Investigating Language as Social (Inter-)Action

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The 15th Conference on British and American Studies

Edited by

Marinela Burada, Oana Tatu
and Raluca Sinu

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ROMANIAN AS AN OBJECT OF INVESTIGATION. INTRODUCTION

RALUCA SINU

The present chapter gathers contributions which explore various (syntactic, morphological, lexico-semantic) aspects related to the structure of natural languages and their acquisition. The papers included here tackle the behavior of aspectual verbs and polarity items in Romanian, the acquisition of epistemic modality in a Romanian-Hungarian bilingual context, and the sensitivity to polarity items in child Romanian.

Aspectual Verbs in Romanian: Control or Raising? (Elena Lăcătuş) deals with the behavior of Romanian aspectual verbs that select non-finite complements. The author begins by examining the ambiguous behavior of aspectual verbs which display properties of both raising and control verbs, as evidenced in the literature, by looking at the theta-grid of the main predicate, the restrictions on the subject, the idiom chunks in subject position, the presence of subject-oriented adverbs and of passive predicates in the complement clause. Then, by applying each of the control diagnostic tests listed above, she looks at Romanian aspectual verbs that select an infinitive or a supine complement, in an attempt to demonstrate whether they behave as control verbs or as raising ones. The investigation concludes that aspectual verbs which select the supine complement, i.e. the verbs in the *a termina* (finish) class, behave like *bona fide* verbs of control, whereas the ones which occur with an infinitive complement, i.e. the ones in the *a începe* (begin) and the *a continua* (continue) classes, present hybrid behavior.

Two Types of Complement for One (Type of) Aspectual Verb in Romanian (Maria Aurelia Cotfas) proposes another examination of Romanian aspectual verbs, more specifically it looks at the choice between supine complements and subjunctive ones in the case of Romanian verbs which encode completion of an embedded event. The paper starts with a discussion of Romanian aspectual verbs and their complements, emphasizing the opposition between structuring and non-restructuring complements. The author notes that, unlike most aspectual predicates, which select the subjunctive, the completion predicates prefer the supine, and this

behaviour leads to consequences such as the possibility of the aspectual verb to combine with a larger range of situation types, or the fact that the internal arguments need not be high on the referentiality scale. She draws the conclusion that the combination between an aspectual predicate and a subjunctive complement, although less frequent and awkward-sounding to some speakers, has started to spread in contemporary Romanian.

Moving to the class of nouns, **Modern Romanian NPIs: the Case of 'Decât'** (Mihaela Tănase-Dogaru) investigates an instance of polarity shift in spoken Modern Romanian, namely the use of the negative polarity item "decât" in affirmative contexts. After a brief introduction into the status of the polarity item "decât" in standard Romanian, the author analyzes spontaneous data produced by adult speakers and internet data which illustrate three types of affirmative uses of "decât": internal, external, and topicalized. The evidence considered prompts the author to put forth the idea that "decât" preserves its status of negative polarity item of the superstrong type, because the syntactically affirmative contexts in which it can be found involve "negation drop", in other words, they contain non-overt negation.

The last two papers in this chapter are concerned with language acquisition. The former, **The Acquisition of Epistemic Modality in a Romanian-Hungarian Bilingual Context** (Veronica Tomescu), approaches comparatively the acquisition of epistemic modality in Romanian and Hungarian by bilingual speakers. The aim of this paper is to look at the importance of the dominant language in the acquisition of epistemic modality, but also to determine whether the acquisition of modality displays any vulnerability in a bilingual context. The data analysed, consisting of spontaneous Romanian and Hungarian utterances and Hungarian narratives and conversations, reveal that in Romanian children use the first epistemic contexts during their third year of life, under the form of epistemic adverbials and mental representation verbs, whereas in Hungarian they avoid epistemic contexts. Tomescu believes that this is indicative of the vulnerability of expressing modalized utterances (especially epistemic contexts) in Hungarian, which confirms the fact that modality is a vulnerable phenomenon in bilingual language acquisition. In addition, the data also show that in a bilingual context children resort to their dominant language to express conditions or uncertainty.

