dictionary* describes adverbs as part of an open word class, stating, "English has four major word classes: nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. They have many thousands of members, and new nouns,

verbs, adjectives and adverbs are often created." This flexibility is seen in how adverbs are often formed by adding the suffix "-ly" to adjectives (e.g., quick → quickly). For example, adverbs like *digitally* or *awkwardly* have been created to describe new ideas or behaviors.

In Albanian, adverbs are classified as part of the unchangeable parts of speech, meaning they do not possess the grammatical categories typical of changeable parts, such as gender, number, or case. This classification differs from the English concept of open and closed word classes, as the two divisions have different connotations. In English, a closed class means new words are rarely added, while in Albanian, unchangeable parts of speech are defined by their lack of inflectional categories. However, Albanian adverbs do share a fixed structure for word formation, with limited capacity for creating new adverbs. "Instead of coining new adverbs, Albanian often uses fixed adverbial expressions to convey new ideas or concepts. Adverbs in Albanian do feature the category of degree, which, like adjectives, is expressed analytically." (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 357). This distinction shows a great difference in how the two languages treat adverbs grammatically and lexically.

3. FORMATION OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

Morphemic Structure of Adverbs in English and Albanian

In English, adverbs can be categorized based on their morphemic structure into three main types: (1) Simple adverbs: these include words like *here, now, quite, since, soon, still, and too*; (2) Compound adverbs: examples of these are *downstairs, indeed, today, tomorrow, overhead, and uphill*; (3) Derived adverbs: A significant number of English adverbs, particularly those expressing manner, as well as some denoting frequency and degree, are formed by adding the derivational suffix -ly to adjectives. For example, adverbs like *dreadfully, greatly, largely, and strangely* are derived from qualitative adjectives. (Blaganje & Konte, 1987, p. 189).

In the Albanian language, adverbs are classified based on their structure into the following categories: (1) Simple adverbs: *mirë (well), keq (badly), bukur (beautifully)*; (2) Derived adverbs: *trimërisht (bravely), dorazi (secretly), fluturimthi (briefly)*; (3) Compound adverbs: *kudo (everywhere), kurdo (whenever), gjithnjë (always)* (Agalliu et al., 2002).

In both English and Albanian, adverbs are categorized according to their morphemic structure into simple, compound, and derived forms. So regarding this aspect, it can be said that they share the same principles and are more similar than different.

4. FORMATION OF SIMPLE ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

Simple adverbs are single-word adverbs that are not derived or compounded but exist in their base form. These adverbs express fundamental ideas such as time, place, manner, or degree. In English, simple adverbs include examples such as *now, here, soon, still, too*. These adverbs often convey straightforward meanings without requiring any morphological changes. Similarly, in Albanian, simple adverbs (ndajfolje të parme) function in a similar way. Examples include *mirë (well), keq (badly), bukur (beautifully)*. These adverbs also represent the base form and do not undergo additional morphological processes.

Formation of Derived Adverbs in English and Albanian In both English and Albanian, derived adverbs are formed through common derivational processes such as prefixation, suffixation, and conversion. These processes modify the base words to create new adverbs with specific meanings or functions.

Adverbs Derived from Prefixation

Prefixation appears to be a less common way to form adverbs in both English and Albanian, with some distinct characteristics in each language.

In English, the prefix *a-* is occasionally used to form adverbs, often stemming historically from the prefix *on-*. This prefix frequently conveys locational meaning or adds an aspectual sense of ongoing action. Examples of adverbs formed with *a-* include *aback, aboard, about, afar, afloat, ahead, and alive*. "Many of these forms, however, are highly lexicalized, meaning their meanings have become fixed and are no longer transparently connected to their origins" (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2013, p. 331).

In Albanian, prefixation is not a typical word-formation process for adverbs. However, in some cases, adverbs are derived from adverbial stems combined with prefixes. These forms often arise from the blending of a preposition and an adverb. "The prefix in such cases does not usually add a new semantic value to the adverb; instead, it may intensify the meaning. (e.g., *përjashta*, (outside), *përpara* (in front), *përsipër* (above), *përkundrejt* (opposite), *përmbra* (behind))". (Agalliu et al, 2002. p.376). Although prefixation exists in both languages, it is limited and often reflects historical or fixed expressions rather than an active, productive process for forming new adverbs.

5. ADVERBS DERIVED FROM SUFFIXATION

In the English language, suffixation is the most productive method of forming adverbs. One of the most common suffixes is **-ly**, which is widely used to create adverbs from adjectives, such as *neighborly*, *motherly*, *hourly*, *loudly*, and *habitually*. The suffix **-s** forms adverbs from various bases, including bound bases, as seen in examples like *besides*, *bedtimes*, *sometimes*, *thereabouts*, *upstairs*, *outdoors*, *overseas*, and *perhaps*.

