



This journal provides immediate open access to its content under the [Creative Commons BY 4.0 license](#). Authors who publish with this journal retain all copyrights and agree to the terms of the above-mentioned CC BY 4.0 license

DOI: 10.2478/seeur-2026-0003

---

# CROSS-LINGUISTIC CONSTRUCTIONS AND PATTERNS OF NOUN PHRASES IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN LANGUAGES

---

Erëza Rushiti

Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication  
South East European University, Tetovo, North Macedonia  
[er32358@seeu.edu.mk](mailto:er32358@seeu.edu.mk)

Arta Toçi

Faculty of Languages, Cultures and Communication  
South East European University, Tetovo, North Macedonia  
[a.toci@seeu.edu.mk](mailto:a.toci@seeu.edu.mk)

## ABSTRACT

This paper presents a contrastive analysis of noun phrases in English and Albanian. It focuses on their syntactic structures and key distinctions. Employing a qualitative approach, the research uses descriptive and comparative methods to analyse data from grammar and syntax books in both languages. The study examines simple and complex noun phrases, particularly the use of definiteness, premodifiers, and postmodifiers. The findings reveal that while both languages share similarities in using indefinite noun phrases, they diverge in marking definiteness: English uses definite articles, whereas Albanian incorporates definiteness through morphological changes. These differences reflect broader grammatical tendencies and offer insights for improving language learning and translation practices. The findings provide practical implications for educators, translators, and linguists by enhancing understanding of syntactic differences for effective cross-linguistic communication.

**Keywords:** noun phrase, English, Albanian, analysis.

## INTRODUCTION

In linguistics, a phrase is known to be two or more words that are related to each other and that work together as a single part of speech but do not have both a subject and a predicate. In English and Albanian, noun phrases (NPs) are essential for understanding syntax and semantics. They provide an in-depth analysis of the internal makeup of noun phrases, indicating that they can vary from straightforward structures, such as *the cat* = *macja*, to more intricate

forms, like *the friendly black cat sleeping on the mat* = *macja e zezë miqësore që po fle në dyshek*, and the word that is its head, or main part, is typically a noun. Noun phrases are groups of words centred around the noun of the sentence, known as the headword. According to Chalker and Weiner (1994), a noun phrase is:

A word or group of words functioning in a sentence exactly like a noun, with a noun or pronoun as head. A noun phrase can be a noun or pronoun alone but is frequently a noun or pronoun with pre- and/or post-modification. (p. 267)

They serve as essential building blocks of sentence structure, often carrying the subject or object roles while allowing for a range of syntactic elaboration. Nuhiu (2012) defines them as “a noun and other words or phrases or clauses that are structured around the noun” (p. 9), noting that they can include the following: 1. prenominal modifiers such as determiners (predeterminers, determiners, and post-determiners), adjectives, participles, nouns, and adverbials; and 2. post-nominal modifiers such as noun phrases, adjective phrases, adverbial phrases, prepositional phrases, numerals, appositives, and finite and non-finite clauses. In addition to grammatical structures, noun phrases engage in various syntactic phenomena, such as noun phrase coordination and modification. Kusumawardhani (2017) discusses the way in which conjunctions are used to coordinate phrases, noting that “coordinate conjunctions (and, but, nor, for) join words, phrases, and clauses of equal importance” and that they “come in between the individual words, phrases, and independent clauses they are joining” (p. 2). This allows for the formation of more complex sentence elements such as subjects and objects. Additionally, the structure of noun phrases is heavily influenced by determiners, both in terms of their presence and where they are positioned within the phrase. Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) emphasise that determiners play a crucial role in shaping the meaning of a noun by indicating its definiteness and quantity. These determiners include the articles *a*, *an*, and *the*, and the quantifiers *some* and *many*.

Noun phrases in Albanian exhibit distinctive features that differentiate them from their English counterparts. An Albanian noun phrase typically consists of a noun and its modifiers, such as adjectives, determiners, and prepositional phrases. According to Beci (2005), noun phrases in Albanian can take various structural forms, including 1) a noun with a determiner, pronoun, or numeral; 2) a noun with an adjective; 3) a noun combined with another noun in the genitive, accusative, or ablative cases, or with a preposition followed by a noun in the nominative, accusative, or ablative cases; 4) two nouns in the nominative case; 5) a noun, an adjective, and a noun in the genitive, accusative, or ablative cases without a preposition; and 6) a noun with another noun or a noun phrase introduced by a preposition. On the other hand, Çeliku et al. (2002) identify additional structural patterns in Albanian noun phrases, including 1) noun + noun, 2) noun + infinitive, 3) noun + adjective, 4) noun + pronoun, 5) noun + numeral, and 6) noun + adverb. The rich inflectional morphology of Albanian, especially the use of cases such as nominative, accusative, and genitive, is crucial for indicating the grammatical roles of nouns. This reliance on morphological markers contrasts with English, where the function of noun phrases is primarily determined by word order rather than inflexion. “Kurani and Muho (2014) noted that linguistic studies between Albanian and English are rare but much needed given the morphological differences between the two” (as cited in Millaku et al., 2022, p. 352). The differences, particularly in noun and verb inflexion, article usage, and word order, underscore the need for focused comparative studies that can support both linguistic theory and practical translation efforts. Against this background, the present study aims to investigate the structure and use of noun phrases in English and Albanian through a contrastive linguistic approach. The present study is guided by the central question of how noun phrases in English and Albanian differ in terms of structure, modification, and syntactic

function, and to what extent these differences reflect broader typological distinctions between the two languages.