Sensitivity to Negative and Positive Polarity in Child Romanian (Ioana Stoicescu and Mihaela Zamfirescu) explores the acquisition of polarity items by Romanian children using two longitudinal corpora of early Romanian. The paper focuses on the acquisition path for the polarity items *deja* "already", *încă* "yet", *doar* "only", and *decât*, "only", with the

intention to, on the one hand, determine whether Romanian children are sensitive to sentence polarity or aware of the licensing conditions for polarity items, and, on the other hand, to establish if children use polarity items correctly or productively. Each of the four polarity items listed above is analysed in turn, i.e. the positive polarity items: *deja* "already", *încă* "yet", *doar* "only", and the negative polarity items: *decât*, "only" and *încă* "yet", indicating the age when they first occur and their frequency in the corpus, as well as the contexts in which they are used. The results of the investigation point to the fact that Romanian-speaking children use more positive polarity items than negative ones, that the former are acquired first, because they are less complex, and are used more correctly than the latter.

ASPECTUAL VERBS IN ROMANIAN: CONTROL OR RAISING?

ELENA LĂCĂTUŞ

Abstract: In the literature, there is no consensus with respect to the control or raising behaviour of aspectual verbs. Some studies focus on their hybrid behaviour, other studies argue that they behave exclusively as raising verbs. The purpose of this paper is to extend the investigation to aspectual verbs in Romanian with a view to identifying whether they have control and/or raising properties. Although Romanian aspectual verbs select both finite and non-finite complements, in this paper I will focus only on those aspectual verbs that select non-finite complements. I will provide evidence that in configurations with an embedded supine they behave like *bona fide* verbs of control, whereas in configurations with an embedded infinitive they have hybrid behaviour, failing some control diagnostic tests.

Key words: Romanian aspectual verbs, supine, infinitive, control, raising

1 Introduction

Aspectual verbs are verbs which "lend aspectual readings to the sentences in which they occur" (Freed 1979, 1). They describe the initiation, termination, or continuation of an activity (Levin 1993, 274). They "form not only a coherent syntactic class, but a semantic class as well, as seen by the consistency of the properties which they share" (Freed 1979, 1). They can select both clausal complements (as in 1) and DP complements (as in 2):

(1)   a. John began/started/continued **to read** poetry after he got married.
        b. John began/started/continued **reading** the newspaper.
(2)   John began **the letter**.

In the literature, several studies have shown that aspectual verbs are ambiguous between control and raising (Perlmutter 1969, 1970; Ross 1972; or Kirby et al. 2010 for an overview). One and the same verb can illustrate both properties of raising and of control verbs. This view that

aspectual verbs are ambiguous between control and raising is rooted in the lexical ambiguity hypothesis. According to this hypothesis, their ambiguity stems from differences in the lexical specifications (i.e. from their selectional restrictions).

Other linguists consider that there is no ambiguity with respect to the behaviour of aspectual verbs. Proponents of this approach argue that aspectual verbs behave exclusively as raising verbs (Rochette 1999, Lamiroy 1988, among many others).

2 Aim

The aim of the present paper is to extend the analysis to Romanian aspectual verbs, in particular to investigate whether aspectual verbs in this language behave like verbs of control or like verbs of raising, or whether they have the hybrid behavior of the English aspectual verbs.

