Research Article

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"The Language of Generations" in Elbasan and the "Linguistic Form" used by Kristoforidhi from a Morphological Perspective with the Albanian Standard

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Abstract

Language, in its entirety of forms and expressions, is closely related to the social community that uses it. No societal change occurs without being reflected in language. It should be noted that language and social development are in such a close and inseparable relationship that it is difficult to imagine a social change without the presence of the language as an element that plays a fundamental role in shaping and materializing it. Social changes, along with the natural development of language over time, bring about transformations in all language aspects: phonetics, grammar, and lexicon. Based on these premises, the object of this study is the language variety of Elbasan, as part of Gheg dialect of the Albanian language, to distinguish its morphological features in synchronic and diachronic aspect. The aim is to highlight the changes occurred under the influence of various sociolinguistic factors and their development over time. To achieve the objectives of this paper, the study is focused in two aspects. First, the morphological features are studied across three generations: the younger generation (12-17 years old), the middle generation (35-50 years old) and the older generation (70-80 years old). Than the data are compared to "the language" used in his books by translator and scolar from Elbasan, Kostandin Kristoforidhi (1827-1895). This paper aims to shed light on the morphological characteristics of the language variety of Elbasan nowadays across different generations, in order to reveal how conservative or innovative has it remained under the continuous influence of social and cultural developments, particularly under the ongoing influence of the standard language. Moreover, the paper aims to highlight the extent to which linguistic features used in Kristoforidhi's works are still present in the nowadays speech of Elbasan, and in which age groups such linguistic traces are found.

Keywords: *The language variety of Elbasan, generations, Kristoforidhi's works, change (innovation), Albanian standard*

1. Introduction

Language constitutes a system that is both highly consolidated and subject to change. Whenever studies of language or its dialects are undertaken, it is almost impossible to avoid the well-known statement by Sapir: "Everyone knows that language is changeable" (Bright 2002: 81-92).

Let's take a quick and simple glance at the geographic spread of a language. We will observe so many varieties and particularities that it would not be difficult for anyone to understand the true nature of human language—the unity, and at the same time, the flexibility and diversity it embodies

(Kaçi Myrta 2021: 55).

Language changes never occur at a predetermined or hypothesized time. Developments and changes in language always align directly with societal development and change, responding precisely to these dynamics. On the other side, the interaction of various sociolinguistic factors, as well as the ongoing contact of this language variety with the standard variety —a relationship that, as elsewhere, causes various developments in language—must have left its traces in the everyday speech of the speakers of Elbasan.

Based on this, we are studing the language variety of the city of Elbasan or as we use in Albanian dialectological studies "Elbasanishtja" in morphological aspect across three generations: the older, middle, and younger. In addition to this aspect, the study focuses on identifying and determining the similarities and differences between the morphological features used in the works of K. Kristoforidhi and the linguistic features of Elbasanisht in nowadays`s usage. The main purpose of this part of the study was to determine the extent to which the morphological features of "the language" used by Kristoforidhi in his works are preserved in today's variety of Elbasan and in which age groups these features are most prevalent.

To establish the overall theoretical framework we have relied on the research of scholars such as: Gjergj Pekmezi, Xheladin Gosturani, and Mehmet Çeliku who have studied the linguistic features of the Elbasan language, as well as Aleksandër Xhuvani, Ali Jashari, Kujtim Bevapi, Teuta Toska, and others, who have focused on Kristoforidhi's works. The linguistic phenomena have been highlighted and studied based on our concrete observations (face-to-face interviews and recorded narratives) and in a wide corpus of materials written in this language variety.

We have previously made this linguistic variety subject of our study, but a comparative study of the morphological features with earlier periods is absent in Albanian linguistics. For this reason, the present study contributes to a more complete and in-depth study of Elbasanisht, particularly in its morphological aspect.

In this paper we are using the term "language variety" for the linguistic term used in Albanian dialectological studies "e folmja: e folmja e Elbasanit".

2. Methodology

This paper constitutes a study that is both descriptive and comparative, as well as analytical. Its goal is to highlight the linguistic features of the linguistic variety of Elbasanisht in its morphological aspect and to trace their manifestation across different generations; to describe how it appears today under the influence of social development and, above all, the standard variety of Albanian. Additionally, the paper aims to determine the extent to which the linguistic features used in Kristoforidhi's work are present in today`s elbasanisht.

To achieve the objectives of this study, we have employed descriptive, comparative, and analytical methods. These methods have been essential in providing a complete study and addressing the research questions of this paper.

Descriptive Method: Through this method a general description of the morphological features of Elbasanisht nowadays has been made based on the collected data from interviews conducted with speakers from different age groups, and many works by various authors. Than we identified and highlighted the morphological features characterizing "the language" used by Kristoforidhi in his works written in the Gheg dialect, so in the language variety of Elbasan.

Comparative Method: Through this method, we made a comparison of the linguistic features of Elbasanisht with the linguistic features of Kristoforidhi's works. Through this comparison we wanted to find out two important aspects in this study:

- To create a general description of this language variety nowadays across three generations: the younger, middle, and older in order to highlight the morphological changes over time and identify the age categories involved in such changes.

– To identify how similar are the morphological features of today`s Elbasanisht with the morphological features used in Kristoforidhi's works.

Analytical Method: Using this method, we conducted a general analysis based on two simultaneous points of reference: on one hand, the morphological features were analyzed across generations, and on the other hand, they were compared to the linguistic features of Elbasanisht as written about two centuries ago in Kristoforidhi's works. Through this method, we aimed to highlight the extent to which this language variety is conservative or innovative and to determine its relationship with the linguistic features found in Kristoforidhi's works.

3. Literature Review

One of the fundamental characteristics of language is its ability to be manifested in a harmony of forms and linguistic structures so admirable that any ideator would be "astonished" faced with such naturalness and fluidity, both contrasting and compact at the same time (Kaçi Myrta 2019: 7). In relation to this definition, we would raise the questions: How the language variety of the city of Elbasan is presented nowadays in diferent generations? What changes have occured in the morphological system if we compare it with "the language" used by Kristoforidhi in his works about two centuries ago?

Elbasanisht, whitch is part of the southen Gheg dialect, has been and continues to be under the constant influence of historical and social factors, which have introduced changes and innovations in its linguistic substrate across various aspects. In to order to give scientific answers to the questions above, in this paper we will study and analyse the noun, adjective, pronoun, verb, and adverb system.

4. Noun

4.1 Plural Formation of Nouns

During the research conducted on this language variety across different generations, as well as in the study of "the language" used by Kristoforidhi in his works the following linguistic phenomena related to noun pluralization emerged:

a. Some masculine nouns in the plural form appear without an ending: *shok (friend), zengjin (rich man), shkall (stairs), pllam (palm), tumall (molar), zamak (glue), shkollar (scholar), doktor (doctor), qërshan (cherry), pjes (piece),* etc. This is a typical feature of Elbasanisht nowadays and is present across all generations.

