



Evaluating Onomatopoeia as a Linguistic Phenomenon in Albanian

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ABSTRACT

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Onomatopoeia in Albanian has a great potential for the existence of the phonosthemes and sound symbolism. By adopting an explorative research design with the case-based approach to study onomatopoeia as a linguistic phenomenon in the Albanian language, a sample of 270 primary onomatopoeias was extracted from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included surveys and requests on social media and in conversations with respondents while the secondary sources comprised dictionaries and etymologies. The results of the study emerged out of consonant and vowel groups employed in onomatopoeia and compared with the regular word corpus. Since

onomatopoeia in Albanian is still productive in the field of word formation, it was evident that it might create the idea of the existence of the phonosthemes and sound symbolism. It was also revealed that it was not the case elsewhere, since some of the consonant groups employed within onomatopoeia were present in the regular word corpus of Albanian. The study implicates that consonant groups employed in onomatopoeic words appear within similar sounds of nature are often against the phonotactic rules of Albanian. The same is the case with the vowel groups, which in onomatopoeic words follow different rules than the vowel groups in the regular word stock of Albanian.

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Introduction

Onomatopoeia is a very interesting phenomenon in language usually within the framework of exclamation as part of speech, even though the differences between exclamation and onomatopoeia are essential. Onomatopoeia also does not have grammatical features; it cannot be said that the phonetic varieties of the vowels or consonants employed constitute distinctive grammatical features. A certain number of phonesthemes are also employed to signify the pattern of sounds systematically paired with certain meanings in the language. Moreover, the distribution of vowel and consonant groups is very much connected to onomatopoeia.

Onomatopoeia in Albanian is very similar to the other Indo-European Languages, but still there are a lot of differences, since it employs all vowels and almost all consonants, with some exceptions, from the regular Albanian vocabulary. Two elements make onomatopoeia very important for the studies on Albanian: the first is that onomatopoeia is a very widespread word-forming base in the Albanian language and the second is that the sounds included in onomatopoeic words are also present in the regular lexical corpus of Albanian (Lai, 2023). Most of the phonemes of onomatopoeia are present in this regular lexical corpus of Albanian. The Albanian Language is very rich regarding onomatopoeia, which at the same time serves as a word-forming base. The Albanian language gives marginal importance and peripheral place to the onomatopoeia, in forming new words.

However, onomatopoeic words are not arbitrary ones, unlike the other words from the regular lexical corpus of languages (Kubokawa, 2022). Onomatopoeia very much goes against the normal flow of languages, either in the sense of phonetic or grammatical features. This echoes one of the earliest translations of De Saussure's (1916) *Course on General Linguistics* into Albanian, as a result of which much of the synchronic Albanian studies are based on Saussure's structural theory. "One might base oneself on onomatopoeic words to say that the choice of the signifier is not always arbitrary", states Saussure. While contesting immediately the absoluteness of this idea, De Saussure (1916) recalled that "onomatopoeic words are never organic elements of a linguistic system" and "moreover, they are fewer in number than are supposed to be" (quoted in Ymeri, 2002, 92-93). In fact, Saussure gave a lot of importance to onomatopoeia and exclamations while explaining the arbitrariness of the language sign, which he advocated to avoid. For this reason, onomatopoeias are considered language deviations. Meanwhile, in Topalli's (2017) *Etymological Dictionary of the Albanian Language*, it appears that many Albanian words are built on an onomatopoeic basis. This proves onomatopoeia and interjection are not only deviations, but also can be placed at the very origin of the language.

There is a dearth of research on onomatopoeia as a linguistic phenomenon in the Albanian language since in Albanian Grammar books onomatopoeia is treated as marginalized and peripheral. However, onomatopoeia in Albanian is still a productive field in word formation, and it has a great potential for the existence of the phonesthemes and sound symbolism. It is interesting to examine whether some of the consonant groups employed within onomatopoeia are present in the regular word corpus of Albanian. It is also necessary to find out whether consonant groups employed in onomatopoeic words appear within similar sounds of nature, and are often against the phonotactic rules of Albanian. The same is the case with the vowel groups, which in onomatopoeic words follow different rules than the vowel groups in the regular word stock of Albanian.

There is no serious and specific study on onomatopoeia or its phonetics in the Albanian language. The current study aimed to investigate the phonetic features of onomatopoeia in Albanian, to find out the similarities and differences between onomatopoeic words and the words from the regular lexical corpus of Albanian. The rationale of the study is that Albanian onomatopoeia is very similar to onomatopoeia in other Indo-European languages, and phonetically in most cases, it is not in line with the phonetics and phonotactic rules of regular lexical fund of language.

