

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE USE OF PROGRESSIVE FORMS IN THE ALBANIAN - ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE NOVEL 'THE DOLL' BY ISMAIL KADARE



SCAN ME

Anisa BEADINI  ^{1*}

Arta TOCI  ²

¹ South East European University, Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication, ab27123@seeu.edu.mk *Correspondent Author.

² South East European University, Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication, a.toci@seeu.edu.mk

Article history:

Submission 13 November 2022

Revision 15 January 2023

Accepted 25 February 2023

Available online 30 April 2023

Keywords:

Translation,

Progressive Tense,

Tense Shift,

Meaning,

Form.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.32936/pssj.v7i1.375>

Abstract

Translation is a process that incorporates two languages and two cultures, it is considered as an act of conveying a message from one society to another. Languages contain different expressions, literary aspects for which translation enables them to be delivered to other cultures. The focus of this research is on the progressive or continuous tenses of Albanian and English language. The progressive tenses of both languages show an ongoing action at an unspecified time in the present, past or in the future. To conduct this research and to analyze and contrast the progressive tenses, we have used the novel "Kukulla" – "The Doll" by Ismail Kadare. The novel has an intriguing, specific topic which is not commonly used in literary texts. Besides its topic, the cultural aspects that Ismail Kadare has masterly incorporated in the novel make it a distinct and important novel to analyze.

The aim of this research is to clarify the aspect of progressive tenses of Albanian language and English language. It aims to identify and analyze whether the tense shift from Albanian language to English language changes the meaning and the form of the source text.

1. Introduction

"Translation is an act through which the content of a text is transferred from the source language into the target language" (Foster, 1958, p.1). To translate, one needs to have a source text and an aim to convert the same work into another language. The process of translation can be considered as a bridge between cultures or literature of different places. (Venuti 2017, p.8) claims: "Translation is, of course, a rewriting of an original text. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices, and the history of translation is also the history of literary innovation, of the shaping power of one culture upon another". The beneficial aspect of the process of translation is that by rewriting a literary text the translator produces new ideas and brings innovation in the literature and the culture of another place. According to Benjamin (1921): No translation would be possible if in its ultimate essence it strove for likeness to the original. . .

For just as the tenor and significance of the great works of literature undergo a complete transformation over the centuries, the mother tongue of the translator is transformed as well. While a poet's words endure in his own language, even the greatest translation is destined to become part of the growth of its own language and eventually to be absorbed by its renewal. Translation is so far removed from being the sterile equation of two dead languages that of all literary forms it is the one charged with the special mission of watching over the maturing process of the original language and the birth pangs of its own. (as cited in Grossman, 2010, p.14)

It is important to mention that this research's main goal is to analyze the aspects of translation of the novel 'Kukulla' by Ismail Kadare. Morgan (2006), claimed that "Ismail Kadare, as a great Albanian writer, is a 'Modern Homer' who has been nominated several times for the Nobel Prize in Literature" (p.7). The novel

'The Doll' is a mesmerizing novel that Ismail Kadare dedicated to his mother. In general, people are used to read stories about the impact that mothers have in the life of their children, but in this novel, we are face to face with the figure of a mother who doesn't have any impact in the life of her son. This is one of the main reasons why he calls his mother 'The doll'.

English Language progressive or continuous tense of the verbs
According to Celce-Murcia, Larsen-Freeman, & Williams, (1983) "the present progressive form (sometimes called the continuous) combines a form of the be verb (*am, is, are*), depending on the person and number of the subject, with the present participle, an *-ing* form". The progressive tense is used when the speaker wants to be more specific for an action that is happening.

The progressive tense – "koha e pakryer" of the Albanian Language

The progressive tense in the Albanian language is used to indicate actions, which were still happening at a certain point in the past. In the progressive tense when the verb is used for an action which is happening at a specific period the particle "*po*" or "*duke*" is added before the verb: *unë po hap, I am opening*, (Agalliu, 2002).