In Kristoforidhi's works the plural with the ending **-ë**, similar to other older northern authors (Kaçi Myrta 2019: 28) is present, but this is a lingustic feature of Tosk Albanian: *mbretënitë (kingdoms), tendatë (tents), yjetë (stars), ujënatë (waters), bagëtitë (livestock), shpendë (birds), njerëzitë (people), gomarë (donkeys), shërbëtorë (servants), plumbatë (bullets).*

b. Another plural formation found in this variety "similar to the northern varieties" (Gjinari 2003: 215), is the plural ending in **-a** for some masculine nouns*: demela (lazy people), fllanxa (flanges), dardaleca (small pears), etc.*

In Kristoforidhi's works, where the plural ending -**ë** dominates, we also encounter words with the ending **-a**, a feature of today`s Elbasanisht, as part of Gheg dialect: *gjuhash (tongues: after many tongues), and farash (seeds: after many seeds).*

c. The formation of the plural with the ending **-j**: *ullij (olive trees), fqij (neighbors), duhanxhij (tobacco sellers), kafexhij (coffee sellers)* is a phenomenon that is also spread "in other northern dialects" (Gjinari 2003: 215). This plural form with **-j** is also found in Kristoforidhi's works: *çakaj (jackals), arij (bears), kaproj (goats), lepuj (rabbits*), but in some instances, we have also encountered the plural with **-nj**, such as: *drenj (deer), shtërpinjvet (houses), gjunj (knees).*

4.2 Noun Form

a. Masculine nouns that end with the diphthong **-ua** in the indefinite form construct the definite form by replacing the diphthong with the vowel **o** and adding the definite suffix **-i:** *ftua/ftu → ftoi, thua/thu → thoi*. According to linguist J. Gjinari, this structure is typical for Southern and Central Albanian (Gjinari 2003: 215).

This category also includes the alternative form *thoni* for the word *thua/thu* (nail), which is present in Elbasanisht alongside the form *thoi*. This creates points of convergence between the two investigated categories. It is important to note that this instance should neither be generalized nor dismissed, as it remains widely still present.

b. Masculine nouns that end with the nasal vowels **â, ê, î, û** in the indefinite form take the nasal **n** in the nominative definite form: *hini (ashes), peni (thread), huni (wood), gjuni (knee), ullini (olive), syni (eye), etc*. This feature is present across all three generations of speakers, but it is worth noting that the forms *hini* and *peni* seem to be gradually replaced by the standard forms *hiri* and *peri* among the younger generation.

Kristoforidhi also used this category of nouns with the consonant **n** in the nominative case: *syni* (eye), *dreni* (deer), *zani* (voice), *dreni* (deer).

4.3 Case System

In the case system we are focused on presenting some of the most typical features that are of particular interest.

Accusative Case: Nouns that end with **u** in the indefinite form construct the accusative case by adding the suffix **-n**, with the insertion of the vowel **i** between the root of the noun and the suffix (Gjinari 2003: 216), as in the examples: trunin (brain), hunin (wood), gjunin (knee). Similarly, masculine nouns ending in **i** form the accusative case in the same way: synin (eye), kushurinin (cousin), ullinin (olive tree), trunin (brain). This feature is also found in Kristoforidhi's works, where he uses forms such as: anëmikun (enemy), shoqin (friend), shkopin (stick), pluhunin (dust).

Locative Case: In everyday speech, especially among some speakers of the older generation (aged 80-90), the so-called locative case has been observed. Linguist J. Gjinari notes: "This form, composed of the accusative stem and the suffix t(ë), has become customary to call the locative case" (Gjinari 2003: 215).

Nouns in the locative case are always preceded by prepositions such as: **në** (in), **mbi** (on), **nën** (under), **nëpër** (through), **përmbi** (above), **me** (with), and **për** (for). During our observations we encountered it primarily preceded by the preposition **në**, which in this variety appears with the vowel **ë** dropped: n'torbët (in the bag), n'dërrasët (on the board), *n'dhet (in the ground), n'hit (in the hay), n'krahit (on the arm), n'xhept (in the pocket), n'qafët (on the neck), n'derët (at the door), n'rrugët (in the streets), n'drekët (at the lunch), n'vesht (in the ear), n'filxhant (in the cup), n'qafët (on the neck), n'xhept (in the pocket).*

This case is widely found in Kristoforidhi's works and is also present in other northern authors of the same period. However, in Kristoforidhi's writings, we also encountered forms like *ndë fushë (in the field), ndë mal (in the mountain), ndë shkretinë (in the wilderness),* which are not present in Elbasanisht nowadays.

Today, the locative case is not heard among the middle and younger generations. Kristoforidhi was the first to signal its decline in use, where, as mentioned earlier, we also encountered mixed forms. The fact that this case is becoming increasingly limited over time suggests that in this language variety, it will soon disappear entirely, giving way to forms like *n'krahë (on the arm), n'derë (at the door), n'rrugë (on the street),* which are widely heard in this dialect today.

4.4 Adjective

The language variety of the city of Elbasan is characterized by several distinctive features in the adjectival system. Participial adjectives which, like in other Gheg dialects, differentiate by gender not only through the article but also by the suffix, are present: *i feju:m – e fejume (engaged) , i lçu:m – e lçume (shiny), i kthy:m - e kthyme (returned), i mlu:m –e mlume (covered).*

In addition to this category of adjectives, particularly among the older generation, there is the presence of another form of participial adjectives created with the suffix -un: i dalun (gone out), i shkurtën (short), i mërzitun (bored), e ngritun (raised), e kallaisun (tinned), e zgjebosun (scabbed), e kputun (broken).

In this category of adjectives, the distinction between genders is made by the article: i dalun – e dalun (gone out), i ngritun – e ngritun (raised), i kallaisun – e kallaisun (tinned), i shkurtën – e shkurtën (short), i mërzitun – e mërzitun (bored). In the plural form, the gender marker is the suffix -(u)na, which is added to the feminine plural, while the masculine plural form remains the same as the singular. These plural forms are preceded by the article të: të dalun – të daluna (gone out), të ngritun – të ngrituna (raised), të kallaisun – të kallaisuna (tinned), të mërzitun – të mërzituna (bored).

Elbasanisht contains both of these dialectal forms, which are not of equal antiquity. Participial adjectives formed with the suffix -un are considered older compared to those formed with the suffix -(ë)m or -m. As previously mentioned, the older form is prevalent among speakers over the age of 80, while the latter form is more commonly used by younger generations. Our observations show that in the same communicative situation, speakers from different age groups use their respective forms: older speakers (80+) tend to use e kputun, e dalun, while middle-aged speakers (40+) prefer e kputme, e dalme.

However, it is worth noting the simultaneous use of both forms by the same speaker. In conversations with individuals over 80 years old, we observed the use of both forms: sometimes the participial adjective with the suffix -un (e.g., nihej e lodhun, vajz e dalun), and other times with the suffix -(ë)m, -m (e.g., nihej e lodhme, vajz e dalme). This indicates that the typical form of participial adjectives from the middle and younger generations has gradually influenced the older generation, "shaking" the status of the -un form.

