

The Category of Case in English and Albanian Nominal System: A Contrastive Analysis

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Abstract

The grammatical category of case, as one of the most discussed grammatical categories in English and one of the most specific categories in Albanian, has always attracted the researchers' attention and, therefore, there are numerous studies about this category in these two respective languages. However, the main purpose of this article is to indicate that despite their different morphological structure which implies differences in their grammatical categories, English and Albanian, also show some similarities that concern the grammatical category of case and especially the genitive case as the only marked case in English nominal system. This article examined the grammatical category of case in English and Albanian nominal system through the contrastive method, emphasizing the differences that regard several aspects of the category of case, such as the number of cases in these two languages, the way they build their case forms, the use of prepositions in building the case forms, i.e., prepositions as case markers, and also several characteristics of the category of case that these two languages have in common. The results indicate that the similarities concern mainly the genitive case. Nouns in the genitive case, in English and Albanian, share some characteristics that concern their semantic functions, their use in "the double genitive" constructions, rules of forming such constructions, and the omission of the case markers without affecting meaning.

Keywords: English, Albanian, category, case, differences, similarities

1. Introduction

Case is usually defined as a grammatical category of nouns manifested in different forms of nouns depending on their syntactic functions, namely, their relations with other words in the sentence. However, this definition does not precisely apply to the grammatical category of case of English nouns which presents a rather complex issue. The term *case* itself means *fall*, and it derives from Latin *cāsus*, a translation of the Greek word *ptōsis*. According to Blake (2001), "the idea seems to have been of falling away from an assumed standard form" (p. 18). However, in the case of English nouns, this is barely feasible because of the specific nature of this grammatical category in English nominal system. In Albanian, as an inflectional language and one of the oldest Indo-European languages, the grammatical category of case is rather consolidated in the sense that there are no disputes among Albanian and foreign researchers of Albanian concerning the number of cases, their functions or their meanings. Albanian nouns have five cases:

- 1) The Nominative Case
- 2) The Genitive Case
- 3) The Dative Case
- 4) The Accusative Case
- 5) The Ablative Case

In English, on the other hand, the grammatical category of case has always been a source of dispute among different researchers of English. There have been various views and opinions on the category of case which basically concern the number of cases in English nominal system and their functions. According to Blokh (2004), these different views have resulted in four theories:

- 1) The theory of positional cases

- 2) The theory of prepositional cases
- 3) The limited case theory
- 4) The postpositional theory

Supporters of the theory of positional cases claim that the unchangeable forms of nouns in different syntactic functions do not imply a lack of the category of case in English nominal system because it is precisely these different syntactic functions which imply the opposite. The linguistic formulations of this theory are found in the works of Deutschbein (4 cases: nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative), Nesfield, Bryant (3 cases: nominative, genitive, and objective) and other scholars (Blokh, 2004). According to Whitman (1975), supporters of this theory are mainly prescriptive grammarians who considered Latin an ideal language and used it to describe the grammatical systems of other languages. They claim that English nouns generally have 6 cases:

- 1) Nominative Case—*the house*
- 2) Genitive Case—*of the house*
- 3) Dative Case—*to the house*
- 4) Accusative Case—*the house*
- 5) Ablative Case—*in, at, by or from the house*
- 6) Vocative Case—*O house*

Thus, Lyons (1968) claims that English nouns have 7 cases:

- 1) Nominative—*John smoked.*
- 2) Accusative—*Smoking killed John.*
- 3) Dative—*John sent a letter to Mary.*
- 4) Genitive—*That was John's will.*
- 5) Instrumental—*The will was written with a black pen.*
- 6) Agentive—*The will was written by John.*
- 7) Comitative—*Tom went to John's house with his lawyer.*

Fillmore (1967) who introduced a syntactic-semantic classification of cases based on the relations they show in the deep structure of the sentence, claims that English nouns have 6 cases:

- 1) Agentive—*Jane bought a flat. This flat was bought by Jane.*
- 2) Instrumental—*Her savings bought her the flat. The flat was bought with her savings.*
- 3) Dative—*It seemed to Jane that she had made a good decision. Jane believed that she made a good decision.*
- 4) Factitive—*The flat was renovated.*
- 5) Locative—*It is sunny in Tirana. Tirana is sunny.*
- 6) Objective—*Jane told her family the good news.*

Palmer (2003) claims that there are five cases that operate in English: the nominative case, the vocative case, the accusative case, the genitive case, the dative case.

According to the theory of prepositional cases, combinations of nouns with prepositions may be considered morphological case forms. However, this would result in a large number of cases, namely redundancy; therefore, this theory has not found supporters among researchers.

