

Structures Confused in English by Albanian Students

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Abstract

This survey consists of a scientific study done with the students of English in the class. Analyzing different parts of speech in English compared to those in Albanian language, some questions were raised: Nominal predicate or Adjective? Nominal predicate or Adverb? Nominal Predicate or Object? As a teacher of English language, I have noticed that the use of nominal predicates appointed after the verb, poses a serious problem for the students studying English language. As far as the position of the of this part of speech is after the verb, the nominal predicate is sometimes confused with other parts of speech. From the study done with some of the students during the class, it was observed that the nominal predicate was confused with an adjective used in its common function, with the adverb and the object.

Key words: parts of speech, nominal predicate, adjective, adverb, object, confused.

1. Introduction

As a lecture of English, I have noticed that the use of nominal predicate after the verb, is a serious problem for albanian students studying English. As a result of its order after the verb, the nominal predicate is often confused with an adjective used in its ordinary function, an adverb and an object. This article relies on some questions as:

1. Nominal Predicate or adjective?
2. Nominal predicate or adverb?
3. Nominal Predicate or object

1.1 Nominal Predicate or Adjective

He is a handsome boy. (english)

Ai është një djalë simpatik. (albanian)

In this sentence the adjective "handsome" (in albanian "simpatik" finds its ordinary use. Although located after the copula "I am", it defines the subject, in our case expressed by the personal pronoun, but the name "boy" (in albanian "djale"). Thus, the adjectivee does not enter into relationships with the subject, but with the noun that has the function of the nominal predicate. In the role of the nominal part in this sentence is used the noun phrase "handsome boy" (djale simpatik.)

A major characteristic for the english language, unlikely to that of albanian language is that the adjective is used before the noun and not after it. The exceptions are very few cases of type:: *proof positive, matters philosophical, paradise lost etc.*

The adjective is used as the nominal part only when it enters into relationship with the subject or the object.

This boy is handsome. (english)

Ky djalë është simpatik. (albanian)

1.2 Nominal Predicate or Adverb?

He looked sad. (nominal predicate).

Ai dukej i trishtuar. (Albanian)

He looked sadly. (adverb)

Ai shikonte me trishtim. (Albanian)

In both languages, in the first sentence that part of speech after the verb enters in relation to the subject, it describes a quality. Consequently, it is a nominal predicate.

In the second sentence the part of speech after the verb enters in relation to the verb and describes the verb. Consequently, it is an adverb.

But the typology of students' errors has a more complex nature than the above examples. Their tendency is to use the adverb instead of nominal predicate and vice versa, in the following cases:

The verb "feel bad" against "feel badly"

"Bad" is the adjective in English, while "badly" is the adverb. Adverb suffixes distinguished from "ly" (characteristic for wordformation in English, the transition of an adjective into an adverb).

Correct: I feel bad. (correct, as it gives a quality to the first personal pronoun I)

Wrong: I feel badly. (in this case "badly" is wrong as the nominal part is used to give a quality to the subject, which in our case is a personal pronoun)

The verb "feel" can be followed by an adverb only in special cases when, for example, a blind person talks about his feelings toward his inability to distinguish the letters in a book written in Braille. (*I feel Badly today*).

Due to" against "because of"

Both these terms are synonymous with each other from the lexicon, but they can not replace each other grammatically. Whenever the word "due" is used, it should be a nominal predicate. "Because Of" is a prepositional expression and has the prepositional function in the sentence.

Wrong: *We were late due to the blowout.* (wrong as "due" is not used as nominal predicate, so in its real function)

Correct: *We were late because of the blowout.* (this clause needs a prepositional phrase and not a nominal predicate)

Correct: *Our lateness was due to the blowout.* (the use of "due to" is correct as this clause is asking for a nominal predicate).

We can never start a clause with the nominal predicate "due to".

Wrong: *Due to the weather, there was a large crowd.*

Correct: *Because of the weather, there was a large crowd.*

"Prior to" against "before"

In one of its other meanings "due to" is similar to the phrase "prior to", thus we say that "prior to" appear as a nominal predicate. This word from the semantic point of view is synonymous with "Before". The latter is a preposition, although synonymous, they can not replace each other.

Wrong: *Our meeting was scheduled prior to May 15.* (wrong as "prior to" is used as a preposition)

Correct: *Our meeting was scheduled before May, 15.*

Wrong: *The letter came prior to the package.*

Correct: *The letter came before the package.*

Correct: *The arrival of the letter was prior to that of the package.* (the use of "prior to" is correct as it is used as a nominal predicate in this clause)

"Prior to" cannot be used in the beginning of the clause.

Wrong: *Prior to the winter, we repaired the roof.*

Correct: *Before the winter, we repaired the roof.*

1.3 Nominal Predicate or Object

It often happens that the nominal predicate is confused with the object, due to the same position in the sentence. Both the nominal predicate and the object are placed after the verb, but their uses come to two conclusions:

Firstly, the nominal predicate is expressed by a noun or adjective. The object is expressed only by a noun or noun phrase.

She seemed a nice girl./nice

He met a nice girl/*nice.

As a conclusion, we may say that when the predicative is expressed by a noun phrase, noun+ adjective, the noun can be omitted without destroying the meaning of the clause. Whereas, in the case when the object is used, the noun can not be left out.

Secondly, the verb which is followed by a nominal part can not be turned from active into passive, whereas the verb followed by an object can be turned from active into passive.

Ed became a minister.

**A minister had become Ed*

Edi u bë ministër.

Ed attacked a minister.

A minister was attacked by Ed.

Edi sulmoi një ministër.

Një ministër u sulmua nga Ed.

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