Based on this result, we believe that the participial adjective with the -un suffix will not be present for much longer and will eventually disappear from the lexicon of Elbasanisht. This form is likely to be entirely replaced by the -me suffix, even among the older, more conservative speakers.

In Kristoforidhi's works, the participial adjective with the suffix -un, -shun, -shëm is encountered in the first variant of the alphabet book, while in the second variant, we observe its shift to the suffix -shim, with the phonetic change of the vowel (Bevapi 1984: 114): i viefshun → i vejefshim (validated); i rrëmbyeshëm → i rrëmbyeshim (impetuous); mal i shenjtënueshim (a sanctified mountain), vend i hienueshim (a habitable place).

The occurrence of participial adjectives with the -un suffix in Kristoforidhi's works, as well as its presence among older speakers in this variety nowadays, reflects the limited presence of this feature, which is gradually giving way to the -me suffix now widely spread across all generations.

4.5 Pronoun

Personal Pronoun: Regarding the forms of personal pronouns, a particular feature is seen in the first-person singular forms of the pronoun: **un** and **una**, the latter being a form "well-known in Elbasan" (Çeliku 1963: 210): *un i thash (I said), un e ndihmova (I helped), un e mbarova (I finished), erdha una (I came), fleta una (I spoke), e hodh una (I threw), una e prisja (I was waiting), i mblodha una (I gathered), sun flisja una (I couldn't speak), sun t'i flisja una (I couldn't talk to you), etc.*

In his works Kristoforidhi uses the form *unë*: unë jam (I am), ç'bana unë (what I did), while the form *una*, typical for all generations in Elbasanisht, is not found anywhere. We believe that in this

case, there is an influence of Tosk Albanian, which Kristoforidhi was very familiar with and used in his works written in the Tosk dialect.

A widely used form is *mu* (me) in the dative and accusative cases of the first-person singular pronoun unë (mua): *ma dha mu (he/she gave it to me), m'ka ndodh mu (it happened to me), ma prune ti mu (you brought it to me), mir t'mbahet mu (I deserved it), ma ka hedh mu (he/she has deceived me), m'u than syt mu (my eyes were tired), m'largun mu (they distanced me), ma the ti mu (you told me), m'msun mu (they taught me).* In Kristoforidhi's works, we find the form *mue: me mue (with me), për mue (for me), bashkë me mue (together with me),* similar to other northern Gheg where vowel clusters are preserved intact. We believe that in this case, Kristoforidhi was influenced by the northen Gheg authors in the language form he used.

5. Demonstrative Pronoun

Demonstrative pronouns are characterized by several features and forms that relate to the second and third-person pronouns: ***ky, kjo, ai, ajo, ata.***

Demonstrative pronouns "**ky**" and "**kjo**" in the accusative singular appear in the forms: ***këtˌ kte*:** *këtˌ çun* (this boy), *këtˌ goc* (this girl), *këtˌ njeri* (this person), *këtˌ t'qeshme* (this laughter), *kte mirni* (take this), *kte e kam ngju* (I've heard this), *ma tregun kte* (they showed me this). In the accusative plural, these pronouns appear in the forms ***kta*** and ***kto***: *kta t'ri* (these young ones), *kta kishin shku* (these had gone), *kto t'raja* (these new ones), *kto dit e funit* (these last days).

In Elbasanisht the feminine demonstrative pronoun ***kjo*** appears as ***qo*,** particularly among spekers over 70 years old: *quhet qo* (it's called this), *qo e cipmja* (this stingy one), *ni qo ishte ma para* (there was one before), *ktu te qo* (here at this one), *qo ishte pjesa e jashtme* (this was the outer part), *ene qo ash* (and this is), *qo qi erth* (this one who came), *qo që t'thash* (this one that I told you), *qo e reja* (this new one), *qo e mlumja* (this covered one), *qo e martumja* (this married one), *qo e ndamja* (this separated one), *qo menjemadhja* (this proud one), *qo e hummja* (this lost one), *ene qo e funit fare* (and this last one). Among younger generations, the form *kjo* is used.

Kristoforidhi uses the forms ***kyi*** for masculine and ***këjo*** for feminine: *kyi ashtë* (this is), *kyi ishte i ati* (this was his father); *këjo ashtë grueja e ati* (this is his wife), *eme motër ashtë këjo* (this is my sister), *ashtë këjo qi më bane* (this is who made me), *këjo tashti* (this now), *këjo ashtë Zoara* (this is Zoara). These forms are naturally influenced by Tosk Albanian.

Demonstrative pronouns "**ai**" and "**ajo**" in the accusative appear in the forms ***ate, atën*/*aten*:** *pata shku me ate* (I had gone with him), *ate e nimova* (I helped him), *msova ate* (I taught him), *i thash për atën* (I told him about that), *i dhash atën* (I gave him that), *atën qi m'the* (that which you told me), *atën qi kemi lan* (that which we left), *du t'mar atën* (I want to take that), *aten ma mur* (he took that from me), *dul me aten* (he went out with her), *aten t'voglën* (that little one), *m'mallkun me aten* (he cursed me with that), *me aten ja dola* (I succeeded with that).

Kristoforidhi uses the form ***ate*:** *për ate* (for him), *e përsuellne ate* (they brought him along), *bashkë me ate* (together with him).

In the dative and ablative cases, the demonstrative pronoun ***ai*** appears in the form ***atit*:** *ja dhash atit* (I gave it to him), *atit çunit* (to the boy), *atit t'shpis* (to the house owner), *atit t'hujit* (to the stranger), *prej atit* (from him). Kristoforidhi uses the form *ati*: *qi të hash pri ati* (that you may eat from him), *prei brinjesh ati* (from the horns of that one), *prei pemësë ati* (from the tree of that one).

Demonstrative pronouns "**ata**" and "**ato**" in the dative and ablative, especially among the older generation, appear in the form ***atyne*:** *atyne i pat than* (he told them), *ju qash atyne* (you apologized to them), *nana i thot atyne* (the mother says to them), *i pat çu atyne* (he had sent to them), *i patëm çu atyne* (we had sent them). Kristoforidhi uses the forms *atyne* and *atyneve*: *të ndenjurit e atyne* (the remaining of them), *prei atyneve* (from them).

Kristoforidhi uses distinct dialectal forms for masculine (***atyne***) and feminine (***atyneve***) demonstrative pronouns ***ata*** (m) and ***ato*** (f), a distinction not found in the speech of the older generation nowadays in the dialect of Elbasan. This suggests that, in an earlier period both forms

(*atyne* and *atyneve*) may have been in use, corresponding to gender. The assimilation of the unstressed vowel has led to the merging of the feminine form *atyneve* with the masculine form *atyne*, which is present nowadays.

