

## TIME SUBORDINATORS AND TIME RELATIONS IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

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**Abstract:** Language in general is a complex apparatus of the human beings through which we express our inner feelings, thoughts and ideas. This study was initiated due to the importance of language in general. However, to know a language does not only mean to know its vocabulary, but how to link the words, the word order in a clause as well as the order of clauses in a sentence, their role and their relations to each other. The relationship of the clauses in a sentence is especially important concerning complex sentences, in which the clauses are not of the same level but show a dependency. So, precisely the adverbial clauses of time are the ones that are highly complicated and create confusion. For this reason, most of the people try to avoid them, and use simple clauses instead, nevertheless, this somehow loses the meaning and originality of the idea. This means that although complex, adverbial clauses of time are crucial in explaining our ideas and thoughts. Based on the great number of the adverbial clauses of time, on the meanings that they convey as well as on the manner how the meaning is expressed, this study will concentrate on a contrastive analysis of the adverbial clauses of time in English and Albanian. It will focus on the time relations that time subordinators of time express in both languages. The methodology that is used in this paper is mainly descriptive and comparative. The paper is based on the analysis of Jack London's novel *White Fang* which was translated into Albanian under the title *Dhëmbi i Bardhë* by Bujar Doko. A comparison of the adverbial clauses of time in both languages is done in order to find their differences and commonalities. Afterwards, a detailed description of the data extracted from the comparison is carried out, which will play a major role in proving the hypothesis and coming to a conclusion. The general hypothesis of this study is that most of the adverbial clauses of time as well as their subordinators will be equivalent in both English and Albanian. The results of the analysis show that adverbial clauses of time do have a similar structure as well as correspondence in English and Albanian: the overall structure of both English and Albanian adverbial clauses of time is the same; the subordinators in both languages correspond to their counterparts in expressing time relations, being a fixed time, duration, simultaneity, anteriority or posteriority; both types of clauses are movable, which means that they can take the initial, medial and final position in a sentence; and the use of commas is the same as well. There is also a similarity in the word order of the time clauses. Another similar feature of the adverbial clauses of time in both English and Albanian is that they are expressed by finite and non-finite clauses.

**Keywords:** adverbial clauses of time, English subordinators, Albanian subordinators, time relations

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization that we live in, and even before that, cultural and linguistic diversities are what make us unique in a world of common things. Therefore, comparing languages in order to find the differences as well as similarities is of particular interest for linguists. Furthermore, time is another concept closely related to globalization, thus comes the idea of how we express time relations, what kind of sentences do we use, are these sentences similar or different in different languages, etc. So, the focus of this paper is to explore the time relations as expressed by time subordinators in English and Albanian.

Adverbial clauses of time specify the time when an action happens. Since the time clause is in a subordinate relation to the main clause, 'there are various relations between the adverbial clauses of time and the main clause. The actions expressed by two clauses can be simultaneous, one may precede the other, it may follow the other, it may start at the moment that the other finishes or it may last till the other begins, etc. Adverbial clauses of time can also express a fixed time of the action, duration or frequency depending on the time subordinator' (Bekteshi, 2011). This paper tries to find out if those time relations are expressed in a similar or different way in both English and Albanian.

The main subordinators of time in English include: *when, while, before, after, till, until, whenever, since, as soon as, as long as, scarcely...when, hardly...when*, etc. On the other hand, the main Albanian time subordinators are: *kur, tek, sa, si, që, që kur, derisa, gjersa, ndërsa, para se, përpara se, sa herë (që), sa kohë që, pasi, mbasi, sapo, posa, porsa, sa herë që, që kurse, teksa, kurdoqë, kurdoherë që, posa që, që se, qysh se, sapo që*, etc. merely by looking at this paragraph, it is evident that in Albanian there is a bigger number of subordinators. This is due to the fact that some of them are synonymous with one another such as *derisa – gjersa – ndërsa, sapo- posa,-porsa,-posa që- sapo që*, etc.