In Romanian, the class of aspectual verbs includes: *a începe* (begin), *a înceta* (stop, cease), *a continua* (continue), *a conteni* (stop, cease), *a isprăvi* (finish), *a sfârşi* (end, finish), *a relua* (resume), *a termina* (finish, end), *a da* (begin), *a sta* (begin), *a trage* (begin, start), *a se apuca* (begin), and *a se pune* (pe) (begin, start) (list taken from Guţu Romalo 1961/2013, and Manea et al. 2008). They select a variety of complements, both finite, such as the subjunctive (3), and non-finite, such as the infinitive and the supine complement (4):

(3)   Vasile a început să scrie o carte.
             Vasile has begun SĂ write a book
             "Vasile has begun to write a book."
(4)   a.   Vasile a   terminat de scris   o carte.
             Vasile has finished   DE write-SUP a book
             "Vasile finished writing a book."
       b.   Vasile a   continuat a   scrie   cărţi.
             Vasile has continued INF write books
             "Vasile continued to write books."

In this paper I focus on those aspectual verbs which select a non-finite complement: a supine complement and an infinitive one.

3 Control and raising in the Principles and Parameters model

3.1 Identifying the main differences

In this section I will be focusing on the main differences between control and raising structures: differences in the theta-grid of the main predicate, restrictions on the subject, idiom chunks in subject position, the presence of subject-oriented adverbs, and whether the complement clause can be passivized (Perlmutter 1968, 1970; Davies and Dubinsky 2004).

3.1.1 The theta-grid

Control and raising structures have different thematic properties. One of the differences between them is that in control structures the main predicate can assign a theta-role to the external argument, while in raising structures it cannot. In raising structures the main predicate selects one single argument, a propositional one, which merges in complement position. This is illustrated in the examples in (5) below:

(5)   a. Bobby is likely to leave.   = one theta-role   (Raising)
        b. Bobby is reluctant to leave. = two theta-roles   (Control)

In the case of raising structures such as the one in (6) the predicate in the matrix is a single-argument one and it assigns a theta-role to a proposition. The embedded sentence is non-finite. This means that its Inflection cannot assign Nominative case to the DP in Specifier position. Therefore, the subject (*Bobby*) must move in order to get case, leaving behind a trace, as seen in (7) below:

(6)   _____ is likely [Bobby to leave].
(7) $Bobby_i$ is likely t_i to leave.

In control structures, the predicate in the matrix can assign a theta-role to its external argument. In (8b) the Specifier of TP is already occupied by the Experiencer *Bobby*. Therefore, there is no need to insert the expletive *it* (as in 8a) or to move the CP for EPP reasons. This is why both extraposition and clausal subject formation are banned with control structures, as shown in the examples in (8) below:

(8)   a. *It is reluctant that Bobby left.   => extraposition
        b. *[that Bobby left] is reluctant.   => clausal-subject

In example (5b) above, the subject apparently gets two theta-roles, Experiencer from the main predicate and Agent from the verb in the embedded phrase (*leave*). This is a violation of the theta-criterion which states that there should be "a one-to-one mapping between the number of arguments and the number of theta-roles in a sentence" (Carnie 2001, 262). Therefore, we need a third argument to receive the extra theta-role. The third argument, a null pronominal subject, receives a theta-role from the verb in the infinitival clause. In terms of reference, in (5b) the null element PRO must obligatorily refer to *Bobby* because, here, it acts like a bound pronoun. It is co-indexed with *Bobby*:

(9) $Bobby_i$ is reluctant [PRO_i to leave].

Summing up, the theta-role assignment properties of the verb in the matrix distinguish between control and raising structures. In the case of the former, the matrix verb assigns a theta-role to the external argument, it projects an external argument. The external argument in the embedded clause, the null element PRO, is assigned a theta-role by the embedded verb but it is not assigned case.

Raising verbs do not assign a theta-role to an external argument. They select one single argument, a propositional one, which merges in complement position. The constituent which occurs in the Spec TP of the matrix reaches this position as a result of movement. The Spec TP in the embedded clause hosts an NP-trace. Given that the null element PRO must be ungoverned and the NP-traces must be governed, the Spec TP position is ungoverned when the verb in the matrix is a control verb and governed when the matrix verb is a raising one.