The old form of the ablative singular ***asoj*** and ***ksoj*** and plural ***kësi,*** which also appears as ***ksi***, is preserved: *asoj djali* (of that boy), *asoj nuse* (of that bride), *asoj t'qeshme* (of that laughter), *asoj gazi* (of that joy), *ksoj gjanash* (of such things), *ksoj fatkeqsish* (of such misfortunes), *ksoj traditash* (of such traditions), *kësi gëzimesh* (of such joys), *kësi njerzish* (of such people), *kësi rastesh* (of such cases), *ksi miqsh* (of such friends), *ksi t'knumesh* (of such celebrations).

The forms ***asoj*** and ***ksoj*** have a wider use compared to ***kësi*** or ***ksi.*** These forms can be observed in the vocabulary of both older and middle-aged speakers. The form ***kësi*** **(ksi),** being part of the lexicon of older generations, reflects its antiquity and limited use. We have not seen the presence of these forms in Kristoforidhi's works, but it is notable that he uses the form ***asish*** for the third-person plural demonstrative pronoun: *disa prej asish* (some of those).

6. Possessive Pronoun

The typical features of this category of pronouns are related to some specific forms of the first and second-person singular possessive pronouns for both genders. The pronouns ***im***/***ime*** (my) in this language variety also appears in the forms ***tem***/***teme*** among the older generation: *çuni tem* (my son), *menimin tem* (my thought), *emni tem* (my name), *babës tem* (my father's), *qytetin tem* (my city), *trunin tem* (my brain), *i vogli tem* (my little one), *i bukri tem* (my beautiful one), *i vujtmi tem* (my suffering one), *motra teme* (my sister), *shpia teme* (my house), *menja teme* (my mind), *nana teme* (my mother), *e vogla teme* (my little one), *e vujtmja teme* (my suffering one), *e mira teme* (my good one).

These forms are also found in Kristoforidhi's works: *Dhiatënë teme* (my testament), *e mora për vetëhenë teme* (I took it for myself), *dorënë teme* (my hand), *ndë shtëpit teme* (in my house), *ronjësi i tem vëlla* (my brother's survivor), etc. Kristoforidhi use also the phrase *eme motërë* (my sister), which today is used as *ime motër* in this dialect. This presence indicates a broader use of this form, which over time, due to language evolution, has given way to the form *ime*, as a result of the phonetic change of the vowel *e* to *i*.

The pronouns ***yt***/***jote*** (your) are widely used in the forms *tat*/*jot*, *tate*/*jote*: *baba tat* (your father), *guximi tat* (your courage), *menimi tat* (your thought), *vllai jot* (your brother), *kushurini jot* (your cousin), *motra tate* (your sister), *shpia tate* (your house), *e ardhmja tate* (your future), *mirnia tate* (your kindness), *amëlsia tate* (your sweetness), *bukuria tate* (your beauty), *menja tate* (your mind), *e mira tate* (your good one), *dhimshunia tate* (your compassion).

The form ***jote*** is also found in Kristoforidhi's works: *grueja jote* (your wife), *fara jote* (your seed). In Kristoforidhi's writings, these pronouns are used in the forms: *zanin tand* (your voice), *mbë barkun tand* (on your belly), *për punët tande* (for your work), *faqenë tand* (your face), *farënë tande* (your seed) in the accusative case, and *jetësë sate* (your life), *gruesë sate* (your wife), *faqesë sate* (your face), *prej dorësë sate* (from your hand), *farësë sate* (your seed) in the dative case. It should be noted that today in Elbasanisht, the forms *tat*/*tate* are used for both cases. We believe that the full retention of the consonant cluster *nd* is likely an influence of Tosk dialect on Kristoforidhi's "language" or an indication of a Tosk element present in an earlier period in this variety.

The third person possessive pronouns *i tij*/*i saj* (his/her) are commonly found in the forms *atit* (his), *asaj*/*asajt* (hers): *çuni atit* (his son), *çuni asajt*/*asaj* (her son), *menja atit* (his mind), *menja asaj*/*asajt* (her mind), etc. Kristoforidhi uses the form *ati* for masculine gender: *gruen e ati* (his wife), *tenda e ati* (his tent), *ani i tha ati* (then he told him).

The feminine possessive pronoun ***e tua*** (yours) in this dialect commonly appears in the form ***tuja***: *menimet tuja* (your thoughts), *shoqet tuja* (your friends), *t'qamet tuja* (your destructions). In the middle and younger generations, it is preceded by the vowel *e*: *menimet e tua* (your thoughts), *shoqet e tua* (your friends), *t'qamet e tua* (your crying).

7. Interrogative Pronoun

Elbasanisht is characterized by unique forms of certain interrogative pronouns. For example:

Accusative Case: The form ***çin*** is used for the interrogative pronouns ***cili, cila*** (which, who): *me çin flet* (who are you talking to), *s'di çin t'mash e çin flash* (I don't know whom to take and whom to leave), *çin të dish* (who do you know), *me çin sy* (with which eye), *çin daç keq* (whom do you wish ill upon), *çin di ma mir* (who knows better), *çin të dush* (whomever you want), *çin t'marrish* (whom you take).

The feminine interrogative pronoun ***cila*** in Kristoforidhi's works appears as ***cilënë*: *cilënë vëmë*** (which one do we place). It should be noted that in today's speech the form *cilën* for the interrogative pronoun ***cila*** in the accusative case is rarely heard. Therefore, we believe that Kristoforidhi's use of ***cilënë*** may be influenced by Tosk dialect, as this form was already limited in use.

The Interrogative Pronoun ***çfarë*:** In this dialect this pronoun appears in various forms: ***çer, çar, ça, çe*:** *çer s'ma kjo tokë* (what's wrong with this land), *çer ban* (what are you doing), *çar lulje* (what flower), *çar yrneku* (what pattern), *çar shef* (what do you see), *ça modeli do vije* (what model will come), *ça po flet* (what are you saying), *ça a kikli* (what is the hook), *ça ishte sergjeni* (what was the shelf), *ça t'ishte* (what was it), *merrni buk me çe ta keni* (take bread with what you have), *çe t'i bash* (what you do).

Our study shows that the forms ***çer*** and ***çe*** are older than ***çar*** and ***ça*.** The antiquity of ***çer*** and ***çe*** is evidenced by their use only among the older generation, while the other forms are more widespread and are used even by younger speakers.

The Interrogative Pronoun ***si*:** The form ***qysh*** is widely used instead of ***si*** (how): *qysh ishte perdja* (how was the curtain),.*qysh i kam qep* (how I sewed them), *qysh ta lexonin* (how they read it), *qysh t'thush* (how to say), *qysh ta baj* (how to do it), *si thosha dot qysh* (I couldn't say how), *qysh je* (how are you), *qysh ash* (how is it), *qysh e pe* (how did you see it).

Although the use of ***qysh*** is noted across all generations, but the younger generation usually use the standard form ***si*,** due to the influence of the standard variant: *qysh kishte vepru* (how he acted), *qysh ia thash* (how I told him), *qysh e bane* (how you did it), but also: *si i shkoi nëpër men* (how it crossed his mind), *si sillet ashu* (how he behaves like that), *si at'her* (like back then), *un i pata than si do shkojn gjanat* (I had told him how things would go).