Another productive suffix is **-ward(s)**, which is used to create directional adverbs from prepositions (e.g., *afterwards*, *backwards*), directional adjectives (e.g., *eastwards*, *leftwards*), and nouns (e.g., *homewards*, *landwards*). The suffix **-ways** often forms adverbs indicating manner or direction, such as *always*, *anyways*, *corner ways*, and *lengthways*. Finally, the suffix **-wise** is particularly productive with noun bases, producing adverbs like *accounting wise*, *age wise*, *clockwise*, and *likewise*. (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2013, pp. 323-329). In Albanian, the same as in English, suffixation is quite a productive way to form adverbs. Characteristic suffixes in Albanian, such as **-as/-azi**, **-thi**, and **-shëm**, are used to derive adverbs from nominal, adjectival, or adverbial bases. For example, **-as/-azi** forms adverbs like *fshëhtazi* (*secretly*) and *shkurtazi* (*briefly*), while **-thi** conveys immediacy in adverbs such as *fluturimthi* (*in a flash*) and *kalimthi* (*in passing*). The suffix **-shëm** closely parallels English **-ly** in forming adverbs from adjectives, resulting in forms like *hareshëm* (*joyfully*) and *rrjedhshëm* (*fluently*) (Agalliu et al., 2002).

6. ADVERBS DERIVED FROM CONVERSION

Conversion serves as a means of forming adverbs by changing the grammatical category of a word without altering its form. In English, adjectives are often converted into adverbs, as in *fast*, *hard*, *loud*, *quick*, and *soft*. These adverbs are typically derived from their adjectival bases (Bauer, Lieber, & Plag, 2013, p. 333). Additionally, “adverbs formed with the suffix **-ward** (*forward*, *upward*, *downward*) and prepositions (*around*, *amid*, *besides*, *toward*) demonstrate conversion, where historical or contextual usage suggests the adverbial form as primary” (Huddleston, 2002, p. 272).

Conversion in Albanian also refers to forming adverbs from other parts of speech without using any linguistic tool. For instance, nouns are converted into adverbs, where the process typically involves a semantic change that gives the word a new lexical identity. Examples include *motit*, *sheshit*, and *vjet*. These words function as adverbs by specifying circumstances or qualities of verbal action.

Additionally, “some adverbs are derived from participles, such as *hapur* (“openly”), *papritur* (“unexpectedly”), and *prerë* (“sharply”). These forms lose their verbal grammatical properties, like tense or voice, and acquire the characteristics of adverbs” (Agalliu et al., 2002, pp. 371–373).

7. FORMATION OF COMPOUND ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

Compound adverbs in both English and Albanian are formed by combining two stems, often reflecting spatial, temporal, or manner relationships. In Albanian, compound adverbs are created through different structural patterns, such as joining pronouns, prepositions, nouns, or other parts of speech, as seen in *gjithmonë* (always), *asnjëherë* (never), and *kudo* (everywhere). Similarly, in English, compound adverbs are formed by joining elements like prepositions and adverbs or other stems, such as *sometimes*, *somewhere*, *upstairs*, *outdoors*, and *overhead*. In both languages, these adverbs function as unified lexical units that specify circumstances or characteristics of actions.

8. THE SYNTACTIC FUNCTION OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN LANGUAGES

According to Kabashi (2000), in English, adverbs may perform various functions by modifying different types of words, phrases, or entire sentences. Generally, they modify or add meaning to a verb, in which case they are referred to as adverbials or adverbial modifiers. Sometimes, adverbs premodify adjectives or other adverbs, in which case they are referred to as modifiers. Thus, in English, an adverb may function as: a) an adverbial. (e.g., The boy threw the ball quickly). b) a modifier of an adjective or another adverb. (e.g., She has a really beautiful face).

In Albanian, adverbs usually can be found next to a verb, adjective or another adverb, according to their function in a sentence, adverbs are categorized into: a) *ndajfolje përcaktore*, as the term itself suggests, denote the quality as well as the intensity of the action expressed by the verb. (e.g., *Bilbili ia thotë bukur*); b) *ndajfolje rrethanore*, denote the circumstances in which the action expressed by the verb takes place. (e.g., *Mbrëmë ia mbushi mendjen vetës se Luanin e kishte mik*).

Adverbs in English and Albanian share similar roles, as they both modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs to add meaning or detail. While English categorizes adverbs broadly into adverbials and modifiers, Albanian uses more specific terms, dividing them into *ndajfolje përcaktore* (describing qualities or intensity) and *ndajfolje rrethanore* (describing circumstances). Despite these differences in classification, their main functions remain largely the same, showing more similarities than differences.