To address the research questions, the study pursues the following objectives:

- To identify and describe the internal structure of noun phrases in English and Albanian;
- To compare the types and positions of modifiers used in noun phrases in both languages;
- To examine the role of morphology and word order in determining noun phrase structure and function;
- To highlight similarities and differences that are relevant for contrastive linguistics and translation studies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Noun phrases can be very flexible in form and structure. They may consist of just one word, such as a simple noun, or include several words, even a full clause acting together as one unit. This kind of flexibility allows them to take on different functions within a sentence, such as subject, object, or complement. As Millaku (2016) states, “the noun phrase typically functions as subject, direct or indirect object, complement of sentences, and complement in prepositional phrases” (p. 39). Celce-Murcia and Larsen-Freeman (1999) support this by highlighting the multifunctionality of noun phrases, identifying that these phrases “function in one of three ways in English: as subjects, as objects, and as predicates” (84). As a result, they help speakers and writers express more detailed and specific meanings in various contexts. “According to Ahmetaj (2000), the sentence consists of constituents that in generative grammar are called the noun phrase (NP) and verb phrase (VP)” (as cited in Mosko, 2014, p. 2388). The NP typically functions as the subject of the sentence, while the VP contains the verb and, often, its objects or complements. For example, in [*The girl reads a book.* = *Vajza lexon një libër.*], *the girl* = *vajza* represents the noun phrase (NP) and is the subject, while *reads a book* = *lexon një libër* functions as the verb phrase (VP) and is the predicate. In Albanian, just like in English, the noun plays the central role in organising the structure of the phrase. It shapes how meaning is built within the group and acts as the core element around which all other modifiers and grammatical markers revolve. As Ajdari and Ismaili (2024) write, “Noun phrases are guided by a noun, which holds the highest hierarchical position within that group. Such constructions are called phrases” (p. 228). This central role of the noun as the head of the phrase determines the grammatical structure of the entire group, influencing how other elements within the phrase interact and agree with it. “Duden (2006) notes that noun phrases are always determined by person, number, gender, and case. Person, number, and gender are categories that are always governed by the head of the noun phrase” (as cited in Ajdari & Ismaili, 2024, p. 225). Noun phrases in Albanian often include grammatical markers that indicate case and number, adding another layer of complexity to their structure. These markers strengthen the relationships between different parts of a sentence and affect how nouns and their modifiers agree with each other. Studies on Albanian noun morphology emphasise the role of inflection in encoding grammatical categories such as case and definiteness. “Piton and Lagji (2010) note that there are numerous case forms (nominative, dative, accusative, ablative), such as: houses PL-ABL-DEF, (engl. of houses)” (Nagavci-Mati et al., 2021, p. 8). In Albanian nouns, definiteness is expressed through morphological marking rather than separate articles, which supports the view that Albanian relies on inflectional mechanisms to signal grammatical relations within noun phrases, in contrast to English, where such relations are largely expressed syntactically. Millaku et al. (2022) state that “two noun phrases, for example, may be combined for the

generation of an additional noun phrase, a phenomenon that occurs in both English and Albanian” (p. 353). Noun phrase compounding or coordination refers to the process in which two or more noun phrases are joined to form a larger noun phrase, a structure that is grammatically acceptable and productive in both English and Albanian. For instance, the phrase *my friend and his sister* = *miku im dhe motra e tij* constitutes a single, coordinated noun phrase formed by combining two individual NPs, so in both languages, a unified NP is operated within the sentence. We might also combine noun phrases like *the mayor’s office key*, where *the mayor’s office* (NP) and *key* (noun) come together to form a more complex noun. When translated into Albanian, *çelësi i zyrës së kryetarit*, the structure changes significantly, where *çelësi* (the key) is positioned at the beginning and *i zyrës së kryetarit* (of the mayor’s office) comes after. The phrase *zyra e kryetarit* (the mayor’s office) is nested within this construction and is itself a noun phrase in genitive form, showing possession. English modifiers often precede the noun (*the mayor’s office key*), whereas the Albanian ones, especially possessive or genitive ones, follow the noun (*çelësi i zyrës së kryetarit*). Using adjectives in noun phrases is also critical, as their placement can alter the focus and interpretation of the noun phrase. For instance, in English, *the beautiful garden* emphasises the beauty of the garden, while in Albanian, *kopshti i bukur* (the beautiful garden) shifts the adjective *i bukur* (beautiful) after the noun *kopshti* (the garden), potentially highlighting the noun itself before introducing its descriptive quality. This positioning affects how meaning is constructed, as the modifier is closely associated with the noun. The following examples illustrate the structure of indefinite and definite noun phrases in both English and Albanian:

*Indefinite and definite noun phrases in English*

|       |       |     |
|-------|-------|-----|
| a/the | black | cat |
| art.  | adj.  | N   |
| PreM  | PreM  | H   |

*Indefinite noun phrases in Albanian*

|      |      |        |
|------|------|--------|
| një  | mace | e zezë |
| a    | cat  | black  |
| art. | N    | adj.   |
| PreM | H    | PostM  |

*Definite noun phrases in Albanian*

|         |        |
|---------|--------|
| macja   | e zezë |
| the cat | black  |
| def. N  | adj.   |
| H       | PostM  |

## METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach to analyse and compare noun phrases in English and Albanian, utilising data from authoritative grammar and syntax books, alongside scientific articles for the theoretical background. All illustrative examples were formulated by the researcher, constructed in accordance with the grammatical rules of each language to reflect naturally occurring structures. These examples serve as the primary data for the comparative analysis. The research methodology consists of two primary methods: a descriptive method for the literature review, for which books and journal articles were consulted and used, and a comparative method for analysing the data gathered. The comparative analysis was conducted to identify key similarities and differences between noun phrases in English and Albanian. The study focused on several aspects:

1. The syntactic structure: the arrangement of nouns, determiners, adjectives, and modifiers, which were closely examined to determine how each language structures its noun phrases and involved a detailed comparison of simple and complex noun phrases to identify patterns in their formation;

2. Functionality: The study explored the grammatical functions that noun phrases serve in both languages, such as subjects, objects, and complements, shedding light on how noun phrases operate within different grammatical frameworks;

3. Case marking and agreement: particular attention was given to case marking in Albanian noun phrases, contrasting this with the reliance on word order in English to convey grammatical relationships, highlighting the functional significance of noun phrases in each language;

4. Adjectival modification: the placement and role of adjectives within noun phrases were analysed to identify any syntactic variations, including examining how the positioning of modifiers affects the overall structure and meaning of noun phrases in both languages.

The study ensures that the comparative evaluation of noun phrase structures is grounded in authentic linguistic patterns, while remaining aligned with the theoretical frameworks outlined in the literature review.

## RESULTS

The distinction between definite and indefinite nouns in English is typically made using articles, such as *a*, *an*, and *the*. In contrast, Albanian incorporates definiteness into the form of the noun itself. Furthermore, the presence of definite and indefinite articles in Albanian noun phrases is influenced by case marking. This is illustrated by the English and Albanian examples below.

### *Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases in English*

| <i>Indefinite</i> |     | <i>Definite</i> |     |
|-------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| a                 | cat | the             | cat |
| art.              | N   | art.            | N   |
| PreM              | H   | PreM            | H   |

### *Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases in Albanian*

| <i>Indefinite</i> |      | <i>Definite</i> |  |
|-------------------|------|-----------------|--|
| një               | mace | macja           |  |
| a                 | cat  | <b>the</b> cat  |  |
| art.              | N    | def. N          |  |
| PreM              | H    | H               |  |

The simple noun phrase pairs *a/the cat* and *mace/macja* illustrate the indefinite and definite forms. In English, *a cat* indicates an indefinite reference. Similarly, in Albanian, (*një*) *mace* is indefinite, where *një* indicates indefiniteness. However, the difference becomes clear in the definite forms: in English, definiteness is marked by the article *the*, which precedes the noun *cat*. On the other hand, in Albanian, it is expressed through the suffix *-ja* (for feminine nouns) added to the noun, forming *macja*. This highlights a key distinction between the two languages: English relies on a determiner to signal definiteness, whereas Albanian modifies nouns to convey the same meaning.

### *Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases in English*

#### *Definite and indefinite*

|       |      |       |     |         |            |
|-------|------|-------|-----|---------|------------|
| a/the | big  | white | cat | sitting | on the mat |
| art.  | adj. | adj.  | N   | gerund  | PP         |
| PreM  | PreM | PreM  | H   | PostM   | PostM      |

### *Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases in Albanian*

#### *Indefinite*

|      |      |         |          |         |            |
|------|------|---------|----------|---------|------------|
| një  | mace | e madhe | e bardhë | e ulur  | në dyshek  |
| a    | cat  | big     | white    | sitting | on the mat |
| art. | N    | adj.    | adj.     | gerund  | PP         |
| PreM | H    | PostM   | PostM    | PostM   | PostM      |

#### *Definite*

|         |                |                 |               |            |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|
| macja   | e madhe (fem.) | e bardhë (fem.) | e ulur (fem.) | në dyshek  |
| the cat | big            | white           | sitting       | on the mat |
| def. N  | adj.           | adj.            | gerund        | PP         |
| H       | PostM          | PostM           | PostM         | PostM      |

In English, the phrase typically begins with an indefinite or definite article, followed by two adjectives, the head noun, a gerund, and a prepositional phrase. In contrast, Albanian employs an indefinite article for an indefinite noun or a noun with a suffix to indicate definiteness, followed by two adjectives, a gerund, and a prepositional phrase. This comparison between the simple and complex noun phrases shows that both languages use modifiers and prepositions, and both employ gerunds to convey the same meaning.