Dueher, (2011) pointed out that "Albanian language presents an original pattern, which provides its own solution to problems dealt with differently by other language systems" (p.274). The Albanian language is an Indo-European language, but it has a quite different morphological system when it comes to verbs, and it is different from other languages of the same branch. In the Albanian language and in the English language as well the auxiliary verb "*to be*" and the suffix "*-ing*" are elements that show the time when the action happens.

The vital element of human nature is communication, the exchange of information between each other helps people to understand and cooperate in their daily life. In general, all languages share the basic structure of creating a sentence such as the importance of a verb for the receiver to understand the message delivered. "According to Catford, (1965), A central task of translation theory is that of defining the nature and conditions of translation equivalence." (as cited in Schanchez, 2009, p.18). A challenging point for the translators is the semantic aspect, polysemy, which means that one word in English, has a lot of other meanings. The basic message of a written text can be delivered with a very simple translation process, but translation has a more important role. According to Newmark, (1991), "the creative element in translation is circumscribed. It hovers when the translation procedures fail when translation is 'impossible'

(p.7). Creativity in translated work comes in when the translator must find the equivalence of a specific word that might not have equivalence in the target language, it mostly happens when metaphors, jargon or poetry are translated.

The poetic text lends itself to multiple readings at the highest degree. The fact that the poetic text is difficult to translate is a symptom of what would seem to be its linearity, but this, however, is only apparent: a single signifier may lead into different interpretive trajectories. For this reason, it is often difficult to find a corresponding signifier in another language with the same capacity for shifting. (Ponzio, 2007)

The translation of poems is considered as one of the most difficult texts to translate as they always express different emotions and can be perceived differently by the readers. The translation of a literary text can be analyzed, changed and modified to the extent that it can even be considered better than the text in the source language. "According to Robinson, (1998), Dynamic development of national literatures required not only translation reforms, but also changes in the readers cultural expectation and era's aesthetic concepts" (as cited in Saule & Aisulu, 2014).

While the translator must ensure that the translated text provides a cross-language communication, they must take into consideration the changes in society and the new norms and expectations that readers have when they read a literary text from another language.

2. The Research Method

This research aims to:

- clarify the uncertainties of the forms between the continuous or progressive tenses of both languages.
- define the similarities and differences of progressive tenses in both languages.
- analyze and compare continuous tenses by their functions, forms and usage from the Albanian language into the English language.

The data collected from this research will serve to clarify the form of progressive tenses in both languages and will demonstrate if there happens to be a tense shift while translating. The research will offer an analysis of the forms of the progressive tenses, and it will examine the way these tenses are translated from Albanian language into English. The objective is to find out to what extent these tenses consist of similarities and differences between each other, are these tenses equivalent to each other, and how do these two interfere in the context. In the end, the claims that were made

with the hypotheses will be supported by the results of the research.

The data used in this research is collected from the novel “Kukulla” – “The Doll” by Ismail Kadre and its English translation. The data was analyzed and compared with the aim of finding similarities and differences of the progressive forms of the Albanian language and the English language. The analysis of the progressive tenses will give answer to the following questions:

1. Is the form of progressive tenses in the Albanian language the same as the form of progressive or continuous tenses in the English language?
2. Does the change of tenses interfere within the meaning of the sentences translated from Albanian to English?
3. How do the forms of progressive tenses change from Albanian language to English?

3. Results

3.1. Albanian Continuous Tense Translated into the Past Simple Tense of the English Language

Albanian version: *E kisha marrë vesh prej kohësh se pas çdo riparimi, qëllonte që shtëpia **pillte** një apo dy dhoma të tjera, ose kundërta, **gëlltiste** pa të keq po aq.*

English version: *I had long understood that every repair project **spawned** one or two more rooms – or the reverse, **swallowed** a couple.*

- In the Albanian version the verb “*pillte*” and “*gëlltiste*” are in the active form of the verb, indicative mood, third person singular. It shows an action that has been repeated over time in the past.
- In the English version the verbs “*spawned*” and “*swallowed*” are in the past simple tense and show finished action in the past.

