

## Linguistics and the Teaching of the Less-Commonly Taught Languages

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*Mirë se vini në këtë klasë, një hyrje në gjuhësinë shqipe. Quhem Brajën Xhozef dhe jam profesori për këtë klasë.*

With these words, I orally greeted the eight students in my East European Languages and Literatures (EELL) 671 course at The Ohio State University on the first day of class in the Winter quarter of 2007. It is fairly simple Albanian, as the translation and parsing below suggest, and my point was to provide a point of departure for discussing the theme and organization of the course.

I told the students there for the class that among my hopes for them was that by the end of the course they would be able not only to both understand what I said and formulate a reply, but also to understand how all the pieces of the message went together to yield the meaning encoded. To clarify these goals, I next wrote the words on the board and led the class through a brief exercise in parsing, asking what they could figure out from this message, essentially guessing as to what was what in it. Not surprisingly, they guessed that *klasë* and *profesori* somehow represented words for class and professor, respectively, and that *Brajën Xhozef* somehow spelled my name; from that, they drew the reasonable inference that *quhem* meant something like my name is. All of these were correct guesses, as it happens.

At that point, I provided a full translation: Welcome to this class, an introduction to Albanian linguistics. I am called/named Brian Joseph, and I am the professor for this class. Then, by way of laying out the further goals of the course, I explained that by the end of the course in the middle of March of that year, they would understand why there is no word that looks like *Albanian* in the message even though that meaning is present in the translation (i.e. why *shqipe* is the name of the language), what the letters *q*, *ë*, *y*, and *x(h)* were doing here (i.e. what they (and other elements) say about Albanian orthography and phonology), why a speaker from a different part of the Albanian-speaking world would not say *quhem* but rather *kljuhem* or even *cuhem* (i.e. material on Albanian dialects), among other things.

These together reveal the purpose of the course, namely to provide an overview of a variety of linguistic perspectives on the Albanian language while at the same time offering some practical skills

and a bit of information on Albanian history and culture. In what follows, I reveal more about the course and propose it as a model for teaching about the less commonly taught languages.

First, though, let me discuss the dilemmas that the less commonly taught languages (LCTLs) present, and then consider how a course such as EELL 671 might be a solution to some of these problems.

One key issue with LCTLs is that it is hard to sustain classes in these languages, especially as upper levels are reached. In an ideal world, enrolments would not matter, but we do not live in an ideal world. Student enrolment is the currency that drives much of the academic economy at most universities, and thus enrolment issues with LCTLs cannot be ignored, especially since most LCTL offerings focus on a one-to-two year sequence of language courses emphasizing the traditional four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking that cannot legitimately have large numbers of students if they are to succeed in their goals. It is also the case that with lesser-known languages that are accordingly less popular on most campuses, often the clientele simply is not there, and independent financial support, e.g. from outside grants or from private benefactors, that could make offering them possible even without substantial enrolments, also often simply is not there.

I feel it is worth raising the question of whether a four-skills approach is really needed to have some coverage of the LCTLs. No one can deny the value of developing a deep practical knowledge of these languages, or of any language, for that matter. Still, a year or even two of a given LCTL often is not enough, for most students, to allow for the development of skills and knowledge even approximating a specialist's understanding of the full scope of what study of the language entails; that is, learning a language well takes several years of hard and intensive work. At the same time, though, knowing about a language and even knowing a language somewhat can be very useful even without the broad and deep practical knowledge that comes with advanced levels of study. Such more limited knowledge can not only be personally enriching for any learner but can also be of value in a number of areas of scholarly and other endeavors. Linguists are often chided, in some instances quite fairly, for not being fully fluent in languages that might figure in their research, and to be sure, fluency and a full range of knowledge are important, in that the more one knows the better one can analyze and understand the language and its social and historical setting. Still, for linguists, it is clear to me that as desirable as a deep knowledge of a language is, it is also the case that skill levels one reaches after years of study may be more than most need to make progress in understanding (or at least beginning to understand) the analytical, historical, and social issues a given language presents. Moreover, it seems that the same can probably be said for anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and even governmental and nongovernmental workers interested in the region where the language is used. This is not to suggest that language learning should be abandoned for the LCTLs -- specialists with real fluency are of course always needed -- but rather to suggest that, given limited resources, a one-term course that gives students a taste of what the issues are with a language, that is a course like my EELL 671 on Albanian, may be an efficient and effective way of getting them started towards an appreciation of various LCTLs.