According to the limited case theory, and so far the most acceptable theory, English nouns have two cases: the Common Case and the Genitive Case. It was formulated by Sweet and Jespersen, and it was later developed by Russian researchers such as Smirnitsky, Barkhudarov, and other scholars (Blokh, 2004). According to Sweet (1892), "English has only one inflected case, the genitive (man's, men's), the uninflected base constituting the common case (man, men), which is equivalent to the nominative, vocative, accusative and dative of such a language as Latin" (p. 53), whereas Jespersen (1987), argues: "There is a common case that corresponds with the nominative and objective case in pronouns and a genitive case (in nouns)" (p. 138). Jespersen goes a step further from Sweet when he implies that English nouns have only one case, namely the genitive case, the common case being attributed to pronouns. This theory has found support among a considerable number of contemporary researchers such as Palmer (1989), Quirk, Greenbaum and Svartvik (1992), Brinton (2000), Huddleston and

Pullum (2002), and others. According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), “The term case applies in the first instance to a system of inflectional forms of a noun that serve to mark the functions of an NP relative to the construction containing it” (p. 455). In this context, when the same NP, in the same form, is used as a subject and an object, respectively, in the nominative and the objective case (dative/accusative), Huddleston and Pullum (2002) use the term “plain case” to refer to the unmarked “common case”, e.g.,

	English	Albanian
Nom.	<i>John is a distinguished neurosurgeon.</i>	<i>Gjoni është neurokirurg i shquar.</i>
Dat.	<i>I gave John several novels.</i>	<i>Unë ia dhashë Gjonit disa romane.</i>
Acc.	<i>Last night I met John in the theatre.</i>	<i>Mbrëmë e takova Gjonin në teatër.</i>
Gen.	<i>John's wife is a teacher of English.</i>	<i>Bashkëshortja e Gjonit është mësuese e gjuhës angleze.</i>

As seen in these examples, unlike Albanian nouns, English nouns retain the same form when used as a subject, a direct object and an indirect object, respectively in the nominative and the objective case, thus the term “plain case”, whereas they change the form only in the genitive case.

The postpositional theory rejects all other theories claiming that English nouns do not have the category of case because they have lost it during the historic development of the language (Ilysh, 1971). Iriskulov (2006, p. 21) claims that one of the fiercest supporters of this theory Vorontsova shares Ilysh’s view and treats the [-s] morpheme of the genitive case as a “postposition”, “a purely syntactical form—word resembling a preposition”, used as a sign of syntactical dependence.

2. The Category of Case in English Nominal System

Regardless of the different views on the category of case in English which have caused disputes among grammarians, as it has been already stated above, the most acceptable view is that English nouns have two cases: the “unmarked” common case and the “marked” genitive case. Concerning the classification of the category of case into inflectional and analytic, according to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), certain English grammar books postulate the analytic case realised by means of the prepositions “to” (as marker of the dative case) and “of” (as marker of the genitive case), e.g.,

[1] i. *I gave my notes to Linda.*

ii. *I gave Linda my notes.*

The view taken by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) is that English nouns have only one inflectional case and that prepositions are not case markers, therefore, in *I gave my notes to Linda*, *to* is considered a dative case marker because *to Linda* is allegedly the indirect object, but, although it has the same semantic function as *Linda* in *I gave Linda my notes.*, their syntactic function is not the same.

2.1 The Common Case

The term “common case” was used for the first time by Henry Sweet in his work “*A New English Grammar, Logical & Historical (1892)*” It is characterised by the fact that it is unmarked and it includes all the cases except the genitive. Brinton (2000) refers to this case as the “nongenitive” case, and this term implies a lot about its functions and its semantic implications. A noun in the common case may have different syntactic functions, such as: a subject, an object (direct/indirect), a complement (subject/object) and an adjunct.

2.2 The Genitive Case

The genitive case is the only marked case in English nominal system. Its main function is to indicate property or belonging, and that’s why it is often referred to as the “possessive case”, but this case has other important functions, too. In English, the genitive case has two forms:

- 1) The Saxon Genitive
- 2) The Norman Genitive

According to Huddleston and Pullum (2002, p. 467), these forms of the genitive case are used in six different constructions:

- 1) subject-determiner—*Linda's father* has arrived.
- 2) subject of gerund-participial—Students objected to *Joshua's*

3) fused subject-determiner-head—Jim's career was not as successful as *Tim's*.

4) oblique genitive—He is *a colleague of Bred's*.

5) predicative genitive—This luxurious villa is *Mr. Hilton's*.

6) attributive genitive—They work in *a decent people's company*.

The Saxon Genitive is formed by adding the inflectional suffix [’s] to regular singular nouns (*a child's dreams, my mother's recipes*), irregular plural nouns (*children's dreams, the women's jewelry*), phrases (*Jane and Henry's child, someone else's flat*), and by adding only the apostrophe ['] to regular plural nouns (*teachers' responsibilities, doctors' orders*), and names that end in [-s] (*Socrates' works, Yeats' poems*). With English names ending in [-s], sometimes, both forms are used:

[2] i. *James's family* or *James' family*

ii. *Charles's money* or *Charles' money*

According to Nelson and Greenbaum (1999), the genitive case can be dependent and independent. It is called dependent when followed by a noun, whereas it is called independent when it is not followed by a noun, although the noun is implied.

The dependent genitive is usually used with animate nouns:

a) names of people, animals, insects—*Ian's glasses, the dog's tail, the spider's web*

b) indefinite pronouns—*no one's business, everybody's wish, someone's child*

c) several collective nouns—*the jury's verdict, the government's policies*

It is also used with special groups of inanimate nouns (Kabashi, 2000)

a) nouns denoting time and distance—*today's news, a yard's length*

b) nouns such as sun, earth, moon, ocean, etc.—*the sun's rays, the moon's smile,*

c) geographical names—*The United Kingdom's foreign policy, Europe's future*

d) some fixed expressions—*at arm's length, a hair's breadth, at a snail's pace*

e) names of newspapers and different organisations—*The Chicago Chronicle's column, The United Nation's decision*

f) names of seasons, months and days—*a summer's day, November's feasts,*

g) names of the vehicles—*the car's door, a ship's funnel, a boat's size*

The independent genitive is used in two cases:

a) when the noun following it has been previously used or it is implied by the context:

[3] i. *John is not Jane's brother, he is Mary's.*

ii. *Tom parked his car next to Brandon's.*

b) when it refers to certain institutions, shops, or a person's house:

[4] i. *My husband bought this sofa at Carlton's.*

ii. *They bought a bottle of eardrops at the chemist's.*

A special use of the genitive case concerns the combination of the two forms of the genitive, the inflectional and the periphrastic one, in a construction generally referred to as the “double genitive” (Brinton, 2000):

[5] i. *a friend of my mother's* (one of the friends that my mother has)

ii. *a work of Shakespeare's* (one of Shakespeare's works)

This construction is functional only if the noun in the genitive case is an animate noun, otherwise the construction is grammatically and semantically incorrect:

[6] i. a. *a door of the house's** or b. *a cover of the book's**

This construction is very significant because it distinguishes the different meanings of the phrases such as (Kabashi, 2000):

[7] i. *a picture of Mother Teresa* (one portraying her)

ii. *a picture of Mother Teresa's* (one photographed by her or belonging to her)

Because of the different semantic implications, the use of each of the two forms of the genitive case, and not only when used in a construction, may cause confusions especially among the foreign speakers of English. As one of the main functions of the genitive case is to indicate possession, it is quite frequently referred to as “the possessive case”. Furthermore, the terms “genitive” and “possessive” are treated as semantically equal terms. This is one of the instances of confusion, or misunderstanding. Indicating possession is only one of the functions of the genitive case, and not the only one. In this context, it would be correct to insist on distinguishing the functions of the genitive case and using the appropriate term depending on these functions. It is acceptable to use the term “possessive” when the genitive case indicates only possession, but the term “genitive” is preferable when it has other functions, e.g.,

- [8] i. *Mr. Sullivan’s house* (the semantic function is that of possession)
 ii. *Mr. Sullivan’s children* (the semantic function is that of belonging)
 iii. *Mr. Sullivan’s death* (neither possession nor belonging)

Therefore, the term “possessive” may not be used to replace the term “genitive”, because they are by no means the same. The genitive case does not indicate only possession and belonging, but it also indicates a series of relationships between the noun in the genitive case and the one following it such as description (*a winter’s day*), authorship (*Pope’s essays*), time (*one hour’s walk*), distance (*a mile’s distance*), monetary value (*five pounds’ worth*). It is precisely the relationship of the noun in the genitive case and the noun following it that determines the meaning of the genitive case. Based on that relationship, Brinton (2000, p. 108) identifies the following types of genitives: possessive genitive, subjective genitive, objective genitive, genitive of origin, descriptive genitive, genitive of measure, partitive genitive, and appositive genitive. According to Kabashi (2000), this relation can be that of the doer of the action, or of the receiver of the action. E.g., *Tom’s control* can have two meanings, that Tom controls someone/something, or that someone/something controls Tom. In his opinion, the genitive case, respectively the Norman genitive may also be confusing, e.g., *The love of her family* can have two semantic implications, namely, that she loves her family, or that her family loves her.

3. The Category of Case in Albanian Nominal System

Nouns in Standard Albanian have five cases: Nominative, Genitive, Dative, Accusative and Ablative. According to Likaj and Çabej (2013), the category of case is considered the most abstract category in the system of grammatical categories of Albanian nouns because of its grammatical content, unlike other categories which undergo a classification based on the semantic criterion. Although the definition of the category of case implies different case forms for each of the cases, Likaj and Çabej (2013) argue that sometimes different cases may result with the same case forms. However, “The totality of the case forms of a noun is called declension” (Newmark, Hubbard, & Prifti, 1982, p. 134). In Albanian, all nouns are declined, without exception; therefore, all nouns have their case forms regardless of the context in which they are used.

3.1 The Nominative Case

The nominative case is the representative form of a noun with the function of designating things and phenomena. A noun in the nominative case can function as subject of the sentence, predicate nominative appositive or vocative (Newmark et al., 1982):

- 1) Subject of the sentence—*Libri është miku më i mirë i njeriut.*
The book is the man’s best friend
- 2) Predicate complement—*Dhimbja që përjetoi, ia kishte bërë zemrën gur.*
The pain she experienced had turned her heart to stone.
- 3) Appositive—*Nesër kemi takim pune me Lekë Gjonaj, drejtor i shkollës.*
Tomorrow, we have a meeting with Mr. Lekë Gjonaj, the principal of our school.
- 4) Vocative—*O Pirro, a po vjen me ne?*
O Pirro, are you coming with us?

3.2 The Genitive Case

The genitive case is a distinct case in Albanian nominal system because nouns in this case are usually preceded by an article as a constituent part of the case form. Nouns in the genitive case can indicate (Agalliu et al., 2002, pp. 108-109):

- 1) Possession—*shtëpia e Dionit* (Dion’s house), *telefoni i Artës* (Arta’s phone)