Literature Review

The phonemic inventory of Modern standardized Albanian consists of seven (07) vowels and 29 consonants, each with a phonemic value. Standard Albanian does not recognize the phonemic values of the vowel varieties but recognizes that the phonetic varieties of the sounds are conditioned by their phonetic environment. In the Gheg dialect, for instance, vowel varieties have phonemic value, as they build distinctive grammatical and semantic features (Golemi, 2015) as reflected in examples like *asht*[E] / *āsht*[F], *dy*[M] (two) / *dÿ*[F] (two), or the grammatical number "lōp[SING] (cow) / lōp[PLUR] (cows), and like. The phonetic inventory of standard Albanian created within the Congress of the Orthography of Albanian Language (Joseph, 2020) has excluded the phonetic varieties of the Albanian sounds and consequently has also excluded the phonemic values of those varieties.

The Gheg dialect, having several vowel sequences, short vs. long and oral vs. nasal, contains distinctive grammatical and semantic values, richer than standard Albanian. This is mainly based on the southern dialect or Tosk. This has certainly influenced the treatment of onomatopoeia, since certain phonostems such as 'ng' of the sound of the bell give a nasal timbre to the vowels 'i' or 'o', in the ding-dong onomatopoeia. Semantically, of course, there are no influences or they are minimal since onomatopoeia are imitations of the sounds of nature and not words with semantic meaning.

The phonetic varieties in some cases constitute a semantically distinguishing feature as seen in *bu-buuum*, *kop-kooop*, *rararar*, *bububu*, *gurllulullu*. In these cases, the speaker builds up the intensity of the sound, either by lengthening the vowels or by repeating syllabic segments or the syllables as a whole. In other cases, the phonetic varieties of a sound are simply conditioned by the phonetic environment in which they occur, such as the nasal 'o' in *ding-dong*, where the 'o' acquires nasal features due to its proximity to the 'n' sound, but also imitates the sound of church's bell, as Hinton, Nichols, and Ohala (1994) noticed for English, as well.

The phonotactic rules of Albanian are similar to most of the Indo-European languages of Europe. However, the sentence has an alternating structure CVCV (*bora* 'snow', *dora* 'hand'), CCVCC (*ipejt* 'fast'), or CCVCC (*shkofshi* [//k/ɔ/f//] 'to go' OPT). As mentioned earlier, there are cases in onomatopoeic words that break these phonotactic rules of Albanian by employing three consonants (*shkllup* 'splash') either to show the intensity of the onomatopoeic sound or to show the participation of more onomatopoeic actions and consequently more phonostems, since this onomatopoeia refers to the sound of a semi-liquid object when hitting a liquid surface. Sequences of more than two consonants are present only in some limited cases in Albanian, such as *ndryshe* (CCCVCV) 'differently' or *as shndrit* (CCCCVC) 'shine'.

Furthermore, Albanian has its shwa (ë) in the cases of neighbor consonants, requiring it; but in the case of onomatopoeia, these phonotactic rules of Albanian are not respected. In early Albanian grammar, onomatopoeia was not even recognized as a separate group of words. In Sami Frashëri's (1886) *Gramatika Shqyp* [Albanian Grammar], examples of onomatopoeia are given in the context of the "thirrje" (exclamation), which was later named as *pasthirrmë* (interjection), such as: "Fiu! Frap! Tyt! Pty! Cap!" Later, Kurti (1937) defines and names them differently: "They are considered as interjections as well as similar sounds, which come out after some emphatic expressions, like Tap-e-tap! Bap! etc." However, Rrota (2006) asserts: "With interjections go sounds following a cry or a whisper of beings - onomatopoeic sounds - or a noise of elements. For example, ha, ha, ha, ha." Angoni (1973), as well as Agalliu, Demiraj, and Domi (2002) call them onomatopoeia or sound imitations.

A lack of consolidated terminology and consistency is a proof of the treatment given to these words. There are even many omissions and confusions, such as in the case of Mulaku and Kelmendi (2002), who stated that "some interjections are used to imitate the voices of animals, objects and nature", which is the definition for onomatopoeia and not for the interjections. "For example, ki-ki-ri-kuu (rooster sings), mjau-mjau (the cat meows), ciu-ciu-ciu (birds chirping), kam-kum! ty-ty-ty (trumpet blows), taf-tuf! Taf-tuf (guns crackle) etc. (Mulaku & Kelmendi, 2002). Beci (2010) defines them as words serving to reproduce sounds, voices, noises, and shouts, but does not explain whether they can be included within interjections or differ from them. Unlike interjections, they do not express feelings: e.g. Ha-ha - qeshte Linda "ha-ha -Linda laughed." It should be noted that these examples are also found in other studies as well (Agalliu et al., 2002; Jashari & Çitaku, 2018; Newmark, Hubbard, & Prifti, 1982).