## **SIMPLE NOUN PHRASES IN ENGLISH AND THEIR ALBANIAN EQUIVALENTS**

In simple noun phrases, English often employs articles, adjectives, and nouns, following a relatively strict word order. While Albanian shares some similarities with English regarding determiners and articles, it frequently uses different syntactic structures when modifying nouns. The examples below compare simple noun phrases in English and their Albanian equivalents.

### **Example 1:** Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases with singular head nouns

#### *English:*

##### *Indefinite and definite*

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| a/the | dog |
| art.  | N   |
| PreM  | H   |

#### *Albanian:*

##### *Indefinite*

|      |             |
|------|-------------|
| një  | qen (masc.) |
| a    | dog         |
| art. | N           |
| PreM | H           |

##### *Definite*

|              |
|--------------|
| qeni (masc.) |
| the dog      |
| def. N       |
| H            |

In Example 1, the English phrase *a/the dog* consists of the indefinite article *a* for the indefinite nouns and the definite article *the* for the definite nouns, followed by the headword *dog*. The definite article indicates that the noun refers to a specific dog. In contrast, Albanian

does not use separate articles to express definiteness; instead, it relies on the morphological transformation of the noun. In the phrases *një qen* and *qeni*, the noun *qen* is preceded by the indefinite article *një*, while *qeni* includes the suffix *-i* (masculine, singular) to mark definiteness. This approach, where definiteness is integrated into the noun morphology, contrasts with English, which employs external articles. Therefore, the two languages differ significantly in how they express definiteness: English uses external determiners, while Albanian incorporates this feature within the noun itself.

**Example 2:** Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases with singular head nouns

|                                |        |                   |             |
|--------------------------------|--------|-------------------|-------------|
| <i>English:</i>                |        | <i>Albanian:</i>  |             |
| <i>Indefinite and definite</i> |        | <i>Indefinite</i> |             |
| a/the                          | flower | një               | lule (fem.) |
| art.                           | N      | art.              | N           |
| PreM                           | H      | PreM              | H           |
|                                |        | <i>Definite</i>   |             |
|                                |        | lulja (fem.)      |             |
|                                |        | the flower        |             |
|                                |        | def. N            |             |
|                                |        | H                 |             |

In Example 2, the English noun phrase *a/the flower* follows the same structural pattern observed in Example 1. The indefinite form, *a flower*, contains the indefinite article *a*, which precedes the head noun *flower* and signals a non-specific reference. In contrast, the definite form, *the flower*, employs the definite article *the*, indicating that the noun refers to a particular, identifiable entity. In both cases, definiteness in English is expressed syntactically through the use of external determiners positioned before the noun. In Albanian, the corresponding noun phrases *një lule* and *lulja* illustrate a different mechanism for marking definiteness. The indefinite noun phrase *një lule* consists of the indefinite article *një* followed by the head noun *lule*, which is a feminine singular noun. Definiteness, however, is not marked by a separate article but through morphological suffixation. In the definite form *lulja*, the suffix *-ja* (feminine, singular) is attached directly to the noun, encoding definiteness within the noun itself.

**Example 3:** Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases with plural head nouns

|                   |          |                 |          |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------|----------|
| <i>English:</i>   |          |                 |          |
| <i>Indefinite</i> |          | <i>Definite</i> |          |
| some              | children | the             | children |
| quant.            | N        | art.            | N        |
| PreM              | H        | PreM            | H        |
| <i>Albanian:</i>  |          |                 |          |
| <i>Indefinite</i> |          | <i>Definite</i> |          |
| ca                | fëmijë   | fëmijët         |          |
| some              | children | the children    |          |
| quant.            | N        | def. N          |          |
| PreM              | H        | H               |          |

In Example 3, *some/the children* and *ca fëmijë / fëmijët* function as indefinite and definite plural noun phrases in English and Albanian, respectively. In both languages, indefiniteness in the plural is commonly expressed through quantifiers, with *some* in English

and *ca* in Albanian preceding the head noun *children* / *fëmijë*. These quantifiers indicate an unspecified quantity and do not encode definiteness themselves, serving instead as premodifiers of the noun. A clear contrast emerges in the expression of definiteness. In English, definiteness is syntactically marked by the definite article *the*, which appears before the plural noun *children* and functions as an independent determiner. In Albanian, however, definiteness is morphologically encoded within the noun through the suffix *-t*, resulting in *fëmijët*. This suffix simultaneously signals plurality and definiteness, eliminating the need for a separate definite article.