3.2. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated by Using the Past Form of Modal Verbs of the English Language

Albanian version: *Mund të **këndoje** gjithë ditën nënë e dashur, nëna ime, më e mira në botë, sa erë e mire që të vjen, e trululu e tralala, e prap të **mos ishe** i kënaqur.*

English version: *You **might sing** all day about your beloved mother, the finest in the world, how sweet her fragrance, tra la la’, but still this **wasn’t** enough.*

- In the Albanian version the verb “*të këndoje*” is used in the active form of the verb, subjunctive mood, second person singular, and the next verb “*të mos ishe*” is in the subjunctive mood, active form of the verb, second person plural, and the particle “*mos*” is used to create the negative form. The verbs show actions that have continued for a specific, but unknown period in the past.

- In the English version to adapt the meaning the translator has used the past form of the modal verb “*may*” that is “*might*” and the main verb is used in its present simple form, the next verb is used in its past simple form. The verb *might* is used to express possibility, and the next verb speaks about an action that has occurred in the past.

3.3. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated by Using Gerund Forms and Infinitive Forms of the English Language

Albanian version: *Një skenë e njohur, e përsëritur shpeshherë në banesën tonë, kur vajzat tona **loznin** kukullash me nënën më kaloi nëpër mend.*

English version: *A familiar scene passed through my mind: our daughters **playing** Doll with my mother.*

- In the Albanian language the author has used the verb “*loznin*” in the active form of the verb, indicative mood, third person plural, the root of the verb is “*loz*”. It describes an action which was happening at a specific period in the past and it doesn’t indicate when it ended.
- In the English version the translator has used the gerund form of the verb “*play*” which has become “*playing*” and it is used to talk about an action that has happened in the past.

3.4. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated into The Passive Form of the English Language

Albanian version: *Në prill të vitit 1994, im vëlla na lajmëroi nga Tirana se nëna **ishte duke dhënë** shpirt.*

English version: *In April 1994, my brother called from Tirana to tell me my mother **was not expected to last**.*

- In the Albanian version the author has used the verb “*jam*” in the past, the particle “*duke*” and the verb “*jap*” in the past tense. The author has used the progressive tense to talk about an action that was happening during a specific time in the past and doesn’t tell the time when the action ended.

- In the English version the translator has used the verb “to be” in the past in its negative form and the verb “expect” in the past simple, the whole tense is in the passive form of the past simple tense. In the English version this tense is used to talk about an action that happened in the past and since the passive form of the verb is used the emphasis is put on the action that was happening.

3.5. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated into Present Simple Tense of the English Language

Language

Albanian version: *Dy ditët e bujjes duhej të kishin kaluar shpejt dhe Kukulla, e shoqëruar ashtu si gjatë ardhjes nga Vitua, cigania e lagjes, ishte nisur të kthehej.*

English version: *The two days of her visit passed quickly, and the Doll set off just as she had arrived, escorted by Vito, a neighborhood gypsy.*

- In the Albanian version the verb “të kthehej” is used in the passive form of the verb, subjunctive mood, third person singular, and by the context it is understood that it speaks about an action that has happened during a short period of time in the past.
- In the English version the verb “set off” is used in the present simple tense.

3.6. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated into Past Continuous Tense of the English Language

Language

Albanian version: *Kjo binte në sy sidomos kur niseshim bashkërisht për te babazoti.*

English version: *This was especially striking when we set off together to visit her father.*

- In the Albanian version the verb “binte” is in the active form of the verb, indicative mood, third person singular, as for the phrase “binte në sy” in Albanian language is used when someone wants to tell that something is obvious. The next verb “niseshim” is used in the passive form of the verb, indicative mood, first person plural. It shows an action that has been repeated in different times in the past.
- In the English version the verb “was striking” is used in the past progressive form of the verb and speaks about an action happening during the time when another action occurred in the past, the verb that indicates the next action is the verb “set off” which is in the past tense.