Agalliu et al. (2002) laid down a text-book for students, and propagate that "the class of interjections also includes sound, which serves to reproduce sounds, voices, noises, shouts of objects and various phenomena of objective reality or calls that sometimes accompanying any physiological action. But the sounds are very different from interjections from the point of view of meaning because they do not express the speaker's feelings, desires, or will, while some sounds are often used to express different feelings such as fear, contempt, irony, such as ku-ku! Hëm, etc. (Agalliu et al., 2002).

Methodology

- *Research design*

This study adopted an explorative research design with the case-based approach to study onomatopoeia as a linguistic phenomenon in the Albanian language. Onomatopoeia in Albanian is still a productive field in word formation, and it has a great potential for the existence of the phonosthemes and sound symbolism. This approach suited this subject as it was also required to examine the existence of phonosthemes in onomatopoeia.

- *Research procedure*

The study focused on collecting evidence of frequency of vowel and consonant sounds used in onomatopoeia. It also attempted to identify differences between the frequency of

sounds in the regular lexical corpus of Albanian and the English language. Such a comparison with other languages showed that this issue was not considered at all in the Albanian studies, and was limited to the etymology of words, trying to connect the word formation base of the words with onomatopoeic origin, whenever it was the case. Since there are certain phonosthemes, either as single sounds or consonantal or vocalic groups present and regularly distributed to imitate the groups of similar sounds, it was essential to deal with this issue.

- **Sampling and Data collection**

The primary data was collected through surveys and requests on social media and in conversations with respondents. A corpus of about 270 primary onomatopoeias was extracted, some of which were reduplication and others were synonymous (or synonymous-like), as well as polysemous. The secondary data on onomatopoeia was extracted from several sources including *Fjalor i Gjuhës së sotme Shqipe* (Dictionary of the Modern Albanian Language, 2006), *Fjalor Etimologjik i Gjuhës Shqipe* (Topalli's The Etymological Dictionary of Albanian, 2017), Rugova's (2019) *Leksikon i termave të fonetikës dhe të fonologjisë* (Lexicon of terms of phonetics and phonology), and the corpus of Albanian at *webcorpora.net*, while some secondary material was collected directly. Since this study aimed to examine the existence of phonosthemes in onomatopoeia in the Albanian language, the data was also collected from studies of this field in other languages.

- **Data analysis**

The study took this premise that certain groups of sounds from nature employ the same or similar sounds to form onomatopoeic words. This hypothesis was tested positively, since certain combinations of sounds were present in the onomatopoeic words, but were not present in the regular lexical corpus of Albanian, as was the case in other Indo-European languages.

Results and Discussion

The study made evident that the frequency of sounds used in onomatopoeia is different from the frequency of sounds in the regular lexical corpus of Albanian. For instance, it turns out that the vowel 'u' has the highest frequency of use with 166 occurrences, followed by the vowel 'a' with 162 occurrences. It seems that the repetition of these sounds in writing to create the idea of intensity, such as 'huu', 'buuum', 'hahahhaa', 'kaap', etc., had also influenced this high frequency. The vowel 'i', which appears 96 times, also has a high frequency of use, but the repetition of this sound within an onomatopoeic word, or even within a single syllable, has also influenced this high frequency. The fourth 'i' comes the vowel 'ə' (shwa) which, in many cases, has no phonemic or syllabic value, but is more of a lubricant sound, whose presence happens to be not real, but conditioned by the vibrant 'r' and 'rr', from the gutturals 'k' and 'g', as well as from the sounds 'n' and 'm' and from the liquid 'l'. [Table 1](#) presents the frequency of use of vowels in onomatopoeia.