Now for more details about the course itself. As noted above, my goal was to offer a blend of practical knowledge of the language with linguistic knowledge of the structure, history, and

dialectology as well. To meet those ends in a ten-week period covering in principle 40 contact hours (two hours twice a week, though we lost two days to holidays and bad weather that closed the university), certain compromises needed to be made. The practical knowledge conveyed was admittedly rather limited, starting with greetings and simple sentence patterns, and relying in a few reading passages on the presence of internationalisms and borrowings, words such as *profesori* or *klasë* above that are easily recognizable to English speakers, to help students get the gist of the reading so that only the most essential details of grammar could be given attention. It turned out though that the greetings presented some structures that led nicely into a discussion of grammatical structure that provided an overview of the organization of the verbal system.

In the particular case of Albanian, there were several basic issues that I thought were important to cover, as listed in (1). In slightly overlapping ways, some of these pertain to the sociology of the language (1a, 1b, 1c), some to its history, including both its prehistory (1d, 1f, 1l) and what is known about its development since first attestation (1c, 1e, 1l), some to its structure (1g, 1i, 1j, 1k), and some to more practical matters of using the language (1h, 1k, 1l):

- (1) a. social and geographical setting for Albanian
- b. sources of knowledge about Albanian
- c. dialect divisions within Albanian
- d. Albanian as an Indo-European language
- e. Albanian as a Balkan language
- f. the etymology of the ethnonyms *shqip* and *Albanian*
- g. the sound system of Albanian
- h. Albanian orthography
- i. the structure of the Albanian verb
- j. Albanian noun structure
- k. the use of little words ( particles ) in Albanian
- l. sources of Albanian vocabulary

In addition, as noted above, there were various other ways that the practical goal of developing a limited working knowledge of the language were met, via the learning of greetings and simple sentence patterns, but also vocabulary and productive word-formation processes. While all of these topics are particular to Albanian, similar sorts of issues can be developed for any targeted LCTL.

My original plan for the ten-week quarter was to spend roughly two weeks on historical questions, two weeks on practical issues, four weeks on structure, and two weeks on dialects. However, it soon became clear that it would not be a good strategy to try to accomplish that much coverage by treating the topics consecutively, e.g. history for the first two weeks, practical skills the last two weeks, etc. Rather, just as some overlaps among these topics are noted in the enumeration given above, in the classroom there was considerable overlap too. For instance, it was hard to talk about the history and prehistory of the language without talking about dialects; since Albanian is attested rather late, only from 1462, a comparison of the modern dialects (cf. (1c)) and the information one gains by applying the Comparative Method to dialect material often have to stand in for what direct attestation with other languages can provide. Similarly, the varied sources of Albanian vocabulary (inheritances from Proto-Indo-European, old loans from

Greek, loans from Latin, later loans from Slavic, apparently old shared words with Romanian, Turkish loans, and more recent borrowings), while offering insights useful for practical vocabulary building, especially regarding loans in the modern era, are also critical for understanding the history and prehistory of the language. Furthermore, upon reflections, it did not make sense to segregate the development of practical skills and relegate them to one two-week stretch of class time; even limited skills are better taught bit-by-bit over several weeks rather than as a “crash” course in a relatively brief concentrated period.

So, each class had some time devoted to practical skills, usually at the beginning, and that was used as a basis oftentimes for discussing other issues. I was aided in the class by the availability of two native speakers who were students at Ohio State and who were interested in furthering any learning about their language. The University’s federally funded Center for Slavic and East European Studies kindly provided token honoraria of \$200 each to these students,<sup>1</sup> giving them a sense of investment in the course, and one student was able to come to each of the classes and both made themselves available to meet each week with the students taking the class for some conversation practice and to allow them to pursue small linguistically oriented research projects (see Appendix C.I).

As an example of how the various topics ended up being interwoven as some of the material from the training in practical skills fed perfectly into other topics, let me mention a few choice instances in which the learning of greetings and simple sentences, when coupled with an explication of how these greetings meant what they did, led to discussions on grammatical categories, on semantics, on Albanian as a Balkan language, and on dialectology. In particular, the verb *quhem* used in my introduction on the first day together with the parting phrase, *mirupafshim* “goodbye” (literally: *mir-* well + *u* each-other + *pafshim* may-we-see, i.e. may we see each-other well), also learned the first day, provided a basis for introducing the important structural distinction between active and nonactive verbs, with their different sets of endings, and for discussing the use of various “little words” for grammatical purposes. This was possible because the nonpresent forms of the nonactive (such as the optative verb form in *mirupafshim*) are marked by the “little word” *u* (which usually precedes the verb) along with active endings on the verb. Similarly, the all-purpose greeting *tungjatjeta* “hello; goodbye” (literally *të* that + *u* be + *gjatë* may-lengthen + *jeta* (your-)life), also learned fairly early, not only contains the nonactive *u* but also the ubiquitous subordinating marker *të* that is essential to understanding how Albanian accomplishes subordination and complementation. This material was covered in a few class sessions using some descriptive handouts (see Appendix B.II and B.III). The active/nonactive distinction moreover offered an important glimpse into the semantics of a category not found in English (which has nothing directly corresponding to the Albanian nonactive) and this was explored in a homework assignment (see Appendix C.III). Moreover, the various “little words” with grammatical value generally have parallels in other Balkan languages (e.g. *do* in the future matches up with Greek  $\theta\alpha$ , Macedonian *k e* etc., and the subjunctive marker *të* matches up with Greek *na*, Macedonian *da*, etc.) and thus they provide a basis for talking about Albanian as a Balkan language, that is as a language that shows structural convergence with its neighboring languages after centuries of sustained and intense contact with speakers of those languages.<sup>2</sup> Finally, since one of the key features of the