- 2) Belonging—*vajza e doktorit* (the doctor's daughter), *daja i Agonit* (Agon's uncle)
- 3) Characterisation—*vitet e rinisë* (the years of youth), *ditët e verës* (summer's days)
- 4) Quality of a person, or thing—*gëzimi i fëmijëve* (children's joy), *thellësia e zemrës* (the depth of heart)
- 5) Object of a nominalised verb—*ndërtimi i rrugëve* (the construction of the roads), *mbyllja e dyerve* (the closing of the doors)
- 6) Subject of a nominalised verb—*kthimi i shpresës* (the return of hope), *thyerja e premtimit* (the breaking of the promise)
- 7) Part of the wholeness—*shumica e banorëve* (most of the inhabitants), *gjysma e mollës* (half of the apple)
- 8) Identity of the referent noun—*qyteti i Prizrenit* (the city of Prizren), *lumi i Shkumbinit* (the river of Shkumbin)
- 9) Predicate adjectival (rarely)—*është i punës* (he is hard-working), *ishin të një mendjeje* (they were of the same mind)
- 10) Referent in the superlative degree—*më i sjellshmi i fëmijëve* (the most polite of the children), *më e vogla e familjes* (the youngest girl of the family)

The genitive case can also have functions which are not typical for this case. It can function as:

- 1) Subject—*Shtëpia e Bojkenit është shumë e madhe*. (Bojken's house is very big)
E Fisnikut është tejte e vogël. (Fisnik's (house) is very small)
- 2) Object—*Ai i pranoi gabimet e tij, ashtu siç i kishte pranuar ato të shokëve*.
(He admitted his mistakes likewise he admitted those of his friends)
- 3) Predicate complement—*Ky është daja i Gencit, e ky tjetri i Drenit*. (daja i Drenit)
(This is Genci's uncle, and this one is Dreni's. (Dreni's uncle))

The genitive case forms are also used with propositions, e.g.,

[9] i. a. *Në xhiron e parë ai ishte në grup me një amerikan, në të dytin me një gjerman, dhe në të tretin me një italian.*

b. *In the first round, he was with an American, in the second (one) with a German, and in the third (one) with an Italian.*

In this context, the adjective functions as a noun in order to avoid the repetition of the noun. Thus, instead of saying *in the second group*, we say *in the second*, the noun *group* being implied.

3.3 The Dative Case

The main function of the dative case is that of the indirect object. This case is usually used with a verb to indicate (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 109):

- 1) The person or thing towards whom/which the action is directed—*Ata ia organizuan Lorikut festën e ditëlindjes*. (They organised Lorik the birthday party)
- 2) Psychological and physiological state of the person—*Hanës ia dhanë lajmin e mirë* (Hana was given the good news)
- 3) The person or thing to whom/which something belongs—*Benit ia sollën dhuratën në punë*. (The gift was brought to Beni at work).

The dative case is also used in slogans such as: *Liri popullit!* (Freedom to people!) *Burg të korruptuarve!* (Prison to the corrupted!)

3.4 The Accusative Case

The main function of the accusative case is that of the direct object. This case is used with a verb to indicate (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 110):

- 1) The person or thing who/which is the receiver of the action—*Profesori e bindi nxënësin të studiojë më shumë*. (The professor convinced his student to study harder.)
- 2) A feature of the noun—*Orgesi u zgjodh kryetar me shumicë votash*. (Orges was elected president with a majority of votes.)

3) The time of the action—**Muajin e kaluar** organizuam një konferencë mbi arsimin. (Last month we organised a conference on education)

4) Measure and quantity—**Këto dardha peshojnë dy kilogramë**. (These pears weigh two kilos). *Ky album kushton pesë euro*. (This album costs five Euros.)

The accusative case forms are used with prepositions as well. With prepositions *me* (with) and *pa* (without), it is used (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 110):

a) to characterise a person or a thing—*grua me stil* (a woman with style), *shtëpi pa kulm* (a house without a roof)

b) to indicate the instrument with which an action is done—*lexoj me syze* (read with glasses), *këndoj pa mikrofon* (sing without a microphone)

c) to indicate company and manner—*Ne ftuam Rinën me Jonin në darkën e përvjetorit tonë të dhjetë*. (We invited Rina and Jon to our tenth anniversary dinner.) *Ata e vazhduan projektin me optimizëm*. (They continued the project with optimism.)

The accusative case forms are also used with several other prepositions: *në* (in), *më* (at, on), *për* (for, about, of), *nëpër* (among), *nën* (under), *ndër* (among), *mbi* (on, about, over), and *përmbi* (over) (Newmark et al., 1982).

3.5 The Ablative Case

Nouns in the ablative, unlike other cases, are used with verbs and verbal adjectives, nouns, and after prepositions (Newmark et al., 1982).

The ablative case forms with verbs are usually used after certain prepositions of time and location such as: *prej* (from), *pas* (after), *prapa* (behind), *afër* (near), *poshtë* (below), *jashtë* (outside), *etj.*, to indicate place, time, origin, cause and means of an action (Newmark et al., 1982). Uses of the ablative case forms with verbs, without prepositions, are quite rare.

One of these prepositions, in fact the most important one *prej*, when used with nouns to mark an agent is replaced by *nga* in standard language, e.g.,

[10] i. *Shkolla e re e fshatit u ndërtua prej amerikanëve*.

ii. *Shkolla e re e fshatit u ndërtua nga amerikanët*.

iii. *The new school of the village was built by Americans*.

Nevertheless, forms of the ablative with *prej* are quite common in one of the two major dialects of Albanian, the Gheg dialect.

When used with nouns, without prepositions, the function of the ablative case forms resembles that of the genitive case forms, e.g., *shtëpi e drunjtë* (a wooden house), *shtëpi prej druri* (a house made from wood). Therefore, in order to avoid the confusion, the nouns must be indefinite and characterise the thing as if it were an adjective, otherwise instead of the ablative case forms we would have the genitive case forms (Agalliu et al., 2002).