Table 1

Frequency of use of vowels in onomatopoeia

| Vowel | Frequency |
|-------|-----------|
| U | 166 |
| A | 162 |
| I | 96 |
| Ë | 55 |
| O | 25 |
| E | 15 |
| Y | 4 |

All seven vowels of Albanian participate in the formation of onomatopoeic words. However, among the consonants, 'k' has the highest frequency of use with 140 times, 'r' with 122, 'p' with 81, 'h' with 80 (many repetitions), 'g' with 78, 'rr' with 67, 'l' with 64, 'm' with 56, etc., as depicted in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency of use of consonants in onomatopoeia

| Consonant | Frequency | Consonant | Frequency |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| K | 140 | F | 26 |
| R | 122 | Sh | 24 |
| P | 81 | D | 24 |
| H | 80 | Ç | 23 |
| G | 78 | B | 19 |
| Rr | 67 | Zh | 15 |
| L | 64 | Z | 14 |
| M | 56 | Q | 12 |
| N | 48 | C | 11 |
| Ll | 43 | S | 8 |
| T | 43 | X | 3 |
| V | 29 | Th | 2 |
| | | J | 1 |

At the phonetic level, there is an interesting distribution of the frequency of sounds used in onomatopoeia, which is different from the frequency of their sounds in the regular lexical corpus of Albanian. Figure 1 further summarizes the frequency of vowel and consonant sounds and reveals that a few consonants 'ð', 'd', 'n̄' and 'dʒ' never take part in the formation of any onomatopoeic words, although 'n̄' as a sound appears in borrowed onomatopoeia like "njam-njam".

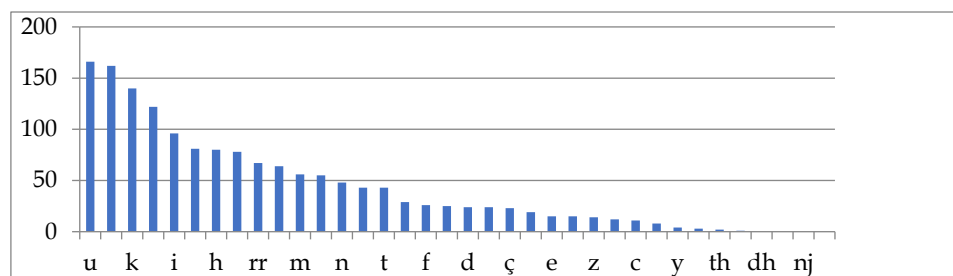


Figure 1. Frequency of use of sounds in onomatopoeia.

- **Consonant groups**

In addition to single sounds, either vowels or consonants, both vowel and consonant groups are often encountered unlike most vocal groups. Specifically, in the 270 analyzed onomatopoeias for this study, consonant groups appeared 101 times, including repetitions, while a total of 10 appearances of vocal groups were noticed. Based on the frequency of use in the regular lexical fund of the language, we classified these consonant groups into three large divisions, based on the model of [Körtvélyessy and Štekauer \(2020\)](#) namely, (i) combinations in the dictionary suggesting that the consonant group is also found in other words of the Albanian language and not only in onomatopoeia; (ii) combinations that are found only in onomatopoeia, a group that only includes cases of repetition of the same consonant, such as 'sss', 'zzz', suggesting that consonantal groups consisted of three consonants, which is not the case for regular words, etc.; (iii) combinations in the dictionary, but in pre-onomatopoeic words – suggesting that a certain consonant group also appears in other words, but only when it is formed by an onomatopoeia.

From the analysis of the frequency of the use of consonant groups, it can be concluded that the onomatopoeia is inconsistent with the regular lexical fund of the Albanian language. The following is an account of some significant consonant groups.

— *Consonant group 'ng'*

This group of consonants appears 39 times in onomatopoeia, in different positions: as an initial group: *ngrr, ngic, ngik, nguk*; in the body of the onomatopoeia: *cingër, cingiling, dingap, hëngr-hëngr*, or at the end of the word: *rang-rang, ting, ving, xing, vring*, which was the most frequent position for this group. This group usually appears in onomatopoeia which indicate the noise or sound that comes from the immediate impact of a hard object (mostly metallic), with another. e.g., *dang, ding, cing, ding-dong, tring* etc. This consonant group also appears in the regular lexical fund of Albanian and appears in all positions, the same as in onomatopoeia, e.g., as an initial group: *ngusht* (tight), *ngadalë* (slowly), *nga* (from) etc., in the body of the word, e.g. *hëngra* (I ate), etc. or , at the end of the word: *aheng* (party), *peng* (hostage), etc.