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<sup>1</sup> I gratefully acknowledge Center Director Dr. Halina Stephan for agreeing to these honoraria.

<sup>2</sup> This is the phenomenon known as the “Balkan Sprachbund”.

major dialect division within Albanian between Geg (the northern dialect group) and Tosk (the southern dialect group) is the way in which the future is marked (with *do* plus an optional *të* plus finite verb forms in Tosk versus another little word *me* plus an infinitival form in Geg), a discussion of these verbal forms necessarily involves one in a consideration of Albanian dialectology.

This blend of practical knowledge (reinforced by bi-weekly quizzes designed to give a focus to the students studying; see Appendix D for some examples) with grammatical, historical, and dialectological information proved to be just the right ingredients for a successful class. There was no textbook per se, though the excellent set of notes on the structure of Albanian that was prepared by Victor Friedman of the University of Chicago and published on line by SEELRC (thus available at [http://www.seelrc.org:8080/grammar/pdf/albanian\\_bookmarked.pdf](http://www.seelrc.org:8080/grammar/pdf/albanian_bookmarked.pdf)) was our main source for facts about the grammar of Albanian, supplemented with informational sheets of my own creation, often drawing on the excellent (but now unfortunately out-of-print) comprehensive grammar by Leonard Newmark, Philip Hubbard, and Peter Prifti, *Standard Albanian. A reference grammar for students* (1982, Stanford University Press). Similarly for details about history and prehistory and about the Balkans, I relied on materials of my own creation (see Appendix B for some examples, including B.I on Illyrian and Albanian prehistory). The preparation of materials took time, of course, but that is to be expected. Moreover, by structuring the class around some homework assignments designed to make the students confront some data from Albanian and attempt to analyze it (see Appendix C for some examples), I was able to make the class sessions somewhat interactive (and not just lecture-style) as we worked together to solve issues in the analysis of the verb, or eventually to apply our knowledge of the verb to simple reading passages (taken from David Cox's 1998 *Albanian Newspaper Reader* (Dunwoody Press)).

While the class offered a lot of information on Albanian, it was very much a linguistics class. Thus, since a few students did not have background in linguistics (and one can expect any similar course to be populated in part by nonlinguists, it was necessary to choose examples carefully and not to expect the nonlinguists to be able to internalize linguistic terminology. This put a premium on careful and clear explanations that were nontechnical but informative, but that is in the nature of what is called for in good teaching anyway.

Although I cannot document here everything that went on in the class, my hope is that this brief description, coupled with examples of the materials used that are included below in the Appendices, gives enough of a flavor of the course so that others can replicate its structure and its success with their own LCTLs.

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## Appendix A: EELL 671 Syllabus

### Eastern European Languages and Literatures 671 (Winter 2007): Introduction to Albanian Linguistics (Hyrje në Gjuhësinë Shqipe)

CLASS MEETINGS: M W 11:30 - 1:18 (Dreese Labs 705)

INSTRUCTOR: Brian D. Joseph  
OFFICES: 361 Hagerty Hall / 206 Oxley Hall (NB: 206 Oxley is my primary one)  
OFFICE HOURS: M W 8:30 - 9:15, or (preferably, by appointment) my default office for office hours is the one in Oxley, though I can meet in Hagerty if needed.  
Contact info: Phone 292-4981 (at both offices) / e-mail joseph.1@osu.edu

GOALS: The purpose of this course is to offer an introduction to Albanian linguistics, covering the basics about the study of this language from a variety of linguistic perspectives. Topics to be covered include Albanian's external and internal history, the structure of the language (phonology, morphology, and syntax), and Albanian dialectology. In addition, a portion of the course is devoted to developing (to an admittedly limited extent) some practical Albanian skills, involving simple conversation (greetings, basic structures for requests and questions, etc.) and relatively easy readings from beginning-level materials.