4. A Contrastive Analysis of the Category of Case in English and Albanian Nominal System

English and Albanian nouns, at first sight, show substantial differences which concern the grammatical category of case, but they also show certain similarities which concern mainly the genitive case and should not be ignored. There are three main differences between the grammatical category of case in English nominal system and that of the Albanian nominal system. The first difference concerns the number of cases. English nouns have only two cases: the common case and the genitive case, whereas Albanian nouns have five cases: the nominative, the genitive, the dative, the accusative, and the ablative. The second difference concerns the case forms. In English, only one of the two cases has a distinct morphological form—the genitive case, whereas in Albanian, there are distinct case forms for all the cases which might coincide with one another, but, nonetheless, have a different function. The third difference concerns the form of the genitive case as a specific case, not only in English as the only marked case, but also in Albanian because of its form with articles. In English, it has two forms: the Saxon genitive [**s*] and the Norman Genitive [*of*], whereas in Albanian, it has only one form preceded by the articles: *i, e, të, së*.

Nevertheless, the essence of the difference does not lie in the number of cases which in Albanian is bigger than in English, but in the way these cases perform their function regardless of their form, namely morphological forms which perform the function of the cases in these two languages. If we rely on the debates about the

number of cases in English, and, for a moment, ignore the theory of limited case, this issue results with a different conclusion. According to Palmer (2003), since English is not an inflectional language, but an analytic one, it is completely clear that it does not have distinct case forms for all the cases. However, the lack of distinct case forms cannot signify a lack of the same, because in his view, there are five cases that operate in English, and writers should know this for two reasons:

- 1) the case structure is still there, albeit invisible, and
- 2) the more they know about what happens in the sentence, the better they will understand that structure.

If we accept Palmer's view (2003), it results that English and Albanian have the same number of cases, namely five, and the same cases: the nominative, the genitive, the dative, the accusative and the ablative, with one key difference, that in English, except the genitive, all other cases are unmarked and regardless of their function they retain the same form. Even though, this view sounds contradictory, the rational explanation takes towards the function of the noun forms which, albeit indirectly, implies the presence of case but without case forms. In this context, we could use the term "abstract case" used in several modern theories of formal grammar which supports the view that all nouns in the abstract sense are case marked, regardless of their form. However, these theories have not found support by distinguished native and foreign scholars because the lack of case forms indicates the lack of cases in languages that use other ways to fulfil their functions.

Case as a grammatical category has a syntactic function because it explains the relationships between the noun and other words in the sentence, but according to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), we should make the difference between the case as a grammatical category with all its forms, namely case as an inflectional category and its syntactic functions. In traditional grammars, a noun is in the nominative case if it functions as a subject, and it is in the dative/accusative case if it functions as an object (direct/indirect), but in either of these functions the noun does not have different case forms, therefore, the case results as only one of the ways to mark the syntactic function of the noun in a sentence, the position of the noun or the word order playing a more significant role in determining this function than the case itself. This assertion by Huddleston and Pullum (2002) implies that word order replaces the case forms, except the genitive case, and that the function of case as a grammatical category is not essential in identifying the syntactic functions of the noun in a sentence. For example, if the case forms of a common noun and a proper noun in both English and Albanian are compared, these differences can be seen:

English	Albanian
Singular—Indefinite	
Nominative: <i>a class</i>	Rasa emërore: <i>një klasë</i>
Genitive: <i>of a class</i>	Rasa gjinore: <i>i e një klase</i>
Dative: <i>a class</i>	Rasa dhanore: <i>një klase</i>
Accusative: <i>a class</i>	Rasa kallëzore: <i>një klasë</i>
Ablative: <i>from a class</i>	Rasa rrjedhore: <i>prej një klase</i>
Singular—Definite	
Nominative: <i>Tom</i>	Rasa emërore: <i>Genti</i>
Genitive: <i>Tom's</i>	Rasa gjinore: <i>i e Gentit</i>
Dative: <i>Tom</i>	Rasa dhanore: <i>Gentit</i>
Accusative: <i>Tom</i>	Rasa kallëzore: <i>Gentin</i>
Ablative: <i>from Tom</i>	Rasa rrjedhore: <i>prej Gentit</i>

As seen in these examples, except the genitive case, namely, the Saxon genitive which has a distinct case form and it is commonly used with animate nouns as in *Tom-Tom's*, English nouns do not have case forms, whereas Albanian nouns on the other hand display different case forms depending on their function, hence the number of cases. Nevertheless, the essence of this issue lies in the analytic structure of English and the synthetic structure of Albanian, as languages that use their own resources in building their grammatical forms.

An important issue in the grammatical category of case in English and Albanian nominal system concerns the use of prepositions. Although several English grammar textbooks highlight the analytic case through the use of

prepositions such as “*of*” as the genitive case marker and “*to*” as the dative case marker, Whitman (1975) adds “*in*”, “*at*”, “*by*” and “*from*” as ablative case markers, Lyons (1968) adds “*with*” as the instrumental, agentive and comitative case marker, whereas according to Huddleston and Pullum (2002), English has only one inflectional case—the genitive case, and that prepositions cannot function as case markers. However, despite this claim, it cannot be denied that the Norman genitive [**of**], as one of the two forms of the genitive case, although not a case marker, nonetheless, functions as one. Unlike English nouns, Albanian nouns use prepositions as case markers. Thus, the nominative case uses the prepositions: *nga* (from, by), *te* (*k*) (at), (although when used with these prepositions the nominative case distances itself from its basic function and approximates the accusative and ablative case), the accusative case uses the prepositions: *në* (in), *mbi* (on, onto, over, above), *përmbi* (on, onto, over, above), *nëpër* (through, across, along), *me* (with, by), *pa* (without), the most frequently used prepositions with the ablative case are *ndaj* (towards), *pranë* (next to, beside, alongside), *afër* (near, close, nearby), *para* (before, in front of), *pas* (after, behind), *prej* (from, of) and *nga* (from, by), whereas cases of the dative case used with prepositions are rare (Agalliu et al., 2002).