Referring back to the time relations that these subordinators refer to, the subordinator *when* is the most widely used one. 'In this aspect it corresponds with its Albanian equivalent subordinator *kur*. Most of the adverbial clauses of

time containing the subordinator *when*, in Albanian are translated with *kur*. In addition, there are many other translations, with other subordinators which are contextually similar in meaning with *when*, such as: *posa, pasi, si, sapo, gjersa, tek, sa herë (që), para* and *pas* (Bekteshi, 2017). So the subordinator *when* can show simultaneity of the actions, posteriority or anteriority depending on the context, as illustrated in these examples:

1. **When** the young leader lay in the snow and moved no more, One Eye stalked over to the she-wolf. (Simultaneity)  
- **Kur** ujku i ri u shtri në dëborë, Njësythi u drejtua nga ujkona me një çap krenar...
2. **When** he grew tired, he found his way back to the cave and slept. (Posteriority)  
- ...dhe, **si** u lodh, e gjeti rrugën e shpellës dhe u shtri të flinte.
3. **When** dogs fight, there are usually preliminaries to the actual combat. (Anteriority)  
- **Para** se të zihen, qentë zakonisht kryejnë një farë ceremonie.

This kind of diversity is supported by the wide semantic scope that the subordinator *when* has. And it corresponds with the Albanian subordinator *kur*.

Additionally, other English subordinators that express simultaneity of the actions, a fixed time or duration, are:

The subordinator *while* which shows simultaneity of two actions in progress: **While** he was driving, he was talking on the phone.

The subordinator *as* can express simultaneity in the cases when it is synonymous with the subordinators *when* and *while*: **As** she had a bath, she sang.

The subordinators *till* and *until* express a fixed time in which the action of the main clause ends and the action of the adverbial clause starts. Their use in a sentence can be interchangeable. However, *till* is generally less 'formal' and is seen by some as an abbreviation: They didn't stop **till** they found out the truth./ **Until** he phoned, they were numb.

The subordinator *since* shows a fixed time, a fixed moment from which the two actions start. Whenever this subordinator is used, the main clause is usually in the present perfect while the adverbial clause of time is in the past simple: The movie has started **since** we got here.

Adverbial clauses of time also express the duration of the action of the main clause. Some of the subordinators that express duration are: *while, as, as long as, so long as*, etc: **While** I was reading, my brother was watching movies./ **As** the train approached, the people hurried to get in. / He will stay with us **as long as** he wishes.

Adverbial clauses of time can also express the repetition or frequency of the action of the verb in the main clause. The most frequent subordinator used to express repetition or frequency is the subordinator *whenever* and the time expression *every time*: **Whenever** I watch that movie, I start crying. / **Every time** she has free time, she plays volleyball.

In addition to simultaneity of the actions of the main clause and the adverbial clause of time, the action of the main clause can also precede the action of the adverbial clause of time, so, the action of the main clause happens before the action of the adverbial clause of time. The subordinators that link these kinds of clauses are: *before, when, until, till*: Kate bought the dress **before** the shop closed. / I looked out of the window **when** I saw the cat. / **Until** the doctor came, he had fallen into a comma.

The restrictive adverbs *hardly...when, scarcely...when, no sooner...than* in the main clause denote that the action in the subordinate clause closely follows that of the main clause (Blaganje & Konte, 1979, p.534): They had **hardly** cleaned the car **when** they drove into the mud. / She had **scarcely** done the exercises **when** the teacher gave her another one./ **No sooner** had he turned on the TV **than** the news started.

Not only can the action of the main clause be simultaneous or precede the action of the adverbial clause of time, it can follow the adverbial clause of time as well. This means that the action of the main clause takes place after the action of the adverbial clause of time. The subordinators that link these kinds of clauses are: *after, when, once, since, as soon as, now that*, etc.: The plane took off **after** the passengers were on board. / **As soon as** she passed her last exam, she received the degree.

The subordinator *as* shows an immediate succession of the action of the adverbial clause of time by the action of the main clause. In such cases this subordinator is preceded by the adverb *just*: We went to play tennis **just as** we finished classes.

On the other hand, Albanian subordinators of time also express simultaneity in the cases when the 'adverbial clauses of time are linked to the main clause with these subordinators: *kur, që, gjersa, ndërsa, qëkurse, teksa, që kur, që se, derisa, sa, sa kohë që*, etc. The verbs are usually in the indicative or subjunctive mood (Domi, 1972, p. 133)

**Ex. Kur** fliste mësuesi, të tjerët dëgjonin.

The subordinator *kur* is used in the cases when the action of the verb in the main clause completely corresponds in time with the verb of the adverbial clause of time in the past, present and future tenses: **Kur** e hapi derën, pa fytirën e panjohur. / **Mos dil** në diell **kur** bën vapë. / **Kur** të fillojë shfaqja ma bën me dije.

