



## **Albanian Optative and Its Expression in German Teaching and Translation Practices**

**Dr. Mihallaq ZILEXHIU**

German Language Department, English Department, Faculty of Foreign Languages  
University of Tirana, Albania

### **ABSTRACT**

This article is an attempt to accentuate the meanings expressed by the Optative Mood in Albanian language, then through various examples to offer the way of its expression in German. All examples are from Albanian literature translated into German as well as from the experience gathered while working with German language students at the University of Tirana. The Optative Mood is present in a few languages and its expression and its meanings in foreign languages taught to students or in which they translate is a feature requiring special access by teachers and translators. Exactly through the examples given in this paper we aim to highlight its special features and present various possible ways of its expression in German. That is why we are specially focused on: The way of Optative Mood formation in Albanian, Different meanings expressed through this mood, Various versions of its translation in German. We are of the opinion, that on this basis should be clarified all German language teachers, pupils and students who study German as well as all those who practice it as translators. The most commonly encountered keywords are: Optative Mood; The meaning of optative mood; Expressive means of optative; the optative modality. Here are some of the definitions we have found for the Optative Mood: In Albanian Grammar book : Gramatika e Gjuhës Shqipe 1, Botimi I Akademisë së Shkencave. "By Optative Mood, we express the mode of wish in the form of congratulations or curse." Wikipedia: Optative Mood in some languages is an explicit way of verb, in some others it has become one with the subjunctive, while many languages do not possess it at all. It is a nonreal mood as it refers to the events we want to happen, but that is not necessarily what is happening. "The optative mood /'ɔptətɪv/ or /ɔp'tetɪv/[1] (abbreviated OPT) is a grammatical mood that indicates a wish or hope. It is similar to the cohortative mood, and is closely related to the subjunctive mood." Glottopedia: Optative Mood is a partial morphological category of verb and partial category of the mood in several languages (eg in Old Greek, in Finnish, in Romanian, Turkish) where it differs from Conjunctive. As we can see from the above definitions, the Albanian language is one of the few that owns this mood of verb. In other Indo-European languages, the optative mood has transferred to the subjunctive, which did not happen in the Albanian language where the moods not only have not melted to one another, but have even increased more differences. Since German does not possess it as such, then it uses different morphological, syntactic and semantic means to express the meanings of the optative mood. Thus, in German are used: subjunctive, indicative, modal verbs, intonation, exclamation mark or even different exclamations. Unlike the Albanian with six verbal moods, there are only three in German: Indicative, Subjunctive and Imperative (Helbig/Buscha). Compared to Albanian, there are no Admirative, Conditional and Optative mood in German. Different German linguists either accept or do not accept the existence of Optative Mood in German, but in spite of these attitudes, we do not find it expressed in a particular form with the relevant morphological paradigms as it is the case of Albanian language. Unlike in German, Albanian possesses the relevant morphological paradigm for expressing the Optative mood. However, the history of the development of the Optative mood in Albanian has not yet been studied exhaustively.

**Keywords:** Albanian, Optative, Expression, German, Translation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The grammatical forms of the optative mood:

The present tense of optative mood is constructed by adding to the root of optative personal endings: -a, -, -të (in the singular form), and -im, -I, -in (in the plural form). The special theme of optative mood is constructed with the help of formative suffixes -fsh or -sh which are attached to the verb theme, which in most cases coincides with the form of present perfect, but in some cases it coincides with the theme of the participle. When the theme ends with a vowel, then -fsh is attached to it: rrof-sh. Otherwise, it is a -sh set to it: vdek-sh.

With regards to the field of usage of this mood we can say: its usage is relatively limited; it is typical for the spoken language and it is often found in written language, when we are referring to talking or spoken language. In general we do not find it used in text treating scientific subjects or theoretical studies.

We express a wish and congratulations: *Mos vdeksh kurrë o mik.... du sollst niemals sterben mein Freund...* It is also in form of idioms: *Plaçtëpreftë, ...!* (*Kronikënë Gur, I. Kadare f.97*)

*Geh zum Teufel!* (*Chronik in Stein, I. Kadare S. 14*)

*Të bëftë mirë!*

*Wohlbekomm's!*

*Tërëntëpika!*

*Der Schlag soll dich treffen-Möge der Schlag dich treffen*

The wishes and congratulations mentioned above can also move to a kind of "Admissivität"-i (admission), as Fiedler and Buchholz call it in their grammar: *Aman, mëqafsh, mështrifsh... du kannst mich beweinen, mich hin strecken...*

This verb mood is also used to express a condition: *Në + dëshiroreosedhe memos:*