9. THE POSITION OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

In English, adverbs have relative freedom in their placement within a sentence, and they can occupy three main positions: front (initial), middle, and end positions. In Albanian, adverbs do not have strict placement rules within a sentence. However, they are typically placed as close as possible to the word they modify, whether it is a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. In general, adverbs in Albanian are most commonly positioned after the verb, regardless of the type of adverb. Similar to English, adverbs in Albanian can also appear in initial, medial, or final positions, but their position is usually influenced by the placement of the verb in the sentence.

- **Front (initial) position:**
English: *Occasionally, Peter missed classes.*
Albanian: *Mirë e di çfarë po thua.*
- **Middle position:**
English: *Peter has occasionally missed classes.*
Albanian: *Ai gjithmonë këndon bukur.*
- **End position:**
English: *Peter missed classes occasionally.*
Albanian: *Ai këndon bukur gjithmonë.*

10. THE DEGREE OF ADVERBS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

In Albanian, just like adjectives, adverbs have a unique grammatical feature that other parts of speech lack: the ability to be used in different degrees. This ability is primarily observed in adverbs of manner, which are closely related to adjectives. Additionally, adverbs expressing spatial relations can also be used in different degrees of comparison (e.g., *mirë, më mirë, shumë mirë; larg, më larg, shumë larg*) (Jashari & Çitaku, 2014).

In English, “the rules for forming the comparative and superlative degrees of adverbs (-er, -est, or more, most) are generally the same as for adjectives. However, comparison is not possible with non-gradable adverbs such as *daily, extremely, only, really, then*, there because they cannot express varying degrees” (Kabashi, 2000, p.316).

For gradable adverbs, English and Albanian follow similar principles as adjectives:

Positive Degree: The base form of the adverb (*early, mirë*).

Comparative Degree: Indicates a higher or lower degree (*earlier, më mirë*).

Superlative Degree: Shows the highest degree (*the earliest, shumë mirë*).

Positive Degree of Adverbs in English and Albanian

In both English and Albanian, adverbs in the positive degree remain in their base form. They do not indicate any comparison or relative intensity but simply describe the action as it is.

English (e.g., He studies hard). Albanian (e.g., Ai ecte fare lehtë).

Comparative Degree of Adverbs in English and Albanian

In English a comparative adverb compares two actions. Many one syllable adverbs take the suffix *-er* to form the comparative, while most adverbs ending in *-ly* use *more* for comparison. It is important not to combine *more* with the *-er* form of an adverb.

Example: The orca swam *faster* and *more powerfully* than the penguin.

This sentence demonstrates the use of both types:

Faster (comparative with *-er*). More powerfully (comparative with *more* for an adverb ending in *-ly*).

Similarly in Albanian, comparative adverbs are used to compare two actions. The adverb in this degree shows whether the second part of the comparison is at a higher, lower, or equal level to the first. In Albanian, the comparative degree is more nuanced because it distinguishes between specific subcategories that reflect different kinds of relationships between the compared elements.

(1) Equality (Barazi):

For example: *Atë ditë recitoi aq bukur si herët e tjera.*

(That day, he recited as beautifully as other times.)

(2) Inequality (Pabarazi):

- **Superiority (Sipërsi):**
For example: *Pagjumësia e vriste ndoshta më keq se uria.*
(Sleeplessness perhaps hurt him worse than hunger.)
- **Inferiority (Ultësi):**
For example: *Tani lexonte jo aq shumë sa dikur.*
(Now he read not as much as he used to.)

Superlative Degree of Adverbs of English and Albanian

In English, the superlative degree of adverbs is used to compare three or more actions and indicates the highest degree or intensity of an action. To form the superlative, -est is added to many adverbs that do not end in -ly, such as hard (e.g., hardest). For adverbs ending in -ly, the superlative is formed by using most before the adverb, as in most fluently. It is important to note that the word most is not used together with the -est form of an adverb. (E.g., On the third day of the storm, the wind blew hardest and most constantly).

In Albanian, the superlative degree (shkalla sipërore) is used to express the highest intensity of an action, often without involving a direct comparison. Unlike in English, the Albanian superlative is formed analytically by adding intensifying adverbs such as shumë (very), mjaft (quite), fare (entirely), tepër (excessively), krejt (completely), fort (strongly), and jashtë zakonisht (extremely) before the base form of the adverb. For example: ‘Tanë nxënësit përgatiten shumë (jashtë zakonisht) mirë’ (Now the students prepare very (extremely) well); ‘Fantazia shkante tepër larg’ (The imagination went extremely far).