The subordinator *sa* (*as long as, while*) shows complete simultaneity of the actions or prolonged conditions when the verbs are in the present or imperfect (Domi, 2002, p. 543): **Sa** qe gjallë agai, jeta ishte e vështirë.

Similar to English, adverbial clauses of time can also express the duration of the action of the main clause. The clauses that show how long the action of the main clause takes and when it ends, are constructed with these subordinators (Domi, 1972, p. 134): *gjersa, derisa, gjer, sa, sa që, sa kohë që, ndërsa, tek, etc.*

The subordinators *gjersa, derisa, gjer kur (till, until)* show the moment up to which the action develops: Ato vazhduan ta godasin, **gjersa** erdhi në vete. / Gjyshja kishte qëndruar në shtrat, **derisa** arriti Vetoni.

The subordinators *sa kohë që, ndërsa (as long as, while)* show two simultaneous actions in duration: **Sa kohë që** isha në shtëpi, halla erdhi të më vizitonte. / **Ndërsa** shiu po binte, lojtarët shënonin gola.

In addition to the adverbial clauses of time that express a fixed time or duration, there are adverbial clauses of time that express repetition or frequency. The frequency of the repetition of the action can be expressed by these time subordinators: *sa herë (që), kurdoherë që, kurdo që, (whenever) etc:* **Kurdoherë që** shkonte në teatër, emocionohesh pa masë. / I binte fyellit **kurdo që** ia kërkonin shokët.

There are adverbial clauses of time in which the action of the main clause happens before the action of the adverbial clause of time, so the action of the time clause is preceded by the action of the main clause. The main subordinators used to join such clauses are: *para se, përpara se (before)* and the verbs are in the subjunctive mood: **Para se** të vinte, unë isha bërë gati. / **Përpara se** të kalonte treni, Drita arriti në stacion. / Beni, **para se** të punësohej, bëri një udhëtim.

Yet another relation between the adverbial clause of time and the main clause is that in which the action of the main clause happens after the action of the adverbial clause of time, meaning that the action of the time clause is followed by the action of the main clause. Here are some of the subordinators that are used to link the main clause and the adverbial clause of time: *si, pasi, mbasi, posa, porsa, sapo, posa që, sapo që, tek, kur, etc:* **Pasi** i kreu detyrat, Artani doli të luante. / **Si** e mësoi këngën, nuk ndalej së kënduari. / **Kur** arriti në shtëpi, u shtri të flente.

The subordinators *posa, porsa, sapo (as soon as)* show immediate succession by the action of the main clause: **Sapo** doli para turmës, Alba filloi recitimin. / E përqafoi të ëmën **posa** hyri te dera.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This paper uses a corpus data analysis of an English novel and its Albanian translation. The adverbial clauses of time analyzed in this paper are taken from Jack London's novel *White Fang* (London, 1994) which is also translated into Albanian as *Dhëmbi i Bardhë* (London, 1999). The methods that are used to analyze the data are the descriptive method – the features of the adverbial clauses of time as well as their subordinators are described in both languages, and the comparative method – the adverbial clauses of time extracted from the novels are compared in order to find the differences and similarities. The clauses are classified according to their subordinators and they are listed in this study based on their frequency. So, they start from the most frequently and widely used subordinator and up to the one which is less used. Due to the brevity of the paper most of the examples extracted from the analysis had to be left out, and only one example per subordinator is given below the results' table.

## 3. RESULTS

Based on the analysis of the adverbial clauses of time in English and Albanian, in the following section will be presented the results in terms of the time relations that English and Albanian time subordinators express. The results are presented in Table 1, as well as some examples for each subordinator since it is impossible to include all the examples extracted from the novels. The focus of the paper is on the time subordinators only, even though there are a lot of contextual translations with means of other compound or complex sentences, finite and non-finite clauses as well as asyndetic clauses, however these are not the focus of this paper.