READINGS: There are four general and highly readable surveys (see below) covering various aspects about the language, and these constitute the required readings for the course. I expect also that you will do readings on your own about Albanian, drawing on Hamp 1972 and other sources you encounter, and one of the assignments below (#5) is designed to stimulate you with regard to these additional readings. Here are the survey articles (copies of which will be made available to you):

- a. Shaban Demiraj: chapter on Albanian in A. Ramat & P. Ramat (eds.), *The Indo-European Languages* (Routledge, 2006)
- b. Benjamin Fortson: chapter on Albanian in his book *Indo-European Language and Culture* (Blackwell, 2004)
- c. Eric P. Hamp: article on Albanian in R. Asher (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (Pergamon, 1994)
- d. Xhevat Lloshi: chapter on Albanian in U. Hinrichs (ed.), *Handbuch der Südosteuropa-Linguistik* (Harrassowitz, 1999)

(and note also Hamp 1972, a bibliographic essay: Albanian . In *Current Trends in Linguistics 9 (Linguistics in Western Europe*, ed. by T. Sebeok), pp. 1626-92. The Hague: Mouton).

In addition, you should all download (and print out for yourselves) the excellent, but highly compressed, set of notes on the structure of Albanian that was prepared by Victor Friedman (go to [http://www.seelrc.org:8080/grammar/pdf/albanian\\_bookmarked.pdf](http://www.seelrc.org:8080/grammar/pdf/albanian_bookmarked.pdf)).

## ASSIGNMENTS:

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Doing the readings mentioned above):   | 0% towards final grade (but expected) |
| 2. Participating in class discussions:  | 0% towards final grade (but expected) |
| 3. Various written assignments (some 6-8 take-home homeworks in all, as well as bi-weekly quizzes every other Monday (1/8, 1/22, 2/5, 2/19, 3/5):                                     | 40% towards final grade               |
| 4. Consultant exercise (see separate sheet):  | 30% towards final grade               |
| 5. Annotated bibliography (find any five articles on Albanian (from whatever sources you can find the internet offers enough to work with) and write 300-500 word summaries of them): | 30% towards final grade               |

## Appendix B: Some Contentful Class Handouts

### I. Sources on Ancient Illyrian (regarding Albanian prehistory)

A Sampling of Facts and Data about Ancient Illyrian (largely from R. Katicic, *Ancient Languages of the Balkans* (1976)):

1. Ancient (Greek) testimony for a precise political entity (p. 155) called Illyrians in western Balkans in ancient times, including, post-4<sup>th</sup> century BC, southern Adriatic coast):
  - " Thucydides (5<sup>th</sup> cent. BC)
  - " Demosthenes (4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC)
  - " Strabo (1<sup>st</sup> cent. BC)
  - " Appian (Hellenistic period)
2. Ancient testimony for a large ethnic group whose territory extended deep into Balkan mainland (p. 156) with name Illyrian
  - " Herodotus (5<sup>th</sup> cent. BC)
  - " Periplus of Pseudo-Scylax (4<sup>th</sup> cent. BC)
  - " Pseudo-Scymnus (1<sup>st</sup> cent. BC)
3. NB: many tribes were said to be under the rubric of Illyrian (especially in sense in (2), both in Greek and in Roman traditions (and not all were in the Balkans))
4. Illyrian evidence (an inscription on a ring found in Kalaja Dalmaçes, near Shkodër, thus within Ancient Illyricum

**A N A**  
**O H Θ H**  
**I C E P**

Read (by Hans Krahe) as:

- " **ana** deity (cf. Messapic inscriptions ostensibly addressed to ana aprodita, ana aθana)
- " **oe:θe:** goddess name
- " **iser** sacred (cf. Greek *hieros*, Sanskrit *is.ira-*)

Thus: To the goddess Oethe

5. But (Ogdenova 1958, 1959) archaeological setting for ring is Byzantine (thus not more ancient than c. 6<sup>th</sup> cent. AD, and maybe as late as 12<sup>th</sup> cent. AD); inscription to be read bottom to top (with IC interpreted as K rather than I + C (= S)):