Kristoforidhi uses the form ***qish*:** *qish duhetë me bam* (how should it be done), *qish po u them* (how I am telling you). He also uses this form for the interrogative pronoun ***çfarë*:** *me gjithë qish kishte* (with everything that was there), *gjithë qish duhet për gjanë* (everything that is needed for the job), *mbani vesh se qish po u them juve* (listen to what I am telling you).

The form ***qish*** has not been heard (used) among the older generation in today's Elbasanisht, suggesting that its presence in Kristoforidhi's works may be due to southern Tosk influence, or perhaps it reflects an earlier presence in this variety, a subject that warrants further study in the future.

Indefinite Pronoun: The indefinite pronoun *ndonjë* appears in various forms, such as *nei, noi, nai, nenji*: *nei goc* (some girl), *nei gja* (some thing), *nei llaf tjetër* (some other word), *noi nuse* (some bride), *noi tjetër* (some other), *noi i huj* (some foreigner), *noi çun* (some boy), *nai dhit lekshe* (some ten-lek coin), *nai fmi* (some child), *nai akullore* (some ice cream), *nai shëtitje* (some walk), *nai menje* (some thought), *nai goc* (some girl), *nai fjal* (some word), *nai qen* (some dog), *nai i joti* (some of yours), *nai i harrum* (some forgotten one), *nai i njoft* (some acquaintance), *nai moll* (some apple), *nai amëlcin* (some sweetness), *nei i huj* (some stranger), *nei i shpis* (some of the household), *nei çun* (some boy), *nei ven* (some place), *nai menje* (some thought), *nanji i lagjes* (some from the neighborhood), *nanji qi s'e njef* (some you don't know), *nanji qi të do t' keqen* (some who wishes you harm), *nanji barktham* (some hungry one), *nanji burr* (some man), *blem nanji* (buy some), *foli nanji* (talk to someone), *t'i qisim nanji* (let's take some out), *nenji i huj* (some stranger), *nenji t'lame* (some washed one), *nenji t'huthme* (some thrown away).

Among these forms, the form ***nei*** suggests relatively greater antiquity, as it is present primarily in the speech of the older generation. Similarly, ***nenji*** is found among older speakers. The other forms are relatively newer, being more prevalent among younger speakers. In our research, we encountered the form ***ndonji*** in Kristoforidhi's works: *ndonji tufë të madhe* (some large flock), *mos hedhi ndonji koqe rrufeje* (don't drop any lightning bolt). He also used the form ***asosh*** with the meaning of *such, like this*: *kemi vram shum'asosh* (we have killed many such).

The indefinite pronoun ***çdo*** (every) in Kristoforidhi's works appears in two forms: sometimes he uses ***çdo*** (e.g., *çdo gjaje të gjallë*—every living thing, *çdo mishi*—every meat), and sometimes ***qishdo*** with the same meaning. The form *qishdo* also carries the meaning of *ndonjë* (some): *qishdo gja* (some thing), *qishdo fluturake* (some bird), *prei qishdo fare* (from any seed).

Nowadays the pronoun ***çdo*** does not have a specific dialectal form and is used in the standard form ***çdo*** across all generations.

8. Verb

8.1 Indicative Mood

Present Tense: The verb ***jam*** (to be) in the third-person singular appears in various forms across all generations: ***â, âsh, âsht***: *kush â* (who is), *gjuha jon â shqipja* (our language is Albanian), *ç'â ky çun* (who is this boy), *ç'âsh moj nan* (what is it, mother), *âsht si fije* (it is like a thread), *âsh ma tepër festa bektashjanve* (it is more of a Bektashi holiday), *âsh model lisho* (it is a sleek model), *âsh ar* (it is gold), *kjo âsh takami* (this is the best), *âsht goca mir* (the girl is good), *n'qoft se âsht kismet* (if it's meant to be), *n'qoft se nuk âsht kismet* (if it's not meant to be).

Kristoforidhi also uses the form ***âsht***, sometimes with and sometimes without the final vowel ***ë: âshtë,*** *âsht' i mirë* (he is good), *âsht'ai* (he is the one).

Imperfect Tense: In Elbasanisht, the endings ***-shim, -shit, -shin*** often replace the standard plural endings ***-nim, -nit, -nin***: *veshim* (we wore), *harroshim* (we forgot), *bashim* (we did), *lushit* (you plowed), *hashit* (you ate), *afroshin* (they approached), *blishin* (they bought), *dëfteshin* (they revealed), *dilshin* (they went out).

In the first-person singular, especially among the older generation, the verb takes the ending ***-je***: *e lexoje* (I read), *e shifje* (I saw), *e knoje* (I sang), *e menoje* (I thought), *e qetsoje* (I calmed), *e mloje* (I covered), *e quje* (I called), *e shkruaje* (I wrote).

In the third-person singular, especially among the older generation, the final ***n*** in the ending ***-nte*** is dropped, giving verbs the following forms: *bate* (he did), *i bite* (he hit), *dëftete* (he revealed), *ledhatote* (he caressed), *mate* (he held), *qate* (he cried), *i shtrote* (he laid), *shkëlqete* (he shined), *rrite* (he grew), *vite* (he came), *zite* (he stirred).

Simple Past Tense: The plural forms of verbs are constructed without the vowel ***a*** in the ***-ua*** cluster in both active and passive voices: *dashurun* (they loved), *gatun* (they cooked), *takun* (they met), *shkum* (we went), *konsultum* (we consulted), *fillun* (they started), *u interesum* (we were interested), *u kujtum* (we remembered). This phenomenon is also found in the subjunctive and imperative moods: *t'i thush* (you say), *ta qush* (you call), *ta dush* (you love), *të rush* (you guard); *thuj* (say), *duje* (love), *quje* (call), *luje* (play), *shuje* (put out), *ruje* (protect).

Verbs with stems ending in a consonant, especially verbs with ***-ol(l)*** and ***-or(r),*** appear in the third-person singular without an ending: *mur* (he took), *dul* (he went out). These forms are retained in the plural: *murën* (they took), *dulën* (they went out). This form is typical for the older generation (aged 80-90), while younger generations use the forms *doli* (he went out) and *morën* (they took), in which the vowel *u* has changed to *o*. These forms are also found in Kristoforidhi's works, but with the unassimilated ***ue*** cluster, which is rarely heard in this dialect nowadays: *qi muer* (that he took), *Perëndia e muer* (God took it).

Future Tense: The features that characterize the future tense are connected to the particles ***të*** and ***do***. In everyday speech, the particle *të* is almost always fully assimilated by the speakers, or only

the vowel ***ë*** is assimilated, and sometimes the particle is dropped entirely: *do t'bi* (I will come), *do t'hyj* (I will enter), *do t'ikësh* (you will leave), *do dal* (I will go out), *t'loth* (you tire), *do t'shkeli* (I will step), *do t'thot* (he will say), but also: *do bi* (I will come), *do hy* (I will enter), *do ikësh* (you will leave), *do dal* (I will go out).