In English:

1) The Norman genitive—*a book of English fairytales, the waves of the ocean, colour of the night, strength of mind, symbols of peace, etc.*

In Albanian:

1) The nominative case—*nga familja* (from/by the family), *nga e diela* (from Sunday), *nga perëndimi* (from the west), *tek unë* (to me/at my house), *te shkolla* (at school), *te fabrika* (at the factory), etc.

2) The accusative case—*në punë* (at work), *mbi tavolinë* (on the table), *përmbi çati* (on the roof), *nëpër oborr* (across the yard), *me kënaqësi* (with pleasure), *pa ndrojtje* (without coyness), etc.

3) The ablative case—*ndaj miqve* (towards friends), *pranë mysafirëve* (next to the guests), *afër liqenit* (near the lake), *para shitores* (in front of the shop), *pas mësimit* (after class), *prej shtëpisë* (from the house), *nga lumturia* (from happiness), etc.

In Albanian, the genitive case with the function of indicating the origin is sometimes interchangeably used with the ablative case. Furthermore, in that function, the noun may completely omit the case markers without affecting the meaning, e.g.,

[11] i. *vajzë e qytetit* (a girl of the city)—genitive

instead of

ii. *vajzë nga/prej qyteti* (a girl from the city)—ablative

iii. *vajzë qyteti* (a city girl)—no case markers

As seen from their English counterparts in brackets, the same occurs in English, too, with the only difference being that cases of using the Norman genitive instead of the ablative when indicating the origin are fairly rare, forms without case markers being far more preferable.

The genitive case as the only marked case in English, despite the differences, also shares several characteristics with the genitive case of nouns in Albanian. The basic difference lies in their case forms. In English, the genitive case has two forms:

1) The Saxon genitive formed with the inflectional or synthetic suffix [**'s**], and

2) The Norman genitive formed with the preposition [**of**] in analogy with the French one [**de**], although as stated above, this form of the genitive case is not considered a case form as it is not part of the noun. Nevertheless, even though when we talk about the genitive case of nouns in English, we randomly refer to the Saxon genitive, we cannot completely disregard the other form, the Norman genitive [**of**] because the genitive case of English nouns, albeit not strictly, imposes the use of the Saxon genitive with animate nouns and that of the Norman genitive with inanimate nouns. For example:

[12] i. Saxon—*John's family, Lorna's pride, my friend's company, the dog's tail*

ii. Norman—*a piece of cake, the leg of the chair, leaves of the tree, slices of bread*

However, as it has been already stated in this paper, there are numerous cases when inanimate nouns, in accordance with the rules, are commonly used with the Saxon genitive, for example: *the sun's rays, a day's work, the world's biggest competition, America's tallest building, etc.* Furthermore, the tendency of using the Saxon

genitive with inanimate nouns that are commonly used with the Norman genitive has been increasing especially in American English, e.g., *the chair's leg, the table's shape, the museum's exhibits, the sweater's colour, etc.*

In Albanian, unlike English, the genitive case has only one form, the form with the article which must always accompany the case, and which should grammatically always be in agreement with the number, gender, and the case of the word preceding it, e.g.,

- [13] i. *busti i Skenderbeut* (Skanderbeg's bust)
 ii. *nxënëset e gjimnazit* (students of gymnasium)
 iii. *kujtimet e së kaluarës* (memories of the past)
 iv. *projekte të rinisë* (projects of youth)

But, English and Albanian have a common feature that concerns the form of the genitive case. In Albanian, as seen in the examples above, a noun in the genitive case must agree in number, gender and case with the preceding noun, likewise in English, where the grammatical agreement of the noun in the genitive case with the noun that accompanies it is imperative. But, unlike Albanian, this agreement in English refers only to the grammatical category of number and not the category of gender or the category of case. Thus, regular nouns in the plural as well as the proper nouns in the singular ending in [s], do not take ['s] in the genitive case, but only the apostrophe [']:

a) Regular common nouns in the plural:

- [14] i. *students' assignments* (detyrat e studentëve)
 ii. *the girls' room* (dhoma e vajzave)
 iii. *the teachers' meeting* (mbledhja e arsimtarëve)
 iv. *doctors' order* (urdhër i mjekëve)
 v. *the architects' plans* (planet e arkitektëve)

b) Proper nouns:

- [15] i. *Flos' shop* (dyqani i Flo-së), *Stephens' company* (kompania e Stefen-it)
 ii. *Iris' projects* (projektet e Iris-it), *Williams' office* (zyra e Williams-it)
 iii. *Ras' opinion* (mendimi i Ras-it), *Jonas' expectations* (shpresat e Jonas-it)

c) Proper nouns used in the plural to refer to members of the same family:

- [16] i. *the Johnsons' residence* (rezidenca e Johnsons-ve)
 ii. *the Dickens' talent* (talenti i Dickens-ve)
 iii. *the Morales' stubbornness* (kokëfortësia e Morales-ve)
 iv. *the Drotos' dedication* (përkushtimi i Drotos-ve)

In some dialects of English, such as Black English or North Midlands of England, the genitive case is often unmarked, e.g. *your wife sister, that man coat* (Greenbaum, 1996, p. 109). This phenomenon is also present in Albanian, especially in the Gheg dialect spoken in Northern Albania, Kosovo, and Macedonia, e.g.,

	Dialectal Albanian	Standard Albanian	English
[17] i.	a. <i>çika Agimit</i>	b. <i>vajza e Agimit</i>	c. <i>Agim's daughter</i>
	ii. a. <i>çuni/djali Benit</i>	b. <i>djali i Benit</i>	c. <i>Ben's son</i>
	iii. a. <i>zoja shpisë</i>	b. <i>zonja e shtëpisë</i>	c. <i>the hostess- lady of the house</i>

In these cases, in Albanian, in spite of the lack of articles, the inflectional suffixes perform their function, whereas in English, the meaning is derived from the context.

Concerning “the double genitive”, in English, it is formed with the combination of the two forms of the genitive case, namely, [‘s] and [of], whereas in Albanian, it implies the doubling of the article, albeit, not always the same one.

The double genitive itself has two forms:

1) In the first, the noun in the double genitive is followed by another noun. There are two variants here:

a) The noun is preceded by the Saxon genitive:

- [18] i. *a piece of my mother's cake*—*një copë e embëlsirës së nënës sime*
 ii. *the mirror of my brother's car*—*pasqyra e makinës së vëllait tim*
 iii. *the result of the deputies' work*—*rezultati i punës së deputetëve*
 iv. *elements of the teachers' qualification*—*elemente të kualifikimit të mësimit*
 v. *the advantages of the children's education*—*përparësitë e shkollimit të fëmijëve*

b) The noun is preceded by the Norman genitive:

- [19] i. *student's presentation of the project*—*prezantimi i projektit të studentes/it*
 ii. *Tim's realization of all his plans*—*realizimi i të gjitha planeve të Timi-it*
 iii. *Mary's sales of her latest novel*—*shitjet e romanit më të fundit të Mary-t*
 iv. *The country's declaration of independence*—*shpallja e pavarësisë së shtetit*
 v. *People's acceptance of their faults*—*pranimi i gabimeve të njerëzve*

In Albanian, this last phrase is rather ambiguous because it has two semantic implications, namely that people accept their faults, and that we accept people's faults.

According to Greenbaum (1996), in English, this form of the double genitive is preferred in communication because it is very important to place the most important piece of information in the final position.

2) The noun in the double genitive is not followed by another noun:

- [20] i. a. *A daughter of Mrs. Shirley's was very kind.*
 b. *Një vajzë e zonjës Shirley ishte shumë e sjellshme.*
 ii. a. *This shop of Mrs. Steel's is quite large.*
 b. *Ky dyçan i znj. Steel është mjaft i madh.*
 iii. a. *That new advertisement of Apple's is quite popular.*
 b. *Ajo reklamë e re e Apple-it është mjaft e popullarizuar.*
 iv. a. *This picture of Martin's is really amazing.*
 b. *Kjo fotografi e Martinit është vërtetë e mahnitshme.*

In such constructions, in English, the indefinite article *a/an* and the demonstrative pronouns *this/that* are randomly used. The same occurs in Albanian, except that Albanian uses only the demonstrative pronouns *ky/kjo* (this), *ai/ajo* (that) and the numeral *një* (one) that performs the function of the indefinite article *a/an*. Demonstrative pronouns in the plural *these - këta/këto* and *those - ata/ato* may also be used in such constructions in both languages. Sweet (1898) refers to this form of the double genitive as “pleonastic genitive”, and, in his view, this form generally has a partitive function. For example, in the sentence: “*A daughter of Mrs. Shirley's was very kind*”, the use of this form of the double genitive indicates that Mrs Shirley has more than one daughter and that one of them was very kind. As seen in these examples, in English this construction can function only when an animate noun in the Saxon genitive is combined with an inanimate noun in the Norman genitive, otherwise the construction is grammatically incorrect. However, in dialectal English, forms of the double genitive with only the Saxon genitive [‘s] are quite frequently used. Furthermore, Rumjanceva and Kalniõa (2003) claim that such forms are possible in American English as well, e.g.,

- [21] i. *Mrs. Spencer's friend's son* (i biri i mikes/mikut të zonjës Spencer) or
 ii. *Jamie's husband's friends* (miqtë e bashkëshortit të Jamie-t)

There are certain fixed expressions in English which have the same form as the examples above, namely a double Saxon genitive, but they contain two inanimate nouns used in the Saxon genitive. Nevertheless, despite their form, they are considered acceptable forms in Standard English:

- [22] i. *to one's heart's content* (sa të të dojë qejfi, sa të duash)
 ii. *at one's wit's end* (tepër e shqetësuar, nuk di ç'të bësh)

English nouns have been used in such a construction since Middle English, thus, although as a form, it might seem redundant or unacceptable to some researchers, nowadays, it is generally considered a steady construction in Standard English. For example, grammarians of the XVIII century refused every double structure because there were no such constructions in Latin which at the time served as a model for the studies of grammar (Merriam-Webster, 1996). However, they would not surely be against such double forms if they embraced Huddleston and Pullum's view, according to which "the oblique genitive construction" usually referred to as "the double genitive", is not actually a double genitive, and it may not be considered as such because it combines the Saxon genitive and the Norman genitive, and since the latter one is not a case form, there is only one form of the genitive used, albeit doubled (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002). According to Bas, Chalker and Weiner (2014, p. 279), "Oblique" is the term used to refer to nouns in whichever case except the nominative."