— *Consonant group 'krr'*

This group is the second in frequency of use among onomatopoeia with a total of 9 manifestations. It mainly appears as an initial group: *krrap, krrup, krrakau, krrau*, etc., and in the body of the word: *çkrrak*; or at the end of the word: *cik(ë)rrr*. It is usually encountered as an initiator group. In the regular lexical fund as a starting group, only a few words such as *krrabë* (crooked tool to extract dry grass for animals), *krrus* (bend), and de-onomatopoeized words such as: *krrokat* (deonomatopoeized noun of the sound of raven) and its derivatives like *krrokama, krrok, krrokoris* etc. It also occurs mainly in onomatopoeia that imitates the voice of a crow (*krrau*) or the noise when something breaks, usually wood, for example *krraak* (the sound of a branch when it breaks), *krrakau* (the sound when lightning strikes a tree), etc.

— *Consonant group 'kll'*

This group appears 9 times in the onomatopoeia. It is found as an initial group: *klluk, kllum, kllup*, etc., and in the body of the word: *çkllup, shkllum, shklluq*, etc. It never appears

at the end of the onomatopoeia. In the regular lexical fund, it is found at the beginning of mainly borrowings: *kllapë, kllaposh, kllapodan, këllirë* (onomatopoeic), etc. It mainly appears when imitating the sound of something soft falling into liquid surfaces. There are cases when three consecutive consonants appear "sh/k/ll", when sh takes the burden of intensity - this combination never appears in the regular lexical fund of Albanian.

— Consonant group 'bll'

This consonant group has appeared 6 times in the corpus, including repetitions. It appears as an initial group: *blla-blla, bllum, bllup*, etc., and in the body of the word: *mbllaç*. It is not found at the end of the word. The consonant group 'bll' is found in onomatopoeia aiming to imitate the fall or contact of other objects in liquid environments, but unlike the groups 'kll' or 'shkll' where the objects are also liquid, the group 'bll' has to do with solid objects falling into liquid environments. Even in the regular lexical fund, 'bll' is found as an initial group, but only in borrowed words: *bllok, bllore*, etc. In the regular lexical fund, this group sometimes is combined with the reinforcing prefix 'm', building the group 'mbll' [mbllaçit, mbllaçitje] of words formed from the onomatopoeic base. Due to the nature of Albanian, the group 'mbll' is not common, therefore the consonant group 'mbll' does not appear in the regular lexical fund of Albanian.

— Consonant group 'brr'

This consonant group appears 6 times in onomatopoeia. It is found only in the initial position: *brram, brrr, brrum*, etc., usually as an imitation of the sounds of hard objects colliding with each other (*brram*- door slamming) or as an imitation of vibrations (*brrr* - cold). It is never encountered in the regular lexical fund of Albanian.

— Consonant group 'tr'

This group occurred 9 times and appears only as an initial group: *trak, tring, trok*, except for the modified repetition *traka-truka, trak-truk*. Like the previous set, this set imitates sounds made by hard objects, but not for intense noises. It is a frequent consonant group in the regular lexical fund of Albanian, such as: *tra* (beam), *tradhti* (treason), *tre* (three), *treg* (market), etc.

— Consonant group 'pll'

This group had a total of 5 examples in our corpus, every time at the beginning of onomatopoeia: *pllap, pllup, pllaq-plluq* etc. It is also found in the regular fund, although rarely: *pllajë* (plateau), *pllakos* (comes unexpectedly) etc. At the phonostematic level, it is a group similar to the 'kll', as it is related to the sound that water makes when it is hit by other objects, such as hands or feet.

— Consonant group 'trr'

This group appeared 5 times and is found as an initial group: *trrak, trrff*, or in the body of the word: *strrak*. In fact, the group 'trr' is the same as the group 'tr', but it is more intense and this intensity is expressed with the intense vibrant 'rr' that participates in this onomatopoeia. The group 'trr' is not found at all in the regular lexical fund of Albanian.

— Consonant group 'vrr'

This group occurs 4 times, but only in two onomatopoeias: *crrr-crrr* and as an initial group: *vrrrr*. As for the lexical fund of Albanian, it never appears.

— Consonant group 'grr'

In total, the onomatopoeia is encountered three times and appears as an initial group. Even in the regular lexical fund of Albanian, it appears as an initial group: *grremç*, *grror*, and more often what are its uses with an 'ë' that is only a lubricant, such as: *g(ë)rryej* (grind), *g(ë)rraq* (gnaw), etc. Even these words have an onomatopoeic meaning.

In the Albanian language, there is no list of phonosthems that would serve us for their identification and for comparison with the phonosthems appearing in onomatopoeia. However, among onomatopoeias, phonemic combinations are observed that are repeated in several onomatopoeias and belong to the same semantic field, such as: *kl*, *pll*, *bll*, *krr*, *ng*, *grr*, *vrr*, as shown in Figure 2.