*Nëtëfoltëvjehrra, veshin mos i avër;*

*Nëtëfoltëvjehrra, nadërgohaber. Autobiografi e popullit në vargje*

*Tadelt dich die Schwiegermutter, sie tut es nur aus Neid*

*Tadelt dich der Schwiegervater, dann gib uns gleich Bescheid.*

*Këndonabilbil, këndona,*

*Në nazëntëgjumizgjona*

*Nëshkoftënjeri, tregona Autobiografi e popullit në vargje*

*Sing, Nachtigal, ein Liedchen für uns,*

*Wenn wir einschlafen, so wecke uns,*

*Wenn jemand kommt, so sag es uns*

Through optative mood we can express even a permission (Konzession) in the case of the compound sentence:

*E gjejtëvërtetën, qoftë e fshehurajoedhenë fund tëdheut – Ich finde die Wahrheit, seisieverborgenauch am Ende der Welt.*

In perfect tense, the optative mood is also used, although more rarely, even in expression of the type: *Iupastëlenëuratën! Moegeereuchseinen Segenerteilhaben!*

Let us now look at some cases of the use of anoptative mood accompanied with relevant German translations. Examples are taken from the books of Ismail Kadare: *Kronikë në Gur*; *Autobiografi e Popullit në vargje*; *Kështjella*.

The book "Chronicle in Stone" offers us some nineteen cases of optative use, in book "The Autobiography of the People in Verse" seven times, in book "The Castle" twice and in the book "The General of the Dead Army" only once. The reason why we find it so widely used in the first two books is explained by the reflection of the spoken language in dialogues and analysis that writer Ismail Kadare makes of poems and poetry in them, as it is normally expected in this genre of writing, in the vocabulary and emotionally rich expressions. Like that we are also once more confirming the assertion that optative mood is mostly a feature of spoken language.

## 1.2 Examples of "Chronicle in Stone"

f.25 "Ç'bën, si je, më tha. Mos qofsha, thashë me vete". \_\_\_\_\_ S. 17 *UmHimmelswillen!*

f.31 *Një ditë, duke dëgjuar se si një grua i tha dy herë rresht fqinjës: "Të dalshin sytë", mua m'u kujtuan menjëherë sytë e tij. \_\_\_\_\_ "Einmal hatte ich eine Frau zweimal zu ihrer Nachbarin sagen hören: "Die Augen sollend dir herausfallen!", und gleich waren mir die Augen von Nazos Sohn in den Sinn gekommen"*

f.35 "Sa? Sa? Sa? Murmurima. Mallkime. "Mos i hëngërshi!" "I bëfsh paret barna!" . \_\_\_\_\_ *Fragen wieviel? Wieviel? Wieviel? Wieviel? Murmeln. Flüche. "Den Magen sollst du dir daran verderben!" "Erstickensollst du an deinem Geiz!"*

f.46 "Thonë se pas ca ditësh do të mblihdhengjithë burrat e gratë e qytetit dhe do të dalin udhëve me flamurë e me muzikë duke thirrur e brohoritur "rroftëmuti!". \_\_\_\_\_ "Esheisst, in ein paar Tagen wollten sämtliche Männer und Frauen der Stadt mit Fahnen und Musikgemeinschaft auf die Strasse ziehen und schreien und jubeln: "Hochlebe die Kacke!"

"Nesër do të na nxjerrë gjemba dhe tela të gjithëve.

*U, larg qoftë, - tha nëna. \_\_\_\_\_ "Bewahre!" stieß Mutter hervor.*

f. 92 – *U verbofshin, - tha Xhexhoja. – Si Vehip Qorri i pafsha të gjithë, o Zot. \_\_\_\_\_ "Ihr Augenlicht soll versiegen!" rief Xhexho. Wieder blinde Vehip sollen sie werden, die Schufte."*

f.100 – *Pika ju rëntë, - tha ajo më në fund, - thashë se ç'kishte ndodhur... \_\_\_\_\_ "Duliebe Güte!" sagte sie schliesslich. Und ich hatte schon das Schlimmste befürchtet."*

f.104 Do të martohet Argjir Argjiri, e more vesh? Luaj vendit. Do të martohet vërtetë. T'u thaftë ajo gojë....\_\_S.92.Argjir Argjiri willheiraten, hastdugehört? UmHimmelswillen! Erheiratetwirklich. DieZunge soll dirverdorren!...

117. – Shqipërinë, or tu mbylltë dera, i thashë... \_\_S.103 "Albanien, klarer Fall! Antworteteich.

- Pika të rëntë, - i tha gruaja. – U matufepse fare. S. 103 "DerSchlag soll dichrühren!"