Typical for the older generation is the formation of the future with the particle ***da***: *da e mloje* (he will cover), *da e maroje* (he will finish), *da e shkruje* (he will write), da *e filloje* (he will start).

Kristoforidhi does not use the ***do*** + ***subjunctive*** form for the future; instead, he uses periphrastic forms expressing future meaning (Kaçi Myrta 2014: 174-181): *kam me dalën* (I will go out), *kam me t'pasën* (I will have), *kemi me i piekë* (we will bake them), *kemi me i ngranë* (we will eat them), *due me dal* (I want to go out), *due me marr* (I want to take).

The dominance of this periphrastic form in Kristoforidhi's works could be seen as an influence from older Gheg authors, or as evidence of its presence in earlier periods in Elbasanisht.

8.2 Passive Form

The simple past passive form is generally created using the particle ***u*:** *u gzu* (he was happy), *u hudh* (he was thrown), *u hodh* (he jumped), *u zgju* (he woke up), *u smun* (he got sick), *u lodh* (he got tired), *u qetsu* (he calmed down), etc.

However, among older speakers (aged 80-90), is present the sigmatic aorist, similar to the Shpati variety (Çeliku 1971: 232) and Central Albanian varieties (Gjinari, Shkurtaj 2003: 240): *u gzu* (he was happy), *u hu ësh* (he was thrown), *u qu* (he woke up), *u smu ësh* (he got sick), *u lo ësh* (he got tired), *u qetsu* (he calmed down).

In Kristoforidhi's works, the vowel ***u***, characteristic of the passive past tense (simple past), is attached directly to the verb, forming a single word. For example: *uafrue* (approached), *me ungjallunë* (was resurrected), *uturnë* (turned), *uzmiruenë* (were better). This may be due to the influence of older Gheg authors or Kristoforidhi's attempt to place the formative element within the word, similar to how the active simple past is formed with a suffix.

8.3 Subjunctive Mood

It is observed that verbs ending in a consonant form the second and third-person singular of the present subjunctive with the endings ***-ish*** and ***-i*:** *të mos humi* (so you don't lose), *të përcjelli* (so he can accompany), *të shofish* (so you can see), *t'shkeli* (so he steps), *t'fusish* (so you put in), *t'vrasi* (so he kills), *t'kapi* (so he grabs), *ta përplasish* (so you smash), *të puthish* (so you kiss), *të pëllcasish* (so you explode), *t'i shtypish* (so you crush), *ta varish* (so you hang).

This form of the subjunctive is found primarily among the older generation (over 80-90 years old), while the standard form dominates among the middle-aged and younger generations. Kristoforidhi also uses this form: *ta mbëledhish afërë teje* (you collect it near you).

In rare cases, among 90-year-old speakers, the third person singular of the present subjunctive is formed with the suffix ***-ç*,** typical of the Tosk dialect: *t'veç* (so you separate), *t'fuç* (so you put in). Kristoforidhi also uses this form: *deri sa të veç* (until you go), *sikur të veç* (as if you go).

8.4 Imperative Mood

The passive second-person plural imperative form is constructed from the verb stem and the suffix ***-i*:** *prishi* (destroy), *lodhi* (tire), *qeshi* (laugh). This form is primarily found among older speakers (aged 70-80), while in all age groups, the form appears with the suffix ***-ni*:** *prishni* (destroy), *lodhni* (tire), *qeshni* (laugh), etc.

Verbs ending in a vowel form the imperative by adding the anti-hiatal sound ***h***: *nrihi* (rise, stand up), *lahi* (wash), *qahi* (cry), *bahi* (become), *vihi* (put on). This form is also found in Kristoforidhi's works: *shumohi* (multiply), *mbushi* (fill), *ngrihi* (stand up), *ini* (be). The same construction is used

when the verb is preceded by the particle *mos* (or *mo*): *mo lahi* (don't wash), *mo bahi* (don't become), *mo vihi* (don't put on), *mo mërziti* (don't bother), *mo qahi* (don't cry), *mo shtohi* (don't increase).

The form ***mo*** is especially common in the speech of the older generation. In Kristoforidhi's works, we encounter the form ***mos*:** *mos i afrohi* (don't approach), *mos e vra* (don't kill).

9. Non-Finite Forms

9.1 Participle

Generally, verbs in the first conjugation appear without a suffix in their participle form: *punu* (worked), *msu* (learned), *kënu* (sung), *ba* (done), *la* (washed), *mallku* (cursed), *mulu* (covered), *maru* (finished), *fitu* (won), *luftu* (fought), *gatu* (cooked), *pranu* (accepted), *eduku* (educated).

Some verbs of the first conjugation, as well as some irregular and suppletive verbs, take the suffix ***-n*** in the participle, similar to the Shpati variety (Çeliku 1971: 232): *lan* (washed), *than* (said), *përzan* (chased), *dhan* (given), *ran* (fallen), *van* (gone).

Among some older speakers, we also find the participle with the ending ***-m***, as in the case of the verb *bëj* (to do), which appears as *ba* (done), while in other age groups, the typical form *ba* is used.

The participle form with ***-m*** is considered archaic and soon to disappear, for Kristoforidhi, this participle form is typical and predominant, retaining the final vowel ***ë*** as well, likely due to Tosk Albanian influence: *(kanë) vum* (placed), *(kanë) prum* (brought), *(pa) lem* (left), *(pa) vram* (killed), *(kam me) vumë* (I will place), *(kam me) prumë* (I will bring), *(ke me) hymë* (you will enter).

Kristoforidhi generally prefers the ***-m*** ending, which is still heard in the older generation of Elbasan speakers, though it is gradually being replaced by the ***-n*** ending.

9.2 Infinitive

The periphrastic infinitive, constructed with the prepositional particle ***për*** and the indefinite verbal noun (neutral), is widely used as it is in Tosk Albanian and Central Albanian dialects (Gjinari, Shkurtaj 2003: 241): *për t'flejt* (to sleep), *për t'pi* (to drink), *për t'gatu* (to cook), *për t'i majt* (to keep), *për t'net* (to stay overnight), *për t'u pa* (to be seen), *për t'qëllu* (to hit), *për t'friksu* (to frighten), *për t'marr* (to take), *për t'menju* (to think), *për t'blu* (to grind).

In the speech of older speakers (aged 70-80), we also found the infinitive constructed with the pronominal particle *me*, which in northern and central Gheg is the dominant infinitive form. It is widely used in the western varieties of Central Albania, while in Elbasan is less common (Gjinari, Shkurtaj 2003: 241). Examples include *eth me fjet* (he came to sleep), *shkun me bamë* (they went to do), *shkum me fol* (we went to speak).