3.1.2 Restrictions on the subject

In the previous section we saw that in control structures the predicate in the matrix projects its own external argument to which it assigns a theta-role. The subject in the matrix is a thematic one. This predicts a ban on expletive subjects, which are non-thematic, and on weather *it* in these structures. Their presence would result in a conflict because of the theta-role assigning property of the verb in the matrix:

(10)   a.   *There wanted to be a party in the streets.
        b.   *It tried to be raining.

In raising structures, the predicate in the matrix does not project its own external argument and it does not assign a theta-role to its subject.

This predicts that a raising verb will license a non-thematic subject position; it will allow an expletive *there* in subject position and weather *it*, provided the verb in the complement clause allows such subjects:

(11) a.   There seemed to be a party in the streets.
      b.   It seems to be raining again.

3.1.3 Idiom chunks

The compatibility of the main predicate with idiom chunks is another control/raising diagnostic. If the clause retains its idiomatic reading, then the main predicate is a raising one.

(12) a. The cat is likely to be out of the bag. (idiomatic meaning, Raising)
      b. *The cat is eager to be out of the bag. (no idiomatic reading, not raising)
                            (from Carnie 2001, 265)
      c. ?The cat tried to be out of the bag.   (no idiomatic reading, control)
                            (from Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 8)
(13) a. The shit is likely to hit the fan.   (from Pesetsky 2017)
      b. ?The shit is trying to hit the fan.   (from Pesetsky 2017)

3.1.4 Subject-oriented adverbs

One further difference between control and raising structures which derives from the difference with respect to the theta-grid of the predicate in the matrix clause is the compatibility with subject-oriented adverbs. Only control structures allow the presence of subject-oriented adverbs such as *deliberately, intentionally, inadvertently.* The compatibility of the main verb with a subject-oriented adverb is in accordance with the Agent theta-role of the subject: it indicates that the subject receives an external theta-role.

(14) a.   The man deliberately hit the vase.   (Control, agent theta-role)
      b.   *The vase deliberately hit the man.   (no agent theta-role)
      c.   Jean deliberately forgot to warn me.   (Control)
      d.   *Jean deliberately seemed to warn me.   (Raising)

3.1.5 Passive predicate in the complement clause

Control and raising constructions behave differently when their complement clause is a passive one. In the case of raising predicates, such as *seem*, the passive complement is synonymous with the active complement of the same sentence, as can be seen in (15) below:

(15)   a.   Barnett seemed to have read the book.
        b.   The book seemed to have been read by Barnett.
                        (from Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 5)

In the case of a control verb, the synonymy is absent. Moreover, in some cases, the main predicate does not allow an embedded passive, as illustrated in the examples below:

(16)   a.   The doctor tried to examine Tilman.
        b.   Tilman tried to be examined by the doctor.
(17)   a.   Barnett tried to read the book.
        b.   *The book tried to be read by Barnett.
                        (from Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 5)

The examples in (17) show that a passive complement is not licit if the object of the embedded clause is inanimate. This has been argued to derive from the thematic structure of verbs like *try,* which assign an Agent role to their subject. In the case of raising predicates, sentences with an embedded passive are "truth-conditionally equivalent to their active counterpart" (Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 6). This is illustrated in the examples below:

(18)   a.   Barnett believed the doctor to have examined Tilman.
        b.   Barnett believed Tilman to have been examined by the doctor.
                        (from Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 6)

In the examples above, (18a) is synonymous to (18b), whereas with matrix control predicates, the embedded passive and its active counterpart are no longer synonymous. This is illustrated in the examples in (19) below:

(19)   a.   Barnett persuaded the doctor to examine Tilman.
        b.   Barnett persuaded Tilman to be examined by the doctor.
                        (from Davies and Dubinsky 2004, 6)

In (19a) *the doctor* is the one being persuaded by *Tilman*, while in (19b) *Tilman* is the one being persuaded. According to Davies and Dubinsky (2004), the synonymy versus non-synonymy of active and passive complements is a test that allows us to distinguish raising from control predicates.

3.2 The control/raising tests

Building on the main differences between control and raising constructions discussed above, one can identify the diagnostic tests summarized in Table 1.