**Example 4:** Definite and indefinite simple noun phrases with plural head nouns

*English:*

*Indefinite*

a few        people  
quant.        N  
PreM        H

*Definite*

the            people  
art.            N  
PreM        H

*Albanian:*

*Indefinite*

pak            njerëz  
a few        people  
quant.        N  
PreM        H

*Definite*

njerëzit  
**the** people  
def. N  
H

In Example 4, the indefinite plural noun phrase, *a few people*, is formed by the quantifier *a few*, which functions as a premodifier and signals an indefinite quantity, followed by the head noun *people*. Since plural nouns in English do not take the indefinite article *a*, indefiniteness is instead expressed through quantifiers. In the definite form, *the people*, definiteness is marked by the definite article *the*, which precedes the plural noun and indicates reference to a specific group. A similar distinction is expressed through different grammatical means in Albanian. The indefinite plural noun phrase *pak njerëz* consists of the quantifier *pak*, functioning as a premodifier, followed by the plural noun *njerëz*. As in English, indefiniteness in plural noun phrases can be conveyed through quantifiers rather than articles. However, in the definite plural form *njerëzit*, definiteness is encoded morphologically through the suffix *-it*, which is attached directly to the noun. This suffix marks both plurality and definiteness, eliminating the need for a separate determiner.

## COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES WITH PRE-MODIFIERS IN ENGLISH AND THEIR ALBANIAN EQUIVALENTS

English noun phrases typically place modifiers such as quantifiers, adjectives, and articles before the noun. Albanian often follows a different syntactic order, where adjectives are usually positioned after the nouns. This distinction in word order offers a clear example of how the two languages manage premodification, emphasising the syntactic rules each follows. Below are examples that compare complex noun phrases with premodifiers in English and their Albanian counterparts.

**Example 1:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with singular head nouns

*English:*

*Indefinite and definite*

a/the    bright red    ball

*Albanian:*

*Indefinite*

një    top    i kuq    i ndritshëm

|      |      |      |   |
|------|------|------|---|
| art. | adj. | adj. | N |
| PreM | PreM | PreM | H |

|      |      |       |        |
|------|------|-------|--------|
| a    | ball | red   | bright |
| art. | N.   | adj.  | adj.   |
| PreM | H    | PostM | PostM  |

*Definite*

|                 |       |             |
|-----------------|-------|-------------|
| topi (masc.)    | i kuq | i ndritshëm |
| <b>the</b> ball | red   | bright      |
| def. N          | adj.  | adj.        |
| H               | PostM | PostM       |

In Example 1, the English phrase *a/the bright red ball* demonstrates a straightforward use of premodifiers: the articles *a* and *the* and the adjectives *bright* and *red* precede the noun *ball*. English places both adjectives before the noun, maintaining a clear pre-modifying order. In Albanian, *një top i kuq i ndritshëm* / *topi i kuq i ndritshëm* displays a different structure. When the noun is indefinite, the indefinite article is placed before the headword *top*, and the headword is followed by the adjectives. In its definite form, the noun becomes *topi*, marked by the suffix *-i* (masculine, singular), and is followed by the adjectives *i kuq* and *i ndritshëm* (both masculine, singular). This structure illustrates the Albanian's post-nominal adjective placement, where adjectives follow the noun and are linked using the particle *i* for masculine singular nouns. Unlike English, where adjectives are grouped before the noun, Albanian uses a more distributed and flexible approach, placing adjectives after the indefinite or definite noun.

**Example 2:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with singular head nouns*English:**Indefinite and definite*

|       |       |        |      |
|-------|-------|--------|------|
| a/the | large | wooden | door |
| art.  | adj.  | adj.   | N    |

*Albanian:**Indefinite*

|      |      |         |           |
|------|------|---------|-----------|
| një  | derë | e madhe | e drunjtë |
| a    | door | large   | wooden    |
| art. | N    | adj.    | adj.      |

*Definite*

|                 |         |           |
|-----------------|---------|-----------|
| dera (fem.)     | e madhe | e drunjtë |
| <b>the</b> door | large   | wooden    |
| def. N          | adj.    | adj.      |
| H               | PostM   | PostM     |

In Example 2, the noun phrase in the indefinite form, *a large wooden door*, begins with the indefinite article *a*, followed by the adjectives *large* and *wooden*, which modify the head noun *door*. The definite form, *the large wooden door*, uses the definite article *the* to indicate a specific referent, while the adjectives continue to precede the noun in a fixed pre-modifying position. In Albanian, on the other hand, the corresponding noun phrases *një derë e madhe e drunjtë* and *dera e madhe e drunjtë* show a different strategy. The indefinite form *një derë e madhe e drunjtë* has the indefinite article *një* followed by the head noun *derë*, also followed by the adjectives *e madhe* and *e drunjtë*. In the definite form, the head noun *dera* takes the suffix *-a*, and the adjectives remain post-nominal, maintaining their agreement with the feminine singular noun.

**Example 3:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with plural head nouns*English:**Indefinite*

|         |         |             |
|---------|---------|-------------|
| several | ancient | manuscripts |
| quant.  | adj.    | N           |

*Definite*

|      |         |             |
|------|---------|-------------|
| the  | ancient | manuscripts |
| art. | adj.    | N           |

|                   |             |           |                        |          |   |
|-------------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|----------|---|
| PreM              | PreM        | H         | PreM                   | PreM     | H |
| <i>Albanian:</i>  |             |           |                        |          |   |
| <i>Indefinite</i> |             |           | <i>Definite</i>        |          |   |
| disa              | dorëshkrime | të lashta | dorëshkrimet           | e lashta |   |
| several           | manuscripts | ancient   | <b>the</b> manuscripts | ancient  |   |
| quant.            | N           | adj.      | def. N                 | adj.     |   |
| PreM              | H           | PostM     | H                      | PostM    |   |