This form of the infinitive, whose traces are still found in Elbasanisht, is also present in Kristoforidhi's works: *me ardhë* (to come), *me u bamë* (to become), *me vram* (to kill), *me prum* (to bring). Since this form of the infinitive is only found among the older generation, its presence in Kristoforidhi's works may indicate a broader usage in earlier decades of this form in Elbasanisht.

9.3 Gerund

The most common gerund form is constructed with the particle ***duke***, but among older speakers (over 60), the forms ***tuke*** and ***tuj*** are also found. The form ***tuke*** is predominant and typical, especially among speakers over 70: *tuke e la* (washing), *tuke e ledhatu* (caressing), *tuke hec* (walking), *tuke knu* (singing), *tuke menu* (thinking), *tuke kalu* (passing), *tuj menu* (thinking), *tuj kënu* (singing), *tuj shetit* (walking), *tuj pi* (drinking). Kristoforidhi uses the forms ***tue*** and ***tuke***: *tuke pim venë* (drinking wine), *tuke i ranë trumpetësë* (blowing the trumpet), *tuke lehë kam-kum* (barking loudly).

9.4 Adverb

This language variety is characterized by distinct forms of adverbs of various types, often resulting from the assimilation of sounds—a typical feature of this dialect, making it a fundamental characteristic.

Adverbs of Time: The adverb ***tani*** (now) appears in different forms such as ***ime, nime***, and ***tashi*****:** *e maj men si ime* (I remember it now), *ime u kthy* (now he returned), *fjetën ime* (they slept now), *ime sa marun* (just finished now), *ime do veç* (now he will leave), *hangu nime* (he ate now), *nime sa erth* (now that he came), *nime sa e zun* (just caught now), *tashi tham* (I say now), *a von tashi* (is it late now), *tashi sa u ulësh* (just now he sat down).

In Kristoforidhi's works we commonly find the form *tashti*: *tashti po zam* (now I am coming), *tashti vijënë* (now they are coming), *po sikur t'arrinjë edhe ai tashti* (what if he also arrives now), *ngre syt'e tu tashti* (raise your eyes now), *këjo tashti* (this now). The fact that the forms ***ime*** and ***nime*** are not found in Kristoforidhi's writings could be due to two factors: either Kristoforidhi was influenced by Tosk Albanian, or these forms may represent later linguistic developments in this dialect. This remains an open hypothesis and a subject for future research, including comparisons with other authors of the same period from Elbasan city.

Instead of the adverb ***pastaj*** (then), the forms ***ani*** and ***eni*** are used. *Ani* is more widespread, while *eni* is primarily found among the older generation: *do merrje ani* (you would take it then), *ani tjetra* (then the other), *prun këto ani* (then he brought these), *z'do e shifje me sy ani un* (then you wouldn't even look at me), *ani pritesh fjala* (then the word was awaited), *ani ikët tuke kërcy* (then you left while dancing), *uleshin eni* (they sat down then), *eni do baheshin gati* (then they were getting ready), *eni u largu* (then he left), *fillum hallet e jetës eni* (then we started talking about life's problems), *eni vishin fmit* (then the children would come), *fillonte eni* (then it started), *eni merrshin i gjilpan* (then they would take a needle), *mas dy-tre ditësh eni* (after two or three days then).

This typical form ***ani*** is also found in Kristoforidhi's works as the dominant form: *ani i dha* (then he gave it), *ani pruni* (then he brought it), *ani i tha ati* (then he told him), *ani pruni prap* (then he brought it again), *ani edhe gratë* (then the women).

The adverb ***atëherë*** (then) appears in the form ***mat'here***: *m'u mush mu mat'here menja* (then I had the thought), *e dhash un mat'here fjalën* (then I gave my word), *mat'here baheshin për paj shamija koke* (then headscarves were prepared for the dowry), *i hoth daja mat' here* (then the uncle threw it), *kan arth shum gra mat'here* (many women came then), *nuk i kam ba mat'here* (I didn't make them then), *kur fejohesh goca mat'here* (when the girl got engaged then), *i thon atyne mat'here* (they said to them then).

Kristoforidhi uses the full form ***atëherë,*** likely due to the influence of Tosk Albanian: *atëherë (rrinjnë) ndë dhe* (then they stay on the ground), *atëhere harusha ra ndë bisht* (then the bear fell on its tail), *atëherë mundemi* (then we can).

In the older generation, the forms ***masanej*** and ***masanaj*** (after this, then) are used: *masanej zgjatte dy jav* (then it lasted two weeks), *masanej kto ishin t'pajës* (then these were part of the dowry), *masanej n'gëzime* (then at celebrations), *masanaj ma nuk të pashë* (then I didn't see you anymore), *masanaj u harru* (then it was forgotten). Kristoforidhi, preserving almost all vowel clusters intact, uses the form ***mbasandaj/mbasandai*****:** *mbasandai u përdanë* (then they separated), *mbasandaj si hynë të bijt e Perëndisë* (then when the sons of God entered), *mbasandaj darkënë* (then at dinner), *mbasandaj prish shoqëninë* (then he ruined the friendship), *mbasandaj s'gjuëjnë ma* (then they don't shoot anymore).

Adverbs of Place: In Elbasanisht, especially among the older generation, we find the forms ***qark*** and ***përqark*** for the adverbs of place ***rreth, përreth*** and ***rreth e rotull*** (around): *vite tymi përqark* (the smoke went around), *kurse përqark tjerët sipas rradhës* (while others were around in order), *do vite përqark* (he went around), *baje badena përqark* (he held it around), *jeleku përqark* (the vest around), *rrite përqark* (he walked around), *i shkote përqark* (he went around him), *i bije përqark* (he circled around him); *i shkoje qark e përqark* (he went around and around), *e qenisje qark e përqark*

(he stitched around), *e mloje qark e përqark* (he covered around), *i millje qark e përqark* (he sowed around), *ja thoje qark e përqark* (he told him all around), *ja vije qark e përqark* (he placed it all around).

The form ***përqark*** is also found in Kristoforidhi's works: *e rrethuene përqark* (surrounded around), *qi sillei përqark* (who circled around), which suggests a broader historical use of this form.

9.5 Preposition

The preposition ***prej*** (from), in some older speakers (aged 80-90), can be heard in the form ***pri,*** as in the example: *pri atyne* (from them). Kristoforidhi uses the preposition ***prej*** in a dual form: sometimes replacing the semivowel ***j*** with the vowel ***i,*** and sometimes using the full form. In his works, we encounter the usage *prei njeriut* (from the person).

The preposition ***në*** (in) for the accusative case, among speakers of different generations, is used in the form *me* (me): *me 'i arkë* (in a box), *m'dy faqet* (in both cheeks), *m'pes* (at five), *me 'i ven* (in a place), *me 'i shpi* (in a house), *me 'i krevat* (in a bed), *ka shku me nai ven* (he went to some place), etc. In Kristoforidhi's works, we observe the widespread usage of the form ***ndë*** and ***ndëpër***: *ndë malt* (in the mountain), *ndë shtëpi të vet* (in his own house), *ndëpër shtëpit tueja* (through your houses).