118. – Plaç! \_\_S. 104 Still

127. – Plaç të preftë, se na shurdhove me atë zë si gomari i Kiços. \_\_"Haltden Mund, man wird ja ganztäubvondeinemEselsgeschrei, Kiço!"(!!!!)

146. – Pika të rëntë, - tha nëna, - kujtova se ishe sëmurë. S. 129 "HoldichderKuckuck!" sagteMutter. Und ichdachte, duwärstkrank."

159. –Tyt, firaun! Të rëntë një rrufe e të fshiftë nga faqja e dheut. \_\_S.141 "VerschwindeduStrolch! Soll dichderTeufel holen!"

- U shofshi që të dy, o Zot! S. 141 "ZurHölle mit euch, ihrLüstlinge."

177. – Ç'të ketë? Mos qofshim, - tha Xhexhoja. \_\_Wasesgibt? Es istschrecklich!" sagteXhexho.

200. Plaç. S. 180 Still

213. (ah, si ky dimër mos pafshim më, thoshin plakat)S. 192 (Ach, dassunsnochsoeinWintererspartbleibenmöge, seufztendie alten Frauen)

224. Të gjitha durohen, moj Selfixhe, po veç mos ardh të ajo ditë që të përhapen dashuritë.S. 201 ...abermögeunsderTagerspartbleiben, an dem dieLiebeumsichgreift."

237. Rroftë Shqipëria! – tha Iliri....Rroftë populli shqiptar! Es lebeAlbanien! Rief Ilir

239. Ardh të shëndoshë, dashtë Zoti. S. 213 Wenn sie nur gesundwiederkommt, insh'Allah!"

268. – I rëntë pika! – tha gjyshja.S. 234 "DerSchlag soll ihntreffen! StiessGrossmutterhervor.

300. Ku veni që mos vafshi.

### 1.3 Examples of the Book "Autobiografi e popullit në vargje".

f.27

Konstandin, të ardh të gjëma

Ku e ke besën që më dhe?

Besa jote nënë dhe...

f. 27

Konstandin , o Fluch, o Unheil!

Kostandin, wastreibstdudenndort?

Wobleibtdeinmännlich' Ehrenwort?

Es liegtwohldrungen, tiefbegraben...

f.31.

Ashtu siç dridhem unë në mur

Ashtu u dredhtë dhe kjo urë

f. 33

Sowieich bebe in derMauer,

Soll auchdieBrücke beben immerfort,

VollerGraus und vollerSchauer

*f. 41*

E gëzofshi Shqipërinë!

*f. 45*

*An Albaniensollt ihreucherfreuen!*

*f. 80* Te porta me dy sofa,

Mbeçi me shëndet, moj gra.

*f. 93*

*DiePforteklein, derHimmelgrau,  
Abschiednehm'ichvonmeinerFrau,*

*f. 87*

Në të foltë vjehrra, veshin mos ia ver;

Në të foltë vjehri, na dërgo haber.

*f.100*

*TadeltdichdieSchwiegermutter, sie tut  
es nur ausNeid  
TadeltdichderScgwiegervater,  
dann gibungleichBescheid.*

Këndona, bilbil, këndona,

Në na zëntë gjumi, zgjona,

Në shkoftë njeri, tregona.

*Sing, Nachtigall, einLiedchenfüruns,  
Wennwireinschlafen, so weckeuns,  
Wennjemandkommt, so sag'esuns.*

*f. 148*

Itali, moj qofsh lanet,

S'pate turp, goxha dovlet

Vure bast me një milet

Të pa top, të pa dyfek...

*f. 181*

*O, duunglückseligesItalien  
Dusollstdichschämen! ... soeingrosserStaat  
Misstsich mit einemkleinenVolke.*

## ***1.2 Examples of the novel "The Castle "***

*Pse thua s'dihet? T'u thaftë ajo gojë!*

*Goja t'u thaftë ty zgjebes. Dhe hëngërsh baltë me të. (Kështjella f. 101)*

*Warum sagst du, wer weiß? Glaubst du etwa nicht daran?*

*Ich habe nicht behauptet, daß ich nicht daran glaube, ich habe gemerkt, wer weiß!“ ( Die Festung Büchergilde Gutenberg)*

*Po,- u përgjigj, kurse me vete shtoi: m'u thafshin këmbët. F. 249*

*„ Ja, antwortete Mevla Tschelebi und versuchte dabei zu ergründen, ob diese Antwort seinem hochgestelltem Bekannten wohl gefallen könnte oder nicht. S 270*