3.7. Albanian Continuous Tenses Translated into Past Perfect Tense of the English Language

Albanian version: *Ndërkaq kishte ca kohë që gjyshja nuk zbriste dot përshkak të dhimbjes së gjunjëve, kështu që ishte e vështirë të dalloje kur ishte me mëri, e kur jo.*

English version: *For some time, my grandmother had refused to come downstairs, supposedly because of the pain in her knees, although it was hard to tell when this was in fact out of spite and when it was not.*

- In the Albanian version the verb “nuk zbriste” is used in the active form of the verb, indicative mood, third person singular, and the particle “nuk” is used to form the negative, the next verb is “të dalloje” which is in the active form of the verb, subjunctive mood, second person singular. It shows an action that has been continuing for a period.
- In the English version the verb “had refused to come” is in the past perfect tense, the next verb is “was hard to tell”, it is in the past simple tense. It shows an action completed in the past.

3.8. English Language Continuous Tenses Form in The Source Text

English version: *As if I were hearing something I already knew.*

Albanian version: *Thua se të gjitha ato që po dëgjoja i dija ndërkaq.*

- In the English version the verb “were hearing” is in the past continuous tense, created with the past simple form of the verb “to be” – “was/were” and the main verb gets the “-ing” suffix. It shows an action that was happening at the time of speaking in the past.
- In the Albanian version the verb “dëgjoja” is in the active form of the verb, indicative mood, first person singular, the particle “po” is used and this is the Albanian language equivalence of creating the progressive tense in the English version.

5. Conclusions

This research has given answers to the following questions:

- Is the form of progressive tenses in the Albanian language the same as the form of progressive or continuous tenses in the English language?
- Does the change of tenses interfere within the meaning of the sentences translated from Albanian to English?

- How do the forms of progressive tenses change from Albanian language to English?

Referring to the first question related to the form of progressive tenses, the analysis of the tenses in both languages has shown that generally the progressive forms of Albanian language and the progressive forms of English language show an action happening during the time of speaking, they don't indicate when the action started nor do show when it ended. The Albanian progressive tenses are mainly focused in the past since they are part of the past tenses of Albanian language, whereas the English tenses expand in all times present, past and future. It is important to explain that the form of Albanian progressive tenses differs from the form of English language progressive tenses. It shouldn't go without mentioning that there exists the equivalence of the English progressive tenses in the Albanian language, and this incorporates not only the form, but the time of speaking as well. The differences and similarities of the forms in both languages will be elaborated in the answer of the third question.

When it comes to the matter of finding out whether the meaning of the sentence changes it is important to mention that even though the tense changes from progressive tense of Albanian language into the past simple tense of English language, passive voice, or there were cases when modal verbs were used in the translated text, the meaning doesn't change, and the reader understands the author's message.

Discussing the way how the forms of progressive tenses change, it is important to mention that mainly these tenses have different forms in Albanian and in English language. The progressive tenses of Albanian language take different suffixes in different moods, example, in the indicative mood, verbs take these suffixes in singular: *-ja, -je, -nte*, and in plural verbs end with these suffixes: *-nim, -nit, -nin*. It is important to mention that these suffixes change according to the mood that the verb is being conjugated in the Albanian language. Albanian progressive tenses also have another form which is created by the particle "*duke*" and "*po*", these two particles help to create the right and equivalent form of the English language progressive tenses. So, in Albanian language there are cases when the continuous tense is used with the suffixes, but sometimes the continuous tense with the particles is used, too. The English continuous or progressive tenses are created with the help of the auxiliary verb "*to be*" that determines the time of the action and the "*-ing*" suffix that the verb gets in the end. The conclusion about forms can be made by adding that there is the similar way of using the continuous tense in both languages Albanian and English, but in the Albanian language there is also the possibility to use the continuous tense by adding suffixes at the end.