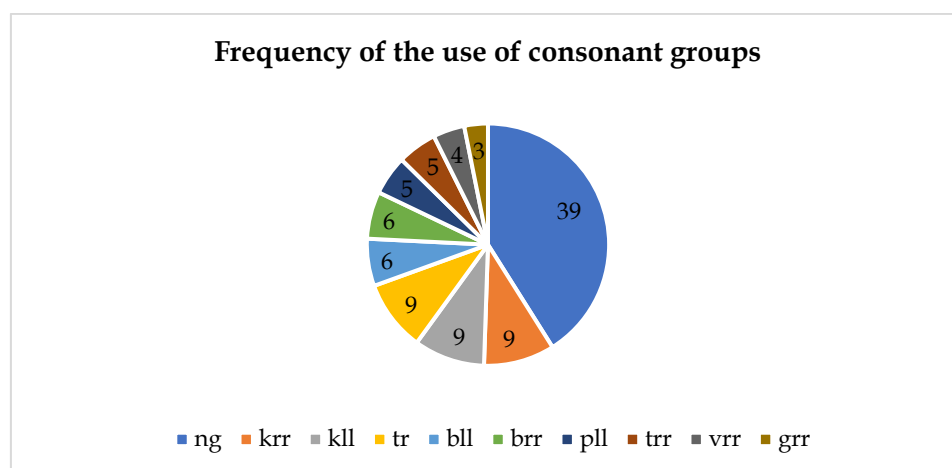


Figure 2. Frequency of use of all ten consonant groups in onomatopoeia

Based on the above division into three groups, we can conclude that out of the ten consonant groups, 6 are always found in the regular lexical fund of Albanian, *krr* occurs only in deomatopoeized words, excluding here the word 'krrabë" and 3 consonant groups (*brr*, *vrr*, *trr*) are found only in onomatopoeia. From the analysis of these findings, it appears that the onomatopoeia is in harmony with the Albanian lexical fund, excluding here only some consonant groups, such as: *krr*, *brr* and *vrr*, as well as cases of repetition of the same consonant, such as: *zzz* and *sss*, which do not encounter in other Albanian lexical units.

- **Vowel groups**

Unlike consonant groups, vowel groups in onomatopoeia are not very frequent - in total we identified only three vocalic groups. We did not encounter vocal groups that could appear only in one onomatopoeia, which has been manifested 26 times. In addition to the fact that these groups are few, their frequency is much lower compared to consonant groups.

— Vowel group 'iu'

This group is the most frequent among onomatopoeia and is manifested a total of 14 times. It is always found at the end of the word: *ciu-ciu*, *firfiu*, *iu-iu*, *viu*, *xiuu*, etc. Whereas, as far as the regular lexical fund of Albanian is concerned, this vocal group can be formed in cases of the direct case of nouns or adjectives which in the indirect case appear with 'i', while they are accented with 'u', such as *njeri-u*, *ari-u*, *i ri-u* etc.

— Vowel group 'au'

Group 'au' appeared 6 times and only in the final position: *auu*, *klauu*, *krrau*, *krakkau*, *mjau*, *paau*. It is also found in other Albanian lexical units and appears in different positions, for example *autor* (author), *aura* (aura), *automjet* (auto, car), *autoritet* (authority), etc. it means, generally to borrowed words.

— Vowel group 'ua'

This group is used a total of 6 times in onomatopoeia and always in the body of the word: *guak-guak*, *kuack-kuack*, *puak-puak*. It is also very common in the regular lexical fund of Albanian, for example *dua* (want, like), *mua* (me), *thua* (nail), *grua* (woman), etc.

- **Syllabic structure**

According to [Rugova \(2019\)](#), Albanian is a mora-based language, since "its stress falls on the paroxytone more of metric foot – trochaic stress (not in the syllable, but the paroxytone more)". The northern dialect (Gheg), which is the largest, is undoubtedly mora-based. Although in Albanian, there is an almost regular structure of syllables, the syllabic structure of onomatopoeic words, differs from the structure of regular words, by employing more consonants within one syllable. It means that some consonants do appear within a single syllable only in onomatopoeic words (*çkrrak* 'click', *strrak* 'crack', *kllum* 'plink', *bllap* 'plop', *shkllap* 'splash', *shllap* 'slap'). In most of cases, a sound joins the consonant group as a prefix to express the intensity of the action.