10. Conclusions

Considering that social and historical factors bring changes and innovations in language we studied the morphological features of the variety of Elbasan in generetions and place it in a comparative framework with the morphological features used by Kristoforidhi in his works.
After analyzing oll the data we have reached several important conclusions:

Lexico-grammatical Category of the Noun:

- The plural of nouns is formed without the final vowel ***ë***, unlike in Kristoforidhi's works, where this vowel is generally preserved. Additionally, the masculine plural is retained with the ending ***a,*** whereas Kristoforidhi predominantly uses the plural ending ***ë.*** This could be viewed as an influence from Tosk dialect or from older Gheg authors that Kristoforidhi may have followed.
- While the locative case is present nowadays only in some older speakers (aged 80-90), Kristoforidhi uses it more extensively. This suggests that the locative case might have been more widespread in this variety in the past.

Lexico-grammatical Category of the Adjective

- Participial adjectives appear with the suffix ***-un*** (among the older generation) and ***-me*** in the middle-aged and younger generations, whereas Kristoforidhi uses suffixes like ***-un, -shun, -shëm,*** **and** ***-shim.*** It is believed that the participial adjective formed with the suffix ***-un*** will soon disappear and will no longer be heard. This form will likely be replaced by the ***-me*** suffix even among older or more conservative speakers.

Lexico-grammatical Category of the Pronoun

- The pronouns ***im/ime*** are typical and also appear in the forms ***tem/teme*** among the older generation. Kristoforidhi also uses these forms also. The pronouns ***yt/jote*** are widely used in the forms ***tat/jot, tate/jote***. In the accusative, Kristoforidhi uses the form ***tande***, preserving the full consonant cluster ***nd*** as in Tosk dialect, while in the dative, he uses the form ***sate***, also similar to Tosk dialect.
- Instead of the interrogative pronoun *si*, the form ***qysh*** is used, while Kristoforidhi uses the form ***qish,*** influenced by southern Tosk.

Lexico-grammatical Category of the Verb

- The verb ***jam*** (to be) in the third person singular appears in the forms: ***â, âsh, âsht*** across all generations. Kristoforidhi also uses the form ***âsht***, but he often retains the final vowel ***ë***

as in Tosk dialect.

- In Elbasanisht, among the older generation, the simple past tense appears in the form ***dul*** (went) and ***mur*** (took), while in the younger generation, it appears as ***doli*** and ***mori.*** Kristoforidhi uses the older form with the vowel ***u,*** but he retains the full diphthong, as found in more northern Gheg dialects: *muer* (took), *duel* (went).
- The typical future tense is constructed using ***do*** plus the subjunctive form (do+lidhore). Kristoforidhi, however, uses a periphrastic form to express the future, such as *kemi me i ngranë* (we will eat them) or *due me dal* (I want to go out). This form, which is not found in this dialect nowadays, may be influenced by other Gheg dialects or could be evidence of its earlier presence in Elbasanisht.
- The simple past passive form is constructed with the particle ***u*** (e.g., *u hodh* - he was thrown). Kristoforidhi uses this form as well, but he attaches it directly to the verb (e.g., *uafrue* - approached). This may be an influence from older authors or a stylistic choice by Kristoforidhi to incorporate the formative element into the word itself, similar to how the active simple past is formed with a suffix.
- In the older generation (aged 80-90), verbs ending in a consonant, in the second and third person singular of the present subjunctive, are used with the suffixes ***-ish*** and ***-i*** (e.g., *të marrish* - you take, *të flasish* - you speak), whereas in the middle-aged and younger generations, the suffixes ***-ësh*** and ***-sh*** are used (e.g., *të marrësh* - you take, *të flasësh* - you speak). Kristoforidhi also uses the form with ***-ish,*** indicating that this form was once more widely spread in the written in Elbasanisht. A similar feature is observed with the formation of the third person singular in the present subjunctive, which in the older generation is formed with the suffix ***-ç***, typical of Tosk dialect.
- Verbs that end in a vowel in the older generation (aged 80-90) form the imperative by adding the anti-hiatal sound *h* (e.g., *nrihi* - rise). Kristoforidhi uses these forms as well: *shumohi* (multiply), *mbushi* (fill), *ngrihi* (rise), *ini* (be - plural). This characteristic highlights a continuity of this anti-hiatal feature in both the older Elbasanisht and Kristoforidhi's writings.

10.1 Non-finite Forms

Participle: Among some older speakers, the participle appears with the ending ***-m,*** such as in the case of the verb ***bëj,*** which is found in the form ***ba.*** In other age groups, the typical form ***ba****:* is used. While the participle form with ***-m*** is considered archaic and is expected to gradually disappear, in Kristoforidhi's works, this participle form is typical and dominant, indicating that it was once widely prevalent in Elbasanisht.

Infinitive: The same applies to the infinitive. Among the older generation (aged 90) and in Kristoforidhi's works, the infinitive is found with the pronominal particle ***me*** (e.g., *me bamë* - to do, *me ardhë* - to come). This usage in Kristoforidhi, as well as its presence in the older generation, suggests that this form was more common in the past.

Lexico-grammatical Category of the Adverb

Both in the older generation and in Kristoforidhi's writings, the adverb ***masanej*** **or** ***masanaj*** (after, then, later) was present. In Kristoforidhi's works, the consonant cluster ***mb*** is preserved in full, appearing as *mbasandaj* (after, later), should be seen as an influence of the Tosk dialect.

Based on the observation, comparison, and analysis of linguistic data concerning in the morphological aspect, we can conclude the following:

I. The language variety of Elbasan is more innovative than conservative. Features that were widely used in Kristoforidhi's works have now mostly become part of the older generation's vocabulary, such as: the locative case, participial adjectives with the suffix ***-un***, the simple past tense forms ***dul*** and ***mur,*** the second person singular present subjunctive with the

suffix ***-ish,*** the Gheg infinitive or the infinitive with the pronominal particle ***me***.

II. The language variety of Elbasan is part of Gheg dialect and the presence of some linguistic features of Tosk dialect used by Kristoforidhi in his works should be seen related to his knowledges about two dialects of Albanian language, and as an influence of "the language" used in the works of older Gheg authors (such as Buzuku or Bogdani), where Tosk elements were still preserved.

In this study we aimed to highlight the changes occurred in the language variety of Elbasan: differences between generations (synchronic study) and changes over time (diachronic study). But what we need to point out is that the language changes will always happen, as long as the language is similar to an "human organizm": Language was born as a sighn of a new step through "the darknees" to a new life, it developed and changed over the centuries, being sometimes conservative and sometimes innovative….running towards the future.

So, we must emphasize that language change constitutes one of the most important aspects of linguistic studies and it is a phenomenon that will always be present, as long as the language is in use (Kaçi, Myrta 2021: 58-59). Therefore the duty of all the language researchers is to be focused on language change, to discover and determine all its variability.

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