The results presented in the table below show the time relations that every English subordinator expresses, as well as the corresponding Albanian time subordinators and the time relations that they express. Whenever there is a total time relation accordance, they are marked in bold. However, even the other time relations which are not marked in bold show a similar time relation because of the transformations during translation. Regardless of the Albanian subordinator and the time relations that they show, the meaning that is conveyed is the same as the one in English. Therefore, the English time subordinators correspond to Albanian subordinators.

Table 1. English and Albanian subordinators and the time relations

English subordinator	Time relations	Albanian subordinator	Time relations
when	-simultaneity -fixed time -anteriority -posteriority	<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority / fixed time
		<i>posa, pasi, si, sapo, pas</i>	-posteriority
		<i>gjersa, tek</i>	-duration/ -simultaneity
		<i>sa here (që),</i>	-repetition/frequency
		<i>para</i>	-anteriority
as	-simultaneity -duration -posteriority	<i>kur</i>	simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority / fixed time
		<i>pasi, si, sesi, sapo, posa,</i>	-posteriority
		<i>sa herë që</i>	-frequency
		<i>ndërsa, tek</i>	-simultaneity
while	-simultaneity of two actions in progress -duration	<i>ndërsa</i>	-simultaneity
		<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity
		<i>përpara</i>	-anteriority
until	-fixed time -simultaneity	<i>derisa, gjersa, gjer kur</i>	-simultaneity / fixed time
		<i>kur</i>	-fixed time
		<i>pasi</i>	-posteriority
before	-anteriority	<i>para, shumë kohë para</i>	-anteriority
		<i>pas</i>	-posteriority
		<i>qysh përpara, që përpara, qysh atëherë kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority
		<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority
		<i>gjersa</i>	-simultaneity
till	-simultaneity -fixed time	<i>gjersa, sa,</i>	-simultaneity
		<i>pasi</i>	-posteriority
whenever	-repetition -frequency	<i>sapo</i>	-posteriority
		<i>sa here që</i>	-repetition -frequency
		<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority
		<i>tek</i>	-posteriority
after	-posteriority	<i>qysh pas, pasi</i>	-posteriority
		<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority
once (adv.)	-posteriority	<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority
		<i>pasi</i>	-posteriority
since	-fixed time/simultaneity, posteriority	<i>që atëherë kur, që kur, qysh kur</i>	-fixed time/simultaneity
scarcely...when (than)	-anteriority	<i>posa</i>	-posteriority
		<i>sa ...që</i>	
<i>so long as</i>	-duration	<i>kur</i>	-simultaneity/ anteriority / posteriority
hardly...when	-anteriority	<i>participial clause of time with the preposition me(sapo)</i>	-posteriority

Below, an example of each subordinator and the Albanian translation is given.

**English subordinator WHEN - Albanian subordinator *kur***

They got out of his way **when** he came along.

-***Kur*** takoheshin me të, ata ktheheshin mënjënjë.

**English subordinator AS - Albanian subordinator *ndërsa***

As he pulled and tugged and wrenched, he kept exclaiming with every expulsion of breath, “Beasts!”  
- *Ndërsa ai shtypte turirin dhe mundohej t’ia hapte nofullat bulldogut, ai s’pushonte së thëni me gjysmë zëri: “Të poshtë!”*

**English subordinator WHILE - Albanian subordinator ndërsa**

He lay down and waited, **while** the porcupine grated its teeth...  
- *U shtri në dëborë përpara iriqit, ndërsa ky kërcëllinte dhëmbët...*

**English subordinator UNTIL - Albanian subordinator gjer kur**

He waited **until** he was sure of striking...  
- *Rrinte pa lëvizur gjer kur mund të vepronte pa pasur frikë...*

**English subordinator BEFORE - Albanian subordinator para**

Hanry thought long over it **before** he went to sleep,...  
- *Henriku e mendoj një copë herë këtë gjë para se të flinte...*

**English subordinator BEFORE - Albanian subordinator pas**

Only a few seconds elapsed **before** he was on his feet again.  
- *Pas disa sekondash, këlyshi ishte prapë më këmbë.*