In Albanian, although rarely, still do exist syllabic structures of the type 'CCCVCVC' (*ndryshim* 'change'), but, concerning phonotactic rules of Albanian, some of the consonants never appear in the same order in regular words as they appear in onomatopoeia, e. g. SH/K/LL, (*shkllap* 'splash', *shkllup* 'splat'); Ç/K/RR, (*çkrrak* 'click', *çkrring* 'cling'); S/T/RR, etc. (*strrak* 'crack', *string* 'cling'). It means that some of the onomatopoeic words employ combinations of sounds that do not exist in the regular lexical fund of Albanian and violate its phonotactic principles. Furthermore, in its word stock, Albanian does not have real diphthongs, since whenever there is a combination of two vowels, they will belong to different syllables ([Dodi, 2004](#)), as *díell* [di/ell] 'sun', *míell* [mi/ell] 'ēheat', *krýe* [kry/e] 'head', *thýe* [thy/e] 'to break' etc. In the cases of borrowed words, where neighbor vowels remain part of the single syllable, the stress is distributed to one of them, according to the rules of Albanian. Contrary to this, in onomatopoeic words, we might find cases when the distribution of the stress is equal to both neighbor vowels: *kuak* [kúák] 'croak' or *guak* [gúák] 'quak', or *puak* [púák] 'cackle'.

- **The distribution of sounds according to onomatopoeic fields**

Since onomatopoeia are imitations of sounds produced in nature, including sounds produced by humans and animals, the distribution of sounds and groups of sounds, whether vowels or consonants, is distinguished in onomatopoeic fields, which are divided into four large fields with their subdivisions: 1. Sounds of nature (water, air, earth, fire), 2. Animal sounds (mammals, birds, reptiles and amphibians, insects, fish, and the creatures of the sea), 3. Human sounds (voices, body sounds), 4. Instruments and work equipment (musical instruments, vehicles, electronic and mechanical tools, ear and destruction tools, bells, etc.). As for the distribution of sounds according to the semantic fields of onomatopoeia, the analysis shows that in the sounds of the nature there is a greater diversity of the use of sounds, since the field is wider and more diverse, since it includes the sounds of water, earth, air and fire. In this area, the vowels 'u' and 'a' and the consonants 'll' for water, 'f' for air, 'k' and 'rr' for earth, and 'b' for fire predominate. The most frequent consonant groups are 'kll' and 'pll' for water, 'krr' and 'brr' for earth, and fire and 'frr' and 'vrr' for air. While the vowel groups are characteristic for air, like 'iu'.

In the field of animal onomatopoeia, the vowel 'u' predominates, while the inclusion of consonants is different. 'g' and 'h' predominate in mammals, 'k' and 'c' in birds, while in reptiles 's' and insects 'z'. The dominant consonant groups of mammals are 'grr' and 'mrr', at birds they are negligible, while in reptiles the 'ks' group, and in insects the 'bzz' group are quite intense. Regarding human voices, dominant sounds are 'a', 'e', 'ë', 'm' and 'n'. As far as consonant groups employed at human voices and body noises, dominant are groups 'mr', 'kh' respectively, 'ng' and 'shll' for the least. At instruments and tools, the most employed sounds are 'g', 'n', 'd', 'f', 'r/rr', 'k', 'b', 'x', which from time to time form consonant groups 'ng', 'tr/trr', 'brr', 'ng', 'vrr', 'xrr'

Furthermore, there is a difference between syllabic structures of onomatopoeia itself. For example, onomatopoeia of animals employs fewer consonants than the sounds of natural objects.

In a closer look, there is a difference between onomatopoeias of animals themselves, since onomatopoeias of wild animals employ more consonants than onomatopoeias of pets or birds, for example. The same happens when comparing onomatopoeias of nature - onomatopoeias of water alongside vowels employ mainly liquid consonants (*l, ll, q*), while onomatopoeias of hard objects such as rocks, etc. employ vibrant (*r, rr*) and explosives (*k, g, b, m*), while onomatopoeias of air employ fricatives (*f, v, sh, zh*).