K(URI)E [B]OHΘH AN(N)i O lord, help Anna

6. Scholion to Odyssey 5.281 reference to Illyrian **rhinos** mist ; cf. **Albre** (Geg **rê**, thus Proto-Albanian \*ren-), cloud . But, is there another explanation for the similarity?
7. Non-Greek ( Eleian , in northwest of Greece) gloss in Hesychius (c. 4 cent. AD): **bra** brothers maybe a form of Proto-Indo-European \*bhra:ter-, explained as an Illyrian loan (p. 171). But, what sense of explain here?
8. **Delminium** ( name of ancient capital of the Delmatae (p. 173), a powerful tribe on coastland of western Balkans connected by some with Alb.**dele/delme** sheep (but based on a misunderstanding of a reference in Strabo to the place as a pasturage for sheep (when what was meant was that it was made into a pasturage , an idiom for laid waste to, devastated )
9. Plus, lots of other proper names (toponyms and anthroponyms) but, none are securely etymologizable and even so, they do not connect in obvious or compelling ways to known Albanian words
10. Nonetheless, Katicic believes that given that the areas where the name Illyrian is assigned by ancient testimony more or less correspond with Albanian-speaking territory, it is normal and natural to regard Albanian as the modern descendant of the Illyrian language (p. 185), and he even states the only thing one can do in to keep an open mind while remembering in that in this controversy the burden of proof is with those who deny the Illyrian descent of Albanian . Note that Hamp thinks otherwise and is dubious of the value of ancient testimony as to the Illyrians (suggesting that for some at least, the name may have been like Indian to many Americans or aborigine to many Australians) and skeptical since there is no linguistic evidence as to what an Illyrian language was like.

## II. Albanian Subjunctive Complementation (regarding verbal structure)

Newmark et al. (1982:78): The subjunctive mood is basically the mood that indicates dependency of the verb. In most sentences a subjunctive verb form will be preceded by an antecedent modal, verb, adjective, adverb, conjunction, noun, or particle to which it is subjoined & in English when the verb is dependent in this way, an infinitive form, with or without the proclitic **to**, is often used; in Gheg dialects of Albanian similar constructions use the infinitive with the proclitic **me**; but in present-day standard Albanian, finite subjunctive forms of the verb indicating the person and number of the subject are used instead.

(Note also that the subjunctive can be used without an antecedent modal, etc., and then it conveys dependence on the speaker's will & [expressing] the speaker's desire for an action (whereas the indicative affirms the independent reality of the action ).)

E.g.:

- a. Duhet **të** shkoj I need**to** go (literally: it-is-necessary that I-go )
- b. Mund **të** shkosh You are able**to** go / you can go (literally: It-can that you-go )
- c. Vazhdojmë **të** shkojmë We continu**to** go (literally: We-continue that we-go )
- d. Është e veshirë **të** shkojmë It is difficult for us**to** go (literally: it-is difficult that we-go )
- e. propozimi **të** shkojmë the plan for us**to** go (literally: plan-the that we-go )
- f. Nuk dinim ku **të** shkonim We didn't know wher**to** go (literally: not we-knew where that we-went )

Note these Geg examples with infinitive (**me** + invariant participle):

- g. filluën **me** lëvisë they beg**to** stir
- h. dëshiroj **me** ju pa I wish**to** see you
- i. puna është **me** e shue the task is**to** wipe it out

### III. On Verbal Categories

#### a. Categories that are marked formally

FINITE

#### Person

- 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 3<sup>rd</sup>

#### Number

- Singular
- Plural

#### Voice

- Active
- Nonactive (*-(h)e-/PRES; u /PAST.DEF*)

#### Mood

- Indicative
- Subjunctive (*të*)
  - Conditional (*do të*)
  - Jussive/Hortative (*le të*)
- Optative (*-f(sh), -ç-, -sh-*)
- Admirative (abbreviated participle + suffixed have )
- Imperative

TENSE	
	\
<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Time</b>
Common	Present
Progressive	Past
Perfect	Future ( <i>do (të)</i> )
Definite	
Imperfect	

NONFINITE      Participle ( past passive )  
 Infinitive (*për të* + participle (Tosk); *me* + participle (Geg))  
 Gerundive (*duke* + participle)  
 Absolutive (*me të* + participle)  
 Privative (*pa* + participle)

**b. Categories/forms marked-by/utilizing proclitics or auxiliaries**

(Note L. Newmark, P. Hubbard, P. Prifti (1982) *Standard Albanian. A reference grammar for students* (Stanford U Press), p. 23: Verbs are typically thought of as single words, but in Albanian one or more proclitics and auxiliaries may precede the main verb and the whole sequence is then still referred to as the verb [BDJ: maybe verbal complex would be better]; many of the conjugational forms of a verb are thus formed with proclitics and/or auxiliaries )

Future:            DO TË shkoj I shall go (also, colloquially, DO shkoj)

Progressive:      PO shkoj I am going  
 PO shkoja I was going

Subjunctive:      TË shkoj that I go

Conditional:     DO TË shkoja I would go (= Future + Imperfect)

Jussive:            LE TË shkojmë let's go

Nonactive  
 Past Definite:    U lava I was washed (vs. nonactive present: lahem)

Perfect:            KAM shkuar I have gone (and note pluperfect, future perfect)

Infinitive:        PËR TË shkuar (in order) to go (cf. Geg ME shkue to go )

Gerundive:	DUKE shkuar (while) going
Absolutive:	ME TË shkuar having gone; upon going; by going
Privative:	PA shkuar without going

and note various weak object pronouns (so-called clitics ) that mark nonsubject arguments (and a few other things).