**English subordinator TILL - Albanian subordinator gjersa**

This it repeated several times, **till** it was a short hundred yards away.  
- *Ajo e përsëriti këtë gjersa iu afrua slitës nja njëqind jard.*

**English subordinator WHENEVER - Albanian subordinator sapo**

**Whenever** he ventured away from his mother, the bully was sure to appear, trailing at his heels,...  
- *Sapo largohej Dhëmbi i Bardhë nga e ëma, Lip-Lipi e ndiqte këmba-këmbas...*

**English subordinator AFTER - Albanian subordinator pasi**

...announced the surgeon, **after** he had worked an hour and a half on White Fang.  
- *...tha kirurgu pasi u mor ndonjë orë e gjysëm me Dhëmbin e Bardhë.*

**English subordinator ONCE - Albanian subordinator pasi**

And, **once** declared against him, they found good reason to continue declared against him.  
- *Dhe, pasi i shpallën Dhëmbit të Bardhë luftë, qentë kishin mjaft pretekste për të mos e pushuar.*

**English subordinator SINCE - Albanian subordinator që kur**

It is a year, Gray Beaver, **since** she ran away.  
- *Që kur iku Kastori i Murrmë, ka kaluar plot një vit.*

**English subordinator SCARCELY...WHEN (THAN) – Albanian subordinator posa**

But **scarcely** had he lain down **when** Gray Beaver staggered over to him and tied a leather throng around his neck.  
- *Posa u shtri Dhëmbi i Bardhë, Kastori i Murrmë duke u lëkundur iu afrua dhe i shkoi një rrip meshini në qafë.*

**English subordinator SO LONG AS – Albanian subordinator kur**

Don’t dast tackle me **so long as** I got that club handy.  
- *Nuk do të guxojë të më vërsulet kur unë kam shkopin në dorë.*

**English subordinator HARDLY...WHEN – Albanian participial clause of time with the preposition me**

**Hardly** had the carriage entered the grounds **when** he was set upon by a sheep-dog,...  
- *Me të hyrë koloshina në rruginë, atij iu vërsul një qen stani me ca sy të ndezur nga zemërimi.*

#### 4. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Having in mind the general hypothesis of this study, that English adverbial clauses of time are equivalent to their Albanian counterparts, it can be stated that this hypothesis has been proved right. This means that English adverbial clauses of time are completely or almost completely the same as the Albanian adverbial clauses of time, in terms of time relations as well as their structure and use.

The overall structure of both English and Albanian adverbial clauses of time is the same. Both types of clauses are movable, which means that they can take the initial, medial and final position in a sentence; and the use of commas is the same as well.

There is also a similarity in the word order of the time clauses. The English normal word order is **subject – verb**, however in Albanian it is quite usual for the time clauses to have the inverted order, **verb – subject**, while in English this inverted word order can be only found when these subordinators are used: *hardly...when, no sooner...than, scarcely...when.*

Another similar feature of the adverbial clauses of time in both English and Albanian is that they are expressed by finite and non-finite clauses. Finite time clauses are expressed by these subordinators: **when – kur; while - ndërsa,**

*tek*; **since** - *që, që kur, që kurse, që se, qysh se*; **before** - *para se, përpara se*; **after** – *si, pasi, mbasi*; **as** – *tek, posa që, sapo që*; **whenever** - *kurdoqë, kurdoherë që*; **till** - *derisa, gjersa*; **until** - *derisa, gjersa*; **as long as** - *sa, sa kohë që*; **so long as** - *sa kohë që*; **as soon as** - *posa, porsa, sapo*; **once** - *posa, porsa, sapo*; **now that** – *tani që*, **hardly...when** - *posa, porsa, sapo*; **scarcely...when** - *posa, porsa, sapo*; **no sooner...than** - *teksa*; **every time** - *sa herë që*, etc.

Apart from the largest number of time subordinators in Albanian, the time relations that are expressed in both languages are similar. As it can be seen from the analysis, in most cases, time subordinators in English correspond to their Albanian counterparts and are equivalent to them. Adverbial clauses of time are widely used and are of crucial importance for these languages in particular and other languages in general.

## RECCOMENDATIONS

Finally, it is suggested that in the future, linguists and researchers make similar contrastive studies of the other kinds of adverbial clauses which will present a deeper insight of the subject matter.

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