Conclusion

When cross-linguistically analyzed, it is evident that there are different sounds employed to cover respective fields of onomatopoeia in Albanian, in comparison with English. However, there are similarities, for example nasal 'o' is used to imitate echoing sounds of nature as the sound of the church bell. Despite the differences, certain groups of consonants such as 'krr', 'grr', 'ng', 'bll', 'kll' do cover groups of sounds of nature, which could be interpreted to have a kind of connection between form and 'meaning', which leads as to the existence of phonosthemes. This process is eloquently described by Bloomfield (1933). Körtvélyessy and Štekauer (2020) stated that phonosthemes are groups of sounds connected to certain semantics. "A phonostheme may be viewed as a generalized cluster of sounds, based on specific articulatory-acoustic characteristics underlying a group of

semantically related words (Körtvélyessy & Štekauer, 2020). Furthermore, according to Feist (2013) and Marchand (1960), onomatopoeia employs phonosthemes when there exists a specific combination between phonostheme (motivated form) and the meaning that enters in the semantic range of phonosthemes.

Some cases of Albanian do fulfill these phonemic and semantic requirements, such as by consonant groups “krr”, ‘grr’, ‘ng’. It means phonostheme consists of symbolic elements and generally sound symbolism is based on the hypothesis that there is a connection between the form and the meaning of the word. This approach is not accepted by the arbitrariness theory of Saussure as stated above, but Lyons (1977) believed “what is traditionally called onomatopoeia [...] is a universally recognized exception to the generality of the Saussurean principle of the arbitrariness of the linguistic sign; and onomatopoeic forms constitute only a small minority of the word forms in any language system. Furthermore, there is some arbitrariness, or conventionality, even in onomatopoeic forms, since they are made to conform to the phonological systems of particular languages, rather than being directly imitative of what they [...] stand for. The existence of conventionality could be confirmed if we will develop a crosslinguistic approach to onomatopoeia where for the same sound of nature there are different onomatopoeia in different languages, e.g., dog bark: *ham-ham* [Alb] / *hav-hav* [Slovak] / *whooff-whooff* [Eng].

It is evident from this study that there is still some space to discuss, since in Albanian, there are at least three synonyms for the sound of the dog bark: [*ham-ham* / *hav-hav* / *hum-hum*]. The last [*hum-hum*] is present in mountains where shepherds raise huge dogs to defend their sheep and that type of dogs have deeper bark sound than the others. It may be concluded that there is a reason for the existence of such an onomatopoeic variety. The other argument in favor of conventionality is sociolinguistic one, where young children acquire English in early stages, do use English onomatopoeia instead of Albanian ones, as they use “whooff-whooff” instead of any Albanian onomatopoeia for dog bark.

The study also attempted to examine any specific connections between sounds employed and their semantics. Bradley (1904) emphasizes the role of sound symbolism by saying that “we often feel that a word has a peculiar natural fitness for expressing its meaning though it is not always possible to tell why we have this feeling”. He mentions, among other things that long vowels are used to mark slow movements, repeated consonants for repetition of movement, close vowels as “suited to convey the notion of something slender or slight” and “oo” for massive objects. He adds (Bradley, 1904), “sequences of consonants which are harsh to the ear, or involve difficult muscular effort... are felt to be appropriate in words descriptive of harsh or violent movement”. This might be the reason for the existence of extended consonant groups in Albanian that are not present in its regular lexical fund, such are ‘s/t/rr’, ‘ç/k/rr’, ‘sh/k/ll’, ‘ç/k/ll’.

Rastall (2021) preferred the term “echoism” to cover this approximation by conventional phonological means. The term “echoism” was distinguished from “symbolism of sounds” or “the suggestive power of various combinations of vowels and consonants”. As for consonants in English, the study further mentions the use of *qu-* for shaking movements (*quake, quiver*); *bl-* for impetus (*blow, blast*), *fl-* for impetus or slow, clumsy movement (*flounder, flop*); *gr-* for grumble or “something of the same meaning” (*groan, grunt, grudge*); end occlusives for abrupt stoppages (*snap, flap*); *-sh* for smashing or rustling sounds (*clash, splash*); and *-mp* for duller and heavier sounds (*bump, dump*). If we

try to apply this in Albanian, we can see that for the shaking movements, Albanian uses its vibrant consonants 'r' and 'rr' (dridh, dredh, brram, rrapëllimë) etc.

All these combinations are similar to those claimed by Bloomfield (1933) as part of a "system of initial and final root-forming morphemes of vague signification", e.g. [sl-] ("smoothly wet"; *slime, slither, slop, sludge* - but note *slay, slog, slate*, etc.). This helps to follow ideas and efforts to test whether there is a sound symbolism in the onomatopoeia in Albanian. No differences were noticed with other languages, except those underlying in a way the nature of Albanian as such. By following Bradley's (1904) findings, Albanian goes in the same line regarding the connections between vowels employed in onomatopoeia and their meaning. The same applies to consonants in principle, but the consonants themselves do differ from those of English.

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