Test	Control	Raising
Compatibility with expletive *it*	No	Yes
Compatibility with expletive *there*	No	Yes
Compatibility with weather *it*	No	Yes
Presence of thematic subjects in the Spec TP of the matrix	Yes	No
Compatibility with subject-oriented adverbs	Yes	No
Retaining the meaning of idioms when idiom chunks move to Spec TP in the matrix	No	Yes
Passive predicate in complement clause (passive-active synonymy)	No	Yes

Table 1. Tests for Control and Raising

4 Romanian aspectual verbs: raising or control?

4.1 Introductory remarks

In this section of the paper I focus on whether in Romanian, aspectual verbs that select an infinitive or a supine complement (as illustrated in 20-22) evince control or/and raising behaviour:

(20)   Vasile a   terminat de scris   o carte.
          Vasile has finished DE write-SUP a book
          "Vasile finished writing a book."
(21)   Vasile a   început a   scrie o carte.
          Vasile has begun   INF write a book
          "Vasile started writing a book."
(22)   Vasile a   continuat a   cânta.
          Vasile has continued INF sing
          "Vasile continued to sing."

One should mention that, in Romanian, the infinitive is rarely selected as the complement of verbs in the *a termina* (finish, end) class (Guţu Romalo 1961/2013, 79, fn. 11). The infinitive is selected only by some of the verbs in this semantic class, e.g. *a înceta* (to cease) (see

examples 23a, 23b), *a sfârşi* (to finish, to end) (see 23c), *a conteni* (to stop) (see example 23d), and it is not found with *a termina* (finish, end).

(23)   a.   Nu am   încetat a   te iubi[1].
                  not have stop   INF you love
                  "I have not stopped loving you."

        b.   Nu am   încetat   a   fi un subiect pentru tabloide[2].
                  not have   stopped INF be a subject for   tabloids
                  "I have not stopped being written about in tabloids."

        c.   Inimă, nu conteni cu suspin a   te boci.
                  Heart-the not stop with sigh INF you cry
                  "Heart, don't stop crying."

                                              (from Guţu Romalo 1961/2013, 80)

The infinitive complement is also selected by *a începe* (begin), *a continua* (continue), *a urma* (follow, continue). More rarely it is selected by verbs such as: *a prinde*[3] (begin), *a apuca*[4] (get to, begin) *a se pune* (get to, begin to), *a bufni* (burst into), *a purcede* (start to).

(24)   a.   Începu a   plânge.
                  began INF   cry
                  "She/he began to weep."

        b.   Au început a   înţelege   situaţia.
                  have begun   INF understand situation.the
                  "They began to understand the situation."

        c.   Copiii   continuară a   dansa.
                  children-the   continued INF dance
                  "The children went on dancing."

In what follows I will investigate whether those aspectual verbs which select a supine and an infinitive complement are verbs of control or of raising. In order to do so, I will use the control diagnostics (Perlmutter 1970, Davies and Dubinsky 2004) presented in section 3.

4.2 Ban on disjoint subjects

In Romanian, aspectual verbs which select a supine and an infinitive complement disallow disjoint subjects. In this respect they behave like verbs of control.

(25)   a.   *(Eu) am   terminat de scris   Vasile lucrarea.
                    I   have finished DE write.SUP Vasile paper-the

        b.   Copiii[i]   au   isprăvit de mâncat e[i][5] mâncarea.
                  children-the have finished DE eat.SUP. e food-the

"The children have finished eating the food."

	c.	*Studenţii au început a scrie copiii lucrarea.
		students-the have begun INF write children-the paper-the
	d.	*Copiii au continuat a scrie studenţii lucrarea.
		children-the have continued INF write students-the paper-the

4.3 Agentivity

4.3.1 Agent theta-role

In Romanian, aspectual verbs assign an agent theta-role to their external argument, which is the controller of the null subject in the embedded supine clause.