In Example 3, *several/the ancient manuscripts* follows a structure where the article *the* and the quantifier *several* precede *ancient* and *manuscripts*, forming a pre-modifying structure, which is typical in English. In contrast, Albanian adopts a post-modifying structure, as seen in the examples *disa dorëshkrime të lashta* and *dorëshkrimet e lashta*. For indefinite nouns, the quantifier *disa* is positioned before the headword *dorëshkrime* and the adjective *të lashta* (feminine, plural, used with indefinite nouns). In the definite form, *dorëshkrimet* precedes *e lashta*, placed post-nominally, adhering to Albanian's syntactic rules. A distinctive feature of Albanian is the use of the particle *të* in adjectives to link the noun with the adjective in the indefinite form. This structural difference highlights a fundamental contrast: English places adjectives before nouns, whereas Albanian positions them after, reflecting differing syntactic norms between the two languages.

**Example 4:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with plural head nouns

|                   |        |           |                   |          |        |
|-------------------|--------|-----------|-------------------|----------|--------|
| <i>English:</i>   |        |           |                   |          |        |
| <i>Indefinite</i> |        |           | <i>Definite</i>   |          |        |
| many              | old    | houses    | the               | old      | houses |
| quant.            | adj.   | N         | art.              | adj.     | N      |
| PreM              | PreM   | H         | PreM              | PreM     | H      |
| <i>Albanian:</i>  |        |           |                   |          |        |
| <i>Indefinite</i> |        |           | <i>Definite</i>   |          |        |
| shumë             | shtëpi | të vjetra | shtëpitë          | e vjetra |        |
| many              | houses | old       | <b>the</b> houses | old      |        |
| quant.            | N      | adj.      | def. N            | adj.     |        |
| PreM              | H      | PostM     | H                 | PostM    |        |

In Example 4, the indefinite noun phrase, *many old houses*, consists of the quantifier *many* and the adjective *old*, both functioning as premodifiers, followed by the plural head noun *houses*. The order of elements is fixed, with all modifiers preceding the noun. In the definite form, *the houses*, definiteness again is marked by the definite article *the*, which occupies the initial premodifier position, followed by the adjective *old* and the head noun *houses*. In Albanian, the corresponding indefinite noun phrase *shumë shtëpi të vjetra* displays a different internal structure. The quantifier *shumë* functions as a premodifier and precedes the head noun *shtëpi*, while the adjective phrase *të vjetra* follows the noun and functions as a postmodifier. This post-nominal placement of adjectives is characteristic of Albanian noun phrase structure. In the definite form *shtëpitë e vjetra*, definiteness is expressed morphologically through the suffix *-të* attached to the plural noun *shtëpi*. The adjective *e vjetra* remains in post-nominal position and agrees with the noun in number and definiteness.

## COMPLEX NOUN PHRASES WITH POST-MODIFIERS IN ENGLISH AND THEIR ALBANIAN EQUIVALENTS

Post-modifiers can take various forms, including prepositional phrases and relative clauses, which elaborate on the head noun by specifying its characteristics or the context in which it is situated. For instance, a prepositional phrase can indicate location, while relative clauses can convey essential or non-essential information about the noun. Below are examples of complex noun phrases with post-modifiers in English and their Albanian equivalents, to facilitate a comparative analysis of their syntactic structures and functions.

### Example 1: Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with singular head nouns

English:

*Indefinite and definite*

|       |      |                   |
|-------|------|-------------------|
| a/the | girl | in the blue dress |
| art.  | N    | PP                |
| PreM  | H    | PostM             |

Albanian:

*Indefinite*

|      |       |                      |
|------|-------|----------------------|
| një  | vajzë | në fustanin e kaltër |
| a    | girl  | in the blue dress    |
| art. | N     | PP PostM             |
| PreM | H     | PostM                |

*Definite*

|                 |                      |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| vajza (fem.)    | në fustanin e kaltër |
| <b>the</b> girl | in the blue dress    |
| def. N          | PP                   |
| H               | PostM                |

In Example 1, the English noun phrase *a/the girl in the blue dress* consists of a head noun and a prepositional phrase that provides additional, postmodifying information about the noun. English frequently uses prepositional phrases introduced by words like *in* to elaborate on or specify details about the noun. The Albanian equivalent, *a vajzë në fustanin e kaltër / vajza në fustanin e kaltër*, follows a similar structure but with notable differences. In the indefinite form, the head noun *vajzë* is followed by the modifying prepositional phrase. In the definite form, the head noun *vajza* incorporates the definite marker *-a* (for feminine singular nouns), removing the need for a separate definite article. This highlights a key syntactic distinction: while English uses a separate definite article to indicate definiteness, Albanian integrates it directly into the noun itself.

### Example 2: Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with singular head nouns

English:

*Indefinite and definite*

|       |      |              |                       |
|-------|------|--------------|-----------------------|
| a/the | book | on the table | which I got yesterday |
| art.  | N    | PP           | relative cl.          |
| PreM  | H    | PostM        | PostM                 |

Albanian:

*Indefinite*

|      |       |              |                       |
|------|-------|--------------|-----------------------|
| një  | libër | në tavolinë  | të cilin e mora dje   |
| a    | book  | on the table | which I got yesterday |
| art. | N     | PP           | relative cl.          |
| PreM | H     | PostM        | PostM                 |

*Definite*

|                 |              |                       |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| libri (masc.)   | në tavolinë  | të cilin e mora dje   |
| <b>the</b> book | on the table | which I got yesterday |

|        |       |              |
|--------|-------|--------------|
| def. N | PP    | relative cl. |
| H      | PostM | PostM        |

In Example 2, the English complex noun phrase *a/the book on the table...* consists of the head noun *book*, preceded by the indefinite or definite article and followed by two post-modifiers: the prepositional phrase *on the table* and the relative clause *which I got yesterday*. The Albanian equivalents *një libër në tavolinë...* and *libri në tavolinë...* display a comparable structural pattern, as both the prepositional phrase *në tavolinë* and the relative clause *which I got yesterday* follow the head noun, maintaining a similar post-modifying order. This parallelism suggests a shared syntactic strategy in both languages for expanding noun phrases through post-modification. However, a notable contrast arises in the expression of definiteness. In English, definiteness is syntactically marked by the determiner *the*, which precedes the noun as an independent element. In Albanian, by contrast, definiteness is encoded morphologically through the suffix *-i* attached to the indefinite noun *libër*, forming the definite noun *libri*. This suffix not only marks definiteness but also reflects gender and number agreement, integrating grammatical information directly into the noun form.

**Example 3:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with plural head nouns

English:

*Indefinite*

|        |        |                  |
|--------|--------|------------------|
| some   | cities | that I know well |
| quant. | N      | that cl.         |
| PreM   | H      | PostM            |

*Definite*

|      |        |                  |
|------|--------|------------------|
| the  | cities | that I know well |
| art. | N      | that cl.         |
| PreM | H      | PostM            |

Albanian:

*Indefinite*

|        |        |                  |
|--------|--------|------------------|
| ca     | qytete | që i njoh mirë   |
| some   | cities | that I know well |
| quant. | N      | that cl.         |
| PreM   | H      | PostM            |

*Definite*

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| qytetet           | që i njoh mirë   |
| <b>the</b> cities | that I know well |
| def. N            | that cl.         |
| H                 | PostM            |

In Example 3, the English noun phrases *some cities that I know well* and *the cities that I know well*, alongside their Albanian equivalents, *ca qytete që i njoh mirë* and *qytetet që i njoh mirë*, display a closely comparable structural organisation. In both languages, the head noun *cities* / *qytete* is followed by a relative clause, *that I know well* / *që i njoh mirë*, which functions as a post-modifier. The use of relative clauses in this position reflects a shared syntactic strategy for expanding plural noun phrases and restricting their reference. Indefiniteness in both English and Albanian is expressed through quantifiers *some* / *ca*, which precede the head noun and indicate an unspecified subset. A clear contrast emerges in the marking of definiteness. In English, definiteness is realised syntactically through the determiner *the*, which appears as an independent pre-modifier before the noun *cities*. In Albanian, definiteness is morphologically encoded on the head noun itself through the suffix *-et*, forming *qytetet*, a marker typically used for masculine plural nouns. Despite these differences in definiteness marking, the relative clause remains structurally and functionally parallel in both languages, reinforcing the comparative finding that English and Albanian employ similar post-modification patterns while differing in the morphosyntactic mechanisms used to encode definiteness.

**Example 4:** Definite and indefinite complex noun phrases with plural head nouns

English:

*Indefinite and definite*

|             |        |                 |                  |
|-------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| a couple of | pupils | with schoolbags | in the bookstore |
|-------------|--------|-----------------|------------------|

|        |   |       |       |
|--------|---|-------|-------|
| quant. | N | PP    | PP    |
| PreM   | H | PostM | PostM |

*Definite*

|      |        |                 |                  |
|------|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| the  | pupils | with schoolbags | in the bookstore |
| art. | N      | PP              | PP               |
| PreM | H      | PostM           | PostM            |

*Albanian:**Indefinite*

|             |        |                  |                  |
|-------------|--------|------------------|------------------|
| disa        | nxënës | me çanta shkolle | në librari       |
| a couple of | pupils | with schoolbags  | in the bookstore |
| quant.      | N      | PP               | PP               |
| PreM        | H      | PostM            | PostM            |

*Definite*

|            |                  |                  |
|------------|------------------|------------------|
| nxënësit   | me çanta shkolle | në librari       |
| the pupils | with schoolbags  | in the bookstore |
| def N      | PP               | PP               |
| H          | PostM            | PostM            |

In Example 4, the English noun phrases *a couple of pupils with schoolbags...* and *the pupils with schoolbags...* are built around the plural head noun *pupils*, preceded by the quantifier *a couple of* and the article *the*. In both cases, the noun is followed by two post-modifiers, namely the prepositional phrases *with schoolbags* and *in the bookstore*. The Albanian equivalents *disa nxënës me çanta shkolle...* and *nxënësit me çanta shkolle...* exhibit an almost identical post-modifying pattern, with the same types and sequence of prepositional phrases following the head noun. Indefiniteness in Albanian is expressed through the quantifier *disa*, which, like its English counterpart, precedes the noun. Definite reference, however, is not marked by a separate article but is encoded morphologically on the head noun through the suffix *-it*, resulting in the plural noun *nxënësit*.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study has shown that English and Albanian noun phrases, while functionally comparable, rely on markedly different morphosyntactic strategies to encode grammatical meaning. The analysis of simple noun phrases, such as *a/the cat* vs. *një mace / macja*, demonstrated that English signals definiteness through external determiners, whereas Albanian encodes the same distinction morphologically by means of suffixation on the noun. This contrast, repeatedly observed across both singular and plural forms, e.g. *the children* vs. *fëmijët*, reflects a fundamental typological difference between the two languages rather than a purely lexical variation. The examination of complex noun phrases further reinforces this distinction. In pre-modified structures such as *a/the bright red ball* and its Albanian equivalents *një top i kuq i ndritshëm / topi i kuq i ndritshëm*, English consistently positions adjectives before the head noun, while Albanian places them post-nominally and links them through agreement particles. Although both constructions fulfil the same descriptive function, their internal organisation reveals contrasting grammatical priorities: English favours linear ordering, whereas Albanian relies on inflection and agreement to establish syntactic relations. Similarly, the analysis of post-modified noun phrases, including structures such as *a/the girl in the blue dress* vs. *një vajzë / vajza në fustanin e kaltër*, and *some/the cities that I know well* vs. *ca qytete / qytetet që i njoh mirë*, shows that both languages make productive use of prepositional phrases

and relative clauses to expand noun phrases. However, even in these parallel constructions, definiteness in Albanian is consistently marked on the head noun itself, *vajza*, *qytetet*, while English maintains determiner-based marking. Taken together, the findings demonstrate that English and Albanian realise comparable noun phrase functions through different grammatical mechanisms, reflecting distinct typological patterns rather than superficial similarity.

## REFERENCES

1. Ahmetaj, S. (2000). *Gjymtyrimi i fjalisë*, In “Gjuha shqipe 1-2”, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, Prishtinë.
2. Ajdari, M., & Ismaili, O. (2024). Sintagma Emërore në Funksionet e Saj Sintaksore si Plotës i Foljes në Gjuhën Gjermane dhe Shqipe. *FILOLOGJIA International Journal of Human Sciences*, 12(22-23), 224-229. <https://eprints.unite.edu.mk/1652/>.
3. Beci, B. (2005). *Gramatika e Gjuhës Shqipe*. Prishtinë: Logos-A.
4. Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (1999). *The Grammar Book: An ESL/EFL Teacher's Course*. 1Boston: Heinle & Heinle.
5. Chalker, S., & Weiner, E. (1994). *The Oxford Dictionary of English Grammar*. Oxford University Press.
6. Çeliku, M., Domi, M., Floqi, S., Mansaku, S., Përnsaka, R., Prifti, S., & Totoni, M. (2002). *Gramatika e Gjuhës Shqipe, Vëllimi II: Sintaksa*. Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave.
7. Duden. (2006). *Die Grammatik*. Mannheim: Bibliographisches Institut & F.A. Brockhaus AG Mannheim.
8. Kurani, A., & Muho, A. (2014). A Morphological Comparative Study Between Albanian and English Language. *European Scientific Journal*, ESJ, 14, 28-47. <https://core.ac.uk/reader/236408100>.
9. Kusumawardhani, P. (2017). The Analysis of Conjunctions in Writing an English Narrative Composition: A Syntax Perspective. *Wanastra*, 9(1), 1-7. <https://scispace.com/pdf/the-analysis-of-conjunctions-in-writing-an-english-narrative-5ffew3amcc.pdf>.
10. Mati, D. N., Hamiti, M., & Mollakuq, E. (2021). Morphological Tagging and Lemmatization in the Albanian Language. *SEEU Review*, 16(2), 2021. 3-16. <https://doi.org/10.2478/seeur-2021-0015>.
11. Millaku, S. (2016). The Noun Phrases. *ANGLISTICUM, Journal of the Association-Institute for English Language and American Studies*, 2(6), 38–47. <https://anglisticum.org.mk/index.php/IJLLIS/article/view/1254>.
12. Millaku, S., Millaku, X., & Kafexholli, T. (2022). The nominal clause and the noun phrases: A comparative study of Albanian and English. *World Journal of English Language*, 12(2), 352-358. <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v12n2p352>.
13. Mosko, E. (2014). Generative Grammar in Albanian Linguistics. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5 (20), 2387-2390. <https://www.richtmann.org/journal/index.php/mjss/article/view/3991>.
14. Nuhiu, V. (2012). *English Syntax* (3rd ed.). Prishtinë: Printing Press.
15. Piton, O., & Lagji, K. (2010). Morphological study of Albanian words, and processing with NooJ. *Computation and Language*, 189-205. Barcelona. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1002.0485>.