### c. Some noteworthy non-English Verbal categories/forms in Albanian:

#### OPTATIVE

Modality of desire is expressed by the optative mood verb forms as a wish, blessing, or curse (Newmark et al., p. 89)

- Dhe ti, o bir, **qofsh** i gëzuar And you, O son, ma-you-be happy!
- Ju **këndoftë** zemra for-you may-sing the-heart! (= May your heart sing! )
- E moj Parti, të **qofsha** falë për këto gëzime që na jep Oh Party, you may-I-have thanked for these joys that us you-give (= Oh Party, may I have thanked you for these joys that you give us )

#### ADMIRATIVE

In general, the admirative mood is used to express reality accompanied by the speaker's sense of surprise at an unexpected action which has taken place in the past or is taking place at the moment of speaking (Newmark et al., p. 76)

- Qenkeni** invalid! You really are an invalid!
- Po e **hëngërka** me gjithë tavë He is eating it with the whole casserole (to boot)!
- Qenke ngritur** në këmbë, Po më çudit. You have been raised on (your) feet [= you're standing up ] you are surprising me!
- C **jupaska ngjarë** more djem? What (in the world) has happened to you, boys?

## Appendix C: Some Homework Assignments

### I. Major Class Assignment: Consultant Exercise

For the purpose of enriching the content and conduct of this class, I have been fortunate enough to secure the services of two native speakers of Albanian, Denisa and Ana. Subject to confirmation (and thus to change), Ana will be available in 222E Oxley Hall on Thursdays for an hour in the afternoon (still to be confirmed), while Denisa will be available at other times (to be determined, along with the place).

My plan is to make use of them in two ways.

First, they offer a way for you to get a bit of time each week to practice your Albanian conversation (note that we will be learning words and phrases in class each week). I expect you to take advantage of their availability for this practice.

Second, they provide a basis for your major assignment for the class. That is, each of you is to devise and carry out an investigation of something in or about the Albanian language that requires one to sit down with and elicit information from a native speaker. Your topic can be a linguistically sophisticated (or even arcane) one (e.g. constraints on quantifier-float, degree of productivity for a particular derivational suffix, etc.) or a somewhat practical (or even mundane) one (e.g. collecting a thematically related word list or perhaps the Swadesh list of basic vocabulary, developing a set of sentences on your own based on available vocabularies and grammatical descriptions to check with our native consultants, etc.). But you must do something that requires you to plan some Albanian in advance, to test it out on one (or both) of our native speakers, to follow up on any leads their answers give you (i.e. new directions to explore that are related to your topic of interest and are a natural outgrowth of your questions), and to record in some written manner your findings.

In terms of some output from your Albanian explorations which can be evaluated, I want you to write up your results into a coherent written presentation, to be turned in on by no later than noon on Monday of exam week (**March 12**); this need not be long (4-6 pages double-spaced should suffice) but in it you should make clear what your topic of investigation was, how you set about investigating it, and what you found out. Alternatively, for those of you who want to do so, instead of turning in a written report, you may do an in-class oral presentation on your findings (c. 15 minutes), but note that a handout for the class (to allow us to follow your presentation more readily) is required. Let me know if you are interested in this latter option, so we can schedule your presentation time accordingly.

### II. Phonology and Orthography Homework

Write out a phonetic transcription of the first two sets (i and ii) of the following Albanian words; you may use the International Phonetic Alphabet if you know it or the guidelines in the Friedman grammatical sketch or a rough system you create based on the English alphabet. Practice pronouncing these words and the other sets too (iii, iv, and v), as we will be reading them in class on Monday January 8. Note that many of these words are rare, dialectal, or obsolete, but all are to be found in the *Oxford Albanian-English Dictionary* (by Leonard Newmark, 1998).

i. *Some words with non-English letters:*

copë	piece
çyçë	waterspout
dha	s/he gave
është	s/he is
gjë	thing
jep	s/he gives
lloç	muddy slush
njeri	man
qe	s/he was
rreth	around, about
shi	rain
xëc	pitch dark
xhuxh	dwarf
yll	star
zhyt	s/he immerses in liquid

ii. *The numbers:*

një	one
dy	two
tre	three
katër	four
pesë	five
gjashtë	six
shtatë	seven
tetë	eight
nëntë	nine
dhjetë	ten
njëmbëdhjetë	eleven (literally one-on-ten )
dymbëdhjetë	twelve (literally two-on-ten )
njëzet	twenty
tredhjetë	thirty
dyzet	forty

iii. *Some tricky clusters:*

brryltirë	hairpin curve
cfytës	blowpipe
çdo	each
çmim	price
çndotje	decontamination
çndryshk	s/he removes the rust from (something)