(26) a.   (Eu$_i$) am terminat de   scris   e$_i$ lucrarea.
            (I)   have finished DE. write.SUP e   paper-the
            "I have finished writing the paper."
      b.   (El$_i$) continuă   a   zâmbi e$_i$.
            (he) continued INF   smile
            "He continued smiling."

Aspectual verbs can assign an agent theta-role. This is reflected in several properties.

4.3.2 Agent-oriented adverbs

The agentivity of aspectual verbs is reflected in the availability of agent-oriented adverbs such as *înadins* ("on purpose"), which modifies the aspectual verb (or the aspectual verb and the complement). This is illustrated in example (27a) below:

(27)   a. Ion a terminat **înadins** de   cântat când a intrat Maria în cameră.
            Ion has finished on purpose DE sing.SUP when has walked Maria   in
            room-the
            "Ion stopped singing on purpose when Maria walked into the room."
       b. El continuă înadins   a   vorbi despre Vasile.
             he continued on purpose INF talk   about Vasile
            "He continued on purpose talking about Vasile."

Also, aspectual verbs can be embedded under verbs of control such as *try*, *force*, and *convince*. This is illustrated in examples (28) and (29) below:

(28) a.   Am încercat să   termin de scris   lucrarea.
             have tried SUBJ finish DE write.SUP paper-the
             "I have tried to finish writing the paper."
      b.   L-am   obligat pe Ion să   termine de scris   lucrarea.
            him have obliged ACC Ion SUBJ finish DE write.SUP paper-the
            "I have obliged Ion to finish writing the paper."

(29) a.   L- am   convins   pe   Vasile să   înceteze a mai cânta.
            him have persuaded ACC Vasile SUBJ stop   INF more sing
            "I persuaded Vasile to stop singing this song."
      b.   L- am forţat   pe Mihai să înceteze a mai executa ordinele.
            him have forced ACC Mihai SUBJ stop INF more follow orders-
            the
            "I forced Mihai to stop following the orders."

4.3.3 Compatibility with the imperative

Aspectual verbs are compatible with the imperative:

(30) a.   Termină   de scris!
            finish.IMP DE write.SUP
            "Finish writing!'
      b.   Mai terminaţi de spus   prostii!
             still finish.IMP DE say.SUP stupid things
            "Stop saying stupid things, already!"
      c.   Încetează   a   cugeta   cum să   dobândeşti cinste! [6]
            stop   INF think   how SUBJ   get   honour
            "Stop thinking how to be honourable."
      d.   Încetează a   mai regreta sau   a   mai comenta trecutul!
            stop   INF more regret or   INF more comment past-the
            "Stop regretting or commenting on the past."

4.3.4 Idiom chunks in subject position

The fact that aspectual verbs assign a theta-role to the argument in subject position in the matrix is also reflected in their incompatibility with idiom chunks in subject position (idioms do not preserve their idiomatic interpretation in this case):

(31) a.   *Ulciorul   a   încetat de mers   de mai multe ori   la apă.
            pitcher-the has stopped DE go.SUP of more many times to water-
            the
            "*The pitcher has stopped going to the well on several occasions."
            Meaning: The pitcher goes only so often to the well.

b.   *Apa   a continuat a trece, pietrele au continuat a rămâne.
         water-the has continued INF pass rocks-the have continued INF
         stay
         Meaning: Water flows, rocks remain.

c.   *Aşchia   nu a   isprăvit de sărit   departe de trunchi.
         splinter-the not has finished DE jump.SUP far   of tree trunk
         "*The rotten apple has finished falling far from the tree."
         Meaning: The rotten apple doesn't fall far from the tree.