Semantic Classification of Adverbs in English and Albanian

Based on semantic correspondence, adverbs in Albanian are classified into adverbs of manner, time, place, degree, and adverbs of cause. Similarly, in English, adverbs are classified into adverbs of manner, time, place, degree, as well as additional types such as focus adverbs, viewpoint adverbs, and connecting adverbs. Below is a contrastive table showing these types and providing examples:

Table 1. The semantic classification of adverbs in English and Albanian

| Category | English Example | Albanian Example | Explanation |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Adverbs of Manner | <i>She speaks clearly.</i> | <i>Ajofletqartë.</i> | Describe how an action is performed. |
| Adverbs of Time | <i>He arrived yesterday.</i> | <i>Ai mbërritidje.</i> | Indicate when an action occurs. |
| Adverbs of Place | <i>The kids are playing outside.</i> | <i>Fëmijët po luajnëjashtë.</i> | Indicate the location of an action. |
| Adverbs of Degree | <i>The soup is very hot.</i> | <i>Supa ështëshumë e nxehtë.</i> | Indicate the intensity or degree of an adjective, adverb, or verb. |
| Adverbs of Cause | X | <i>Ai nukerdhisepseishteil odhur.</i> | Explain the reason or cause of an action. |
| Focus Adverbs | <i>She only cares about her job.</i> | X | Emphasize a specific part of the sentence. |
| Viewpoint Adverbs | <i>Personally, I don't agree.</i> | X | Indicate the speaker's perspective or opinion. |
| Connecting Adverbs | <i>Therefore, he decided to leave.</i> | X | Link ideas or sentences to show relationships such as contrast or cause-effect. |

Note: This information was adopted from Gramatika e Gjuhës Shqipe I (2002) and English Grammar – Morphology (2000)

In Albanian, adverbs that show focus, viewpoint, and connection in English are not treated as separate categories, which marks a difference between the two languages. In terms of their meaning, adverbs in both English and Albanian share many similarities. Both languages have categories like manner, time, place, and degree, which show how adverbs modify actions, qualities, or other adverbs. However, English distinguishes additional categories such as focus, viewpoint, and connecting adverbs, while Albanian does not. Despite this difference, the main roles of adverbs in both languages are similar, as they help change the meaning in sentences.

3. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to compare and contrast English adverbs with their counterparts in Albanian and to identify the similarities and differences between these two parts of speech. Given that both languages belong to the Indo-European language family, they share notable similarities, although inevitable differences also exist. The similarities and differences between English and Albanian adverbs are as follows:

- Adverbs, as a part of speech in both languages, modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs to provide additional information about manner, time, place, frequency, or degree.
- In Albanian, adverbs are part of the unchangeable parts of speech, defined by their lack of grammatical categories like gender, number, or case, which are typical of changeable parts of speech. This differs from the English concept of closed word classes, which refers to the limited addition of new words.

- According to their morphological structure, both English and Albanian adverbs are classified as simple, compound, or derived.
- Suffixation is the most productive method of forming adverbs in both languages, with English using the suffix -ly and Albanian using suffixes like -as, -azi, and -shëm.
- Prefixation, though less common, exists in both languages. In English, prefixes like a- (e.g., aboard, alive) are used, while in Albanian, prefixes often result from the union of prepositions and adverbs, such as përpara (in front) and përjashta (outside).
- Conversion serves as a method of forming adverbs in both languages, such as from adjectives in English (e.g., fast, hard) and from nouns or participles in Albanian (e.g., sheshit, hapur).
- According to syntactic function, adverbs in both languages modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. English categorizes adverbs as adverbials or modifiers, while Albanian uses the terms ndajfolje përcaktore (adverbs describing quality or intensity) and ndajfolje rrethimore (adverbs describing circumstances).
- Both languages show flexibility in the placement of adverbs within sentences. However, English adverbs can occupy initial, middle, or end positions, while Albanian adverbs are typically placed close to the word they modify, often following the verb.
- Adverbs in both languages express degrees of comparison, including positive, comparative, and superlative degrees. However, Albanian distinguishes further subcategories within the comparative degree, such as equality, superiority, and inferiority.
- According to semantic classification, adverbs in both languages are grouped into adverbs of manner, time, place, and degree. Additionally, English includes focus, viewpoint, and connecting adverbs, which in Albanian does not exist as types of adverbs.

The findings of this contrastive analysis provide a clearer understanding of the similarities and differences in the structure, function, and usage of adverbs in English and Albanian. This understanding can help language learners and linguists better grasp the complexities of adverbs in these languages, helping in more effective learning, teaching, and translation practices.

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