çngjyron	s/he causes (something) to lose color
kthehet	s/he returns
ltar	altar
mbret	king
nxënës	pupil
nxjerr	s/he extracts
qutetth	small town
shqip	Albanian
tmerrshëm	terrible
vdiq	s/he died
zbathur	shoeless
zbrapset	s/he moves backwards
zmbrapset	s/he moves backwards
zdap	cudgel
zgjat	s/he lengthens
zhduket	s/he disappears
zhvillon	s/he develops

iv. *Some (mildly) amusing English-sounding vocabulary:*

bush	mythical swamp-dwelling animal that causes rain by howling
dosido	somehow or another
dudë	gingiva (gum)
dhimsun	compassionate
fillthi	all alone
sherri	deceit
trash	s/he thickens

v. *Some useful vocabulary:*

dhe	and
jo	no
mirë	good
mirë dita	hello (lit. good day )
mirupafshim	goodbye (lit. well each-other may-we-see , i.e. may we see each-other well )
po	yes
si jeni	how are-you? ( you = plural or polite singular)
tungjatjeta	hello; goodbye (lit. may (your-)life be lengthened )

### III. Homework on Albanian Nonactive Voice (regarding verbal structure)

We have seen that Albanian has for most verbs a set of parallel active and nonactive forms, e.g. *la-* wash-ACT /*la-he-* wash-NON.ACT . The purpose of this exercise is to explore the functions of the nonactive and aim at some generalization as to how it is used and what it signifies when it is used.

By considering some typical examples of its use, try to find some unifying common thread in the various functions it serves. Work through these cases in the order they are given (that is, (1) through (8)); in each case you are given some data with a bit of commentary, and you are asked along the way to draw some conclusions about nonactive forms and their use and meaning, conclusions which may be in need of revision once you move on to additional data further down the exercise; where appropriate, corresponding active forms (or other useful information) are given after various examples:

1. First, consider cases with passive functions, e.g.:

- a. lahen (prej shokëve) they are washed (by friends) (cf*la-* wash (someone) )
- b. forcoheni (prej profesorit) you are forced (by the professor) (cf*forco-* force (someone) )

**QUESTION:** What is the relationship between the *logical* object (the entity acted on, the so-called *patient* in the structure of who-does-what-to-whom that the verb expresses) and what serves (or is understood) as the *grammatical* subject?

2. Next, consider the class of *psychological action* verbs that express states of mind or attitudes that the subject holds (a-c) or changes of state (d-e), e.g.:

- a. mërzhitem I get bored (cf*mërzhit-* bore (someone) )
- b. dëshpërohem we become disappointed (cf*dëshpëro-* cause despair )
- c. gëzohet s/he rejoices, is happy (cf*gëzo-* gladden, make happy )
- d. fishkem I wither (cf*fishk-* cause to wither )
- f. qetësohem I grow calm, relax (cf*qetëso-* soothe; quiet (someone) down )

**QUESTION:** Is there an element of meaning that links the uses in (1) with the uses in (2)?

3. Next, consider reflexive and reciprocal uses, e.g.:

- a. lahen they wash themselves
- b. krihem I comb myself (cf*kreh-* comb (someone) )
- c. takohemi we meet one another (cf*tako-* meet (someone) )

**QUESTION:** Can the use in (3) be integrated into your conception of the nonactive voice based on (1) and (2)?

4. Nonactive forms are also found with various verbs that denote movements, e.g.:

- a. hidhem I jump (cf*hedh* I cast/throw )
- b. kthehem I return (cf*kthe-n* s/he turns, alters, bends (something) )
- c. ngrihem I get up (cf*ngre-* lift up, raise (something) )
- d. rrotullohem I rotate (cf*rrotullo-* rotate (something) )
- e. nisem I set out, depart (cf*nis-* start (something) off )

**QUESTION:** Are the uses seen in (4) compatible with your emerging view of the nonactive voice based on (1) through (3)?