4.3.5 Compatibility with weather verbs

The verbs which select a supine complement are incompatible with weather verbs:

(32)   a.   *A   terminat de plouat/   de nins.
                has finished   DE rain.SUP/ DE snow.SUP
       b.   *A   încetat de plouat/   de nins.
                has stopped DE rain.SUP/ DE snow.SUP
       c.   *A   contenit de plouat/   de nins
                has stopped DE rain.SUP/ DE snow.SUP

However, aspectual verbs which select the infinitive are compatible with this class. This is illustrated in the examples below:

(33)   a.   A   început   a ploua.
                has begun   INF rain
                "It began to rain."
       b.   A   continuat   a   ninge.
                has continued INF snow
                "It continued to snow."

This difference shows that aspectual configurations do not represent a homogeneous class with respect to weather verbs. When the clausal complement is a supine, they cannot take a weather verb as a complement. But when the complement is an infinitive, aspectual verbs are no longer incompatible with weather verbs. One should notice, however, that the two configurations behave similarly with respect to the other tests which involve agentivity discussed so far.

4.3.6 Agentivity of the embedded predicate

The semantic constraints on the embedded clause are not uniform across aspectual verbs. *A termina* (finish, end) with a supine complement,

for example, bans non-agentive stative predicates and unaccusatives. This is illustrated in the examples in (34).

(34)   a.   *Oaspeții au   terminat de iubit   gazda.
                     guests-the have finished DE love.SUP host-the
                     "The guests finished/stopped loving the host."

        b.   *Frunzele   au   terminat de ruginit   în vii.
                     leaves-the have finished DE rust.SUP in vineyards
                     "*The leaves stopped rusting in the vineyards."

      Aspectual verbs with an infinitive complement, on the other hand, are compatible both with non-agentive stative predicates and with unaccusatives (35).

(35)   a.   Plantările de copaci au   început a   fi în vogă[7].
                     planting of trees   have begun INF be in vogue
                     "Planting trees has become popular."

        b.   Balcanii au continuat a fi un loc   periculos pentru jurnaliști[8].
                     Balkans.the have continued INF be a place dangerous for journalists
                     "The Balkans have continued to be a dangerous place for journalists."

        c.   Omul   a   încetat   a   fi ca   o maimuță[9].
                     man-the has ceased INF   be like an ape
                     "Man ceased being like an ape."

        d.   Au   început a cădea mulțime de îngeri[10].
                     have started INF fall   lots   of angels
                     "Lots of angels started falling (from the sky)."

        e.   Romanul   a continuat   a   fi o cetate   de spirit înalt[11].
                     Roman-the has continued INF be a   medieval town of spirit high
                     "Roman continued to be a medieval town of high spirit."

        f.   De câteva ori el a continuat a fi galant[12].
                     a few times he has continued INF be chivalrous
                     "He continued to be chivalrous a few times."

      In this respect, aspectual verbs with a supine complement behave like verbs of control. When they occur with an infinitive, they behave like raising verbs.

4.4 Passivization of the complement

      In Section 3, we saw that in raising structures the passive complement is synonymous with the active complement of the same sentence. In control constructions this cannot be the case. The main

predicate does not allow a passive complement. In Romanian, supine structures cannot be passivized. Therefore, this control diagnostic cannot be used with aspectual verbs and a supine complement. In the case of aspectual verbs which select an infinitive complement, one notices a gradience of acceptability. When the embedded passive sentence has a stage-level interpretation, as in (36) – (37), the sentence is ungrammatical:

(36)   a.   Copiii   au   continuat a   desena girafele.
               children-the have continued INF draw giraffes-the
               "The children went on drawing the giraffes."
      b.   */?Girafele au   continuat a   fi desenate de către copii.
               giraffes-the have continued INF be drawn by children-the
               "*The giraffes kept on being drawn by the children."

(37)   a.   Copiii au început a cânta un cântec vesel.
               children-the have begun INF sing one song happy
               "The children began singing a happy song."
      b.   *Un cântec vesel a început a fi cântat de către copiii.
               one song happy has begun INF be sung by children-the
               "*A happy song began to be sung by the children."