Concerning the double genitive in Albanian, examples show that in each of the cases, the second article is always *së* or *të*. But, unlike English, Albanian also allows the triple genitive which is commonly used in daily speech, e.g.,

- [23] i. a. *operacioni i burrit të motrës së Gimit*
 b. *Gimi's sister's husband's operation* or *Gimi's brother-in-law's operation*
 ii. a. *bashkëshortja e djalit të fqinjit të Mozës*
 b. *Moza's neighbour's son's wife*

In English, a noun in the genitive case is never separated from its case form regardless of the context in which it is used, whereas in Albanian, a noun in the genitive case is allowed this convenience because it may be separated from the article, allowing thus, the insertion of another word or expression between them (Agalliu et al., 2002).

In English:

- [24] i. a. *John is Carey's brother-in-law.* b. *John është kunati i Carey-it.*
 ii. a. *Sue is Mr. Smith's wife.* b. *Sue është bashkëshortja e zotëri Smith-it.*
 iii. a. *Josh is Henry's son.* b. *Josh është i biri i Henry-it*

In Albanian:

- [25] i. *babai i Jonit* (Jon's father)—without insertion of a word or phrase between the noun and its case form,
 ii. *anëtar i kësaj familjeje* (member of this family)—with the insertion of the word *kësaj*.

As seen in these examples, none of the English nouns allows the insertion of another word or phrase between the noun and its case form, whereas in Albanian, the insertion of words or phrases is quite common.

In Albanian, the article as a case marker is not repeated in the second noun and others that follow when the determiners are coordinated (Agalliu et al., 2002, p. 106). In this respect, Albanian nouns resemble those of English which also avoid the repetition of the case form, if it is the same, e.g.,

- [26] i. a. *John is Carey, Tom, Susan and Rebecca's brother-in-law.*
 b. *John është kunati i Carey-it, Susan-ës dhe Rebeka-s.*
 ii. a. *William is Blake, Brandon and Belinda's nephew.*
 b. *William është nipi i Blake-ut, Brandon-it dhe Belinda-s.*
 iii. a. *Anne is Marilla and Mathew's dearest person.*
 b. *Anne është personi më i dashur i Marilla-s dhe Mathew-it.*

Here, the case form is added to the last noun to avoid the repetition, although when there are only two nouns, in American English, they may both take the case form, e.g.,

- [27] i. a. *Bob's and Sarah's children are very polite.*
 b. *Fëmijët e Bob-it dhe Sarah-s janë shumë të sjellshëm.*

English and Albanian nouns in the genitive case also show several similarities in regard to their semantic functions. Thus, they are used:

- 1) to indicate property—*Henry's flat, kompjuteri i Saimirit*
- 2) to indicate belonging—*Sarah's daughter, nëna e Artës*
- 3) to characterise a thing—*a women's college, ditët e rinisë*

- 4) to indicate quality, substance—*soldier's courage, buka e misrit*
- 5) to indicate origin—*Shelley's poems, vajzat e Dibrës*
- 6) to indicate measure (time, value, space)—*a week's wait, gjysma e bukës*
- 7) to define a place—*the city of London, qyteti i Sarandës*
- 8) as subject of the sentence—*Anne's flight was exhausting. It took twelve hours.*
Goli i Lorikut ishte i fuqishëm. I Redonit ishte triumfues.
- 9) as object of the sentence—*We saw Angela's father at the theatre last night.*
Ata e konsideronin humbjen e pikëve pjesë të lojës.

The predicative genitive is another feature that English and Albanian have in common. For example:

[28] i. a. This wonderful house is **Ben's**.

b. Kjo shtëpi e mrekullueshme është **e Benit**.

This use of the genitive case is a quite common occurrence especially in daily conversations in both languages, English and Albanian.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the grammatical category of case in English and Albanian nominal system, highlighting the differences and similarities that concern different aspects of the grammatical category of case in these two languages. There are three key differences between the grammatical category of case in English and Albanian nominal system. The first difference concerns the number of cases. English nouns have two cases, and Albanian nouns have five cases. The second difference concerns the case forms. English nouns have only one marked case—the genitive case—which has two forms: the Saxon genitive and the Norman genitive which is not a morphological form, but, nevertheless, it has a significant role in forming “the double genitive” construction. Albanian nouns, on the other hand, have distinct case forms which might coincide with one another but have a different function. The third main difference concerns the use of prepositions in building the case forms or prepositions as case markers. Unlike English nouns that do not use prepositions as case markers, Albanian nouns build case forms with prepositions. However, as the genitive case is the only marked case in English, the focus has been on the differences and similarities between the genitive case in English and Albanian. that, despite their differences, have also shown some similarities that concern mainly their semantic functions, their role in the sentence, their use in constructions such as “the double genitive”, rules of forming such constructions, and the omission of the case markers without affecting the meaning. These similarities do not refer only to the use of the genitive case in Standard English and Standard Albanian, but also in some of their dialects.

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