**QUESTION:** How do all of these generalizations fare with additional data like that in (5), (6), (7), and (8)?

5. There are verbs whose active and nonactive forms are virtually identical in meaning, e.g.:
  - a. afrohet it gets closer = afron it gets closer (NB: *afron* can also mean it brings (something) closer )
  - b. mendohet (për) s/he thinks/ponders (over (something)) = *mendon* (për) s/he thinks (about (something))
  - c. kthehet s/he returns = kthen s/he returns (INTRANSITIVE, i.e. from somewhere) (cf. (4b))
6. There are verbs with only a nonactive form, e.g.:
  - a. kollem I cough (NB: there is no active-form *\*koll* cough , though there is a noun *kollë* a cough )
  - b. pendohet s/he regrets (NB: there is no active-form *\*pendo-*, though there is a noun *pendim* regret ; also cf. (2) above)
7. There are (as Newmark et al. 1982:29 put it) non-active forms & accompanied by some indication of negation [that] represent the action in a general way without specifying a particular subject [with] modal nuances of possibility or even necessity , e.g. (ç is the negation marker):
  - a. s shkohet there s no going (~~ç~~*shko-* go )
  - b. s kalohet there s no passing by (i.e. no one should pass this way ; *kallo-* pass )
8. There are some active motion verbs with meanings similar to other (unrelated) nonactive forms, e.g., *ikën* s/he departs (cf. (4e)).

**FINALLY**, add any other comments you feel are relevant (you may do nothing at this point if you like, but feel free to add more to your above discussion if the spirit moves you).

#### IV. Historical Analysis Homework (regarding Albanian as Indo-European)

Consider the following data from Albanian numerals:

4	katër
5	pesë

The standard reconstructions for 4 and 5 respectively in Proto-Indo-European are *\*k<sup>w</sup>twor* and *\*penk<sup>w</sup>e*, respectively (where *\*k<sup>w</sup>* is a labio-velar stop, that is, a *k*-like sound with concomitant lip-rounding). Thus if these Albanian forms continue the PIE forms directly, there is a conflict in the apparent outcome of *\*k<sup>w</sup>* in Albanian in the environment before *\*e*, for 4 shows [k] and 5 shows [s] (position in the word here can be assumed to be irrelevant and the vowel developments are regular). We have seen [s] as the outcome of *\*k<sup>w</sup>* before other front vowels (long [e:], [i]), but in principle the development before [e] could be different and in any case, the apparent conflict between the presumed outcomes of 4 and 5 needs to be resolved.

Thus, your assignment is to resolve this conflict and demonstrate which of these reflexes is the regular outcome of \*k<sup>w</sup> in this environment.

Along with any other information you have that deem relevant (and making any reasonable assumptions you need to as long as you spell them out carefully), you should consider and discuss the relevance of the following additional facts, given in no particular order.

- a. Sanskrit has a word *pañcāṣṭī-* meaning 'a set of 5' (related to the word for *pañca*)
- b. *quattuor* in Latin is *quattuor*, with an unexplained geminate *-tt-* and a vowel in the first syllable (*a*) that is irregular if from PIE \*e
- c. the Albanian modal negator (etc.) *isnos*, from PIE \*me: *not* plus possibly either \*-~~k~~e and or \*-~~k~~id *what; at all*
- d. the Hittite word for '4' is *isneyaw-*, not obviously from any PIE number word
- e. the Albanian words for '1', '2', and '3' derive from clear PIE number word sources
- f. *isures* in Aeolic Greek is *isures*, where the *-i-* in the first syllable is the outcome of a PIE reduced grade (most likely reflecting a special inserted vowel breaking up the word-initial consonant cluster in a presumed form \*k<sup>w</sup>twor)
- g. in some contexts, \*-ti- gives *-s-* in Albanian, but in the numbers '7' through '10' in Albanian, all originally trisyllabic, a suffix \*-ti- occurs and yields *-të*, e.g. *tetë* '8' from \*ok to: ~~t~~*htatë* '7' from \*septi.
- h. Alb. *darkë* 'evening meal', from \*dorkom shows that the labiality of a labio-velar was lost before a nonfront vowel (such as [o] or [a]).

**Appendix D: Some Quizzes**

**QUIZ #1**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Write out, using Albanian spelling, the numbers from 1 to 10 :

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_

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**QUIZ #2**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (written in Albanian spelling)

1. Give a full conjugation of the present tense (indicative) active voice of **forco-** ‘to force’

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Give a full conjugation of the present tense (indicative) nonactive voice of **forco-** ‘to force’

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3. Translate the following dialogue into Albanian:

Gjon: Are you happy in class? \_\_\_\_\_

Fatmir: Yes, I am happy in class. \_\_\_\_\_

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### **QUIZ #3**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ (written in Albanian spelling)

1. Translate the following sentences from Albanian into English:

a. A ju pëlqen të laheni? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. A të pëlqen të jesh në klasë sot? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Më pëlqen të lexoj gjuhën shqipe. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Translate the following sentence from English into Albanian:

They like to pass time in class. \_\_\_\_\_