So far, from the comparison of the continuous tenses of both languages we can conclude that the first hypothesis of this research, that is as follows: "*There is a difference between the form of the progressive or continuous tenses in Albanian language and the progressive or continuous tenses in the English language.*", is true, there is a difference in the form of progressive tenses of Albanian language and English language, but it is worth mentioning that in the Albanian language there exists the right equivalent form of the English language progressive tenses which can be used and has the same meaning, use and function as in the English language as well. By the analysis of the progressive tenses, it was concluded that there occurs tense switching during the process of translation, however this does not interfere with the meaning of the sentences when translated from the source language to the target language. According to this we can mention that the second hypothesis of this research that is: "*The change of the form of the tenses does not interfere the meaning of the sentences translated from Albanian to English, is true. Lastly, the third hypothesis of this research, 'If in the source text the author uses the progressive tense, then the translated text will use the past simple tense followed with an adjective or with the gerund form of the verb and in some cases will change to past simple tense.'*", by the analysis and comparison conducted in this research, it has been proven to be right. The results have shown that there occurs not only the tense switch from continuous to past tense, but there are cases when the modal verbs, gerund and infinitive forms, passive voice and rarely the present tense form of the verbs were used when translated from Albanian language into English language. All these grammatical aspects were used by the translator with the aim to adapt the meaning and to convey the message of the author to the reader, which is a proof that translation requires adaptability, effort, and creativity to create a proper translated work.

The analysis of the tenses in both languages has brought these main conclusions:

- The progressive forms of Albanian language and the progressive forms of English language show an action happening during the time of speaking, they don't indicate when the action started nor do show when it ended.
- Even though there are tense shifts from progressive tense of Albanian language into different grammar tenses of English language, the meaning doesn't change.
- Albanian progressive tenses take suffixes in the end, but this tense is also formed by the particles "*po*" and "*duke*" which is the same as in English language with the verb "*to be*" and the "*-ing*" ending.
- The Albanian progressive tenses are mainly focused in the past since they are part of the past tenses of Albanian

language, whereas the English tenses expand in all times present, past and future.

Acknowledgement

This article uses data and information from the Master Thesis "A Comparative Study on the Use of Progressive Forms in the Albanian - English Translation of the Novel 'The Doll' by Ismail Kadare" which was conducted by Anisa Beadini, MA and supervised by her mentor, Prof. Dr. Arta Toçi.

References

1. Agalliu, A. & Angoni, E. & Demiraj, Sh. & Dhrimo, A. & Hysa, E. & Lafe, E. & Likaj, E. (2002). Gramatika e gjuhës shqipe 1. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Instituti I Gjuhësisë dhe i Letërsisë.
2. Bassnett, S. (2013). Translation Studies. London, Routledge.
3. Celce-Murcia, M., Larsen-Freeman, D., & Williams, H. A. (1983). The grammar book: An ESL/EFL teacher's course (p. 854). Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
4. Demiraj, Sh. & Dhrimo, A. (2002). Gramatika e gjuhës shqipe 1. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Instituti i Gjuhësisë dhe i Letërsisë.
5. Dueher, J. L. (2011). The Albanian Tense System '. Tense systems in European languages II, 338, 253.
6. Ghanooni, Ali. (2012). A Review of the History of Translation Studies. Theory and Practice in Language Studies. 2. 10.4304/tpls.2.1.77-85.
7. Grossman, E. (2010). Why translation matters. Orwigsburg. Yale University Press.
8. Kaçi, M. (2015). Description of the Verbal System of Albanian Language in the " Grammar of the Albanian Language"(1882) of Konstandin Kristoforidhi. Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 4(3 S1), 421.
9. Morgan, P. (2006). Ismail Kadare Modern Homer or Albanian Dissident? World Literature Today, 80(5), 7-11. <https://doi.org/10.2307/40159180>
10. Newmark, P. (1988). A Textbook of Translation. Hoboken, NJ. Prentice Hall
11. Ponzio, A. (2007). Translation and the literary text. TTR: traduction, terminologie rédaction, 20(2), 89-119.
12. Sánchez, M. T. (2009). The problems of literary translation: A study of the theory and practice of translation from English into Spanish (Vol. 18). Peter Lang.
13. Sanders, A. (1994). The short Oxford history of English literature. New York. Oxford University Press Inc.
14. Saule, B., & Aisulu, N. (2014). Problems of translation theory and practice: original and translated text equivalence. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 136, 119-123.
15. Venuti, L. (2017). The translator's invisibility: A history of translation. Routledge, Retrieved from: <http://library.navoiy-uni.uz/files/The%20Translator's%20Invisibility.pdf>