But if the embedded passive has a generic or habitual interpretation, the sentence is fully acceptable:

(38)   a.   Centrul   orașului a   început a   fi decorat[13].
               center.the city-gen has started INF be decorated
               "The center of the city has begun to be decorated."
      b.   Regulile au continuat   a fi schimbate până în secolul al 19-lea[14].
               rules.the have continued INF be changed until in century of 19th
               "The rules continued to be changed until the 19th century."

With respect to this diagnostic one notices a difference between aspectual verb configurations with a supine complement and with an infinitive complement. The former behave like verbs of control, the latter like verbs of raising.

4.5 Complement drop

One more control diagnostic is complement drop (Ross 1972). In Romanian, aspectual verbs allow complement drop, like control verbs.

(39)   a.   Ion a terminat de citit dar nu   cred   că a terminat [ ]
               Ion has finished DE read-sup but not believe that has finished [ ]

şi   Vasile.
and Vasile
"Ion has has finished reading, but I don't think Vasile did too."

b.   *Ion se   pare că   a terminat de citit   dar nu cred
Ion REFL seems that has finished DE read-SUP but not believe
că   se   pare   [ ] şi   Vasile.
that REFL   seems   [ ] and Vasile
"Ion seems to have finished reading the book but I don't believe
that Vasile seems too."

c   Ion a început a striga dar nu cred că   a   început [ ] şi Vasile.
Ion has begun   INF shout but not believe that has begun [ ] and
Vasile
"Ion began shouting but I don't believe that Vasile began too."

4.6 Interim conclusions

All the above tests show that Romanian aspectual verbs with a
supine complement behave like *bona fide* verbs of control. When they
occur with an infinitive complement, however, they behave both like
control verbs and like raising verbs. The results are summarized in Table
2.

Test	with a supine complement	with an infinitive complement
thematic subject in the matrix	Yes/ control	Yes/control
compatibility with weather verbs	No /control	Yes/raising
compatibility with idiom chunks in subject position (and retain idiomatic meaning)	No /control	No/control
compatibility with the imperative	Yes/control	Yes/control
compatibility with agent-oriented adverbs	Yes/control	Yes/control
can be the complement of *force*, *persuade*, *try*	Yes/control	Yes/control
the verb in the complement must be agentive	Yes/control	No/raising
Passive predicate in complement clause (passive-active synonymy)	N/A	Yes/raising
Complement drop	Yes/control	Yes/control

Table 2. *Romanian aspectual verbs + supine/infinitive as control verb*s

The data presented in this section showed that Romanian aspectual verbs which select a supine complement behave like *bona fide* verbs of control. However, those which select an infinitive evince hybrid behaviour. They behave like control verbs with respect to the presence of thematic subjects in the matrix, they are compatible with the imperative, they allow subject-oriented adverbs, they can be the complement of control verbs like *try*, *force* and *persuade*, and they allow complement drop. Idiom chunks in subject position do not retain their idiomatic meaning. But they behave like raising verbs with respect to compatibility with weather verbs, semantic constraints on the verb in the complement (the predicate in the complement may be non-agentive), and the fact that there is passive-active synonymy for the embedded clause.

This structural difference, at least at first sight, partly overlaps with a semantic difference. The verbs in the *a termina* (finish, end) class are the ones which, when occurring with a non-finite complement, preferentially occur with the supine (see Lăcătuş 2016 for an analysis of the verbs belonging to this class with respect to control and restructuring). The verbs in the *a continua* (continue) and the *a începe* (begin) classes, when taking a non-finite complement, occur with the infinitive. This suggests that the supine is licensed by some semantic property of the embedding aspectual verb. Similarly, the *irrealis* interpretation of the infinitive matches the semantics of the aspectual verbs in the *a începe* (begin) and the *a continua* (continue) classes. I am tentatively suggesting that the semantics of the aspectual verb in conjunction with the properties of the complement with which it merges in the derivation will determine its control or raising behaviour.

5 Conclusions

The aim of this paper was to investigate the behaviour of Romanian aspectual verbs in configurations