#### **1.4 Example of the novel "General of the Dead Army":**

*Tani mbetsh me shëndet, se po ikim (Gjenerali i Ushtrisë së vdekur f.109)*

*Jetzt mach's gut, wir fahren weiter.“ (Der General der toten Armee Fischer 2006 S. 117)*

In the above corpus, it is easy to find out that most of the word groups, part of which are verbs in optative mood, are idioms. Their meaning comes out just by being considered as such and not necessarily as an expression of desire or curse. That is why we should be careful to find the closest equivalent in the language in which we translate, in our case in German:

“Chronicle in Stone”, Onufri p.35 “*Sa? Sa? Sa? Murmurima. Mallkime. “Mos i hëngërshi!” “I bëfsh paret barna!”* .\_\_\_\_ *Fragenwieviel? Wieviel? Wieviel? Wieviel? Murmeln. Flüche. “DenMagensollstduirdaranverderben!” “Erstickensollstdu an deinemGeiz!”*

It is something else when we are simply dealing with the verb in anoptative mood, and we have to translate its meaning independently from the group of words it is part of: In the sense of a condition, the verb is placed in indicative mode: f. 87

*Në të foltë vjehrra, veshin mos ia ver;*

*Në të foltë vjehrrri, na dërgo haber.*

*f. TadeldichdieSchwiegermutter, sie tut*

*es nur ausNeid*

*TadeldichderSchwiegervater, dann gibungleichBescheid.*

In the following case when expressing permission we use Konjunktiv I: *E gjejtëvërtetën, qoftë e fshehurajoedhenë fund tëdheut – Ich finde die Wahrheit, se sie verborgen auch am Ende der Welt.*

So, in all cases when we translate the verb from optative mood in Albanian into German, (excluding idioms), the auxiliary tools are: auxiliary verbs *sollen* and *mögen* or even the verb that is conjugated in Konjunktiv I, accompanied in the spoken language with the respective intonation and in written form with exclamation mark or exclamations:

*Rroftë Shqipëria! (Kronikë në Gur Onufri 2000 f.237)*

*Es lebe Albanien! (Chronik in Stein Fischer Verlag 2012 S. 211)*

*Të dalshin sytë (Kronikë në Gur Onufri 2000 f. 26)*

*Die Augen sollen dir herausfallen! (Chronik in Stein Fischer Verlag 2012 S 23)(Folje modale, mallkim)*

*Të rëntë një rrufe e të fshiftë!( Kronikë në gur Onufri 2000 f. 159)*

*Soll dich der Teufel holen!( Chronik in Stein Fischer Verlag 2012S. 141)*

*I rëntë pika!(Kronik në gur f. 268)*

*Der Schlag soll ihn treffen!( Chronik in Stein Fischer Verlag 2012S. 234)*

*f.213. (ah, si ky dimër mos pafshim më, thoshin plakat)S. 192 (Ach, dassunsnochsoeinWintererspartbleibenmöge, seufztendie alten Frauen)*

*f.224. Të gjitha durohen, moj Selfixhe, po veç mos ardh të ajo ditë që të përhapen dashuritë.S.*

*201 ...abermögeunsderTagerspartbleiben, an dem dieLiebeumsichgreift."*

*Iupastëlenëuratën! MögeereuchseinenSegenerteilhaben!*

If we evaluate cases of using this mood and compare cases while expressing a desire and when we curse, the latter one dominates in the above corpus and the reason may be most likely coincidental. Interestingly, in most cases, when we find the use of auxiliary verb **sollen**, we are dealing with a curse, a kind of strong desire which seems like an order to fulfill what the speaker imagines. On the contrary, the cases of the use of auxiliary verb **mögen** lead us to the conclusion that with the help of this verb we seem more to pray and plead for the desire to be realized, so we express our wish. We have also exceptions to this rule, but in general it happens like that.

## 2. SUMMARY

Through this paper we tried to give a brief overview of the content and meaning of the optative mood in Albanian language. We offered some definitions of this mood according to literature in Albanian language and the Optative mood as an expression of modality in general and particularly in German. After that, we have highlighted the main meanings arising from the use of this mood in Albanian language by providing even relevant translations in German. The main part of the paper is a presentation of examples on the use of this mood by writer Ismail Kadare in his book "Chronicle in Stone", "Autobiography of People in Verses" and two other novels of him. The reason for selection of

this literature is due to the fact they are translated in German and this translation is thought to be one of the finest given the importance of the writer and his works. On the basis of these examples we have extracted the main means of expression of optative mood in German in order to clarify the special tools used by German for this purpose. Finally, we have also realized an analysis of the content of grammatical and lexical elements from which comes out even the recommendation for teaching and using of this mood by German language learners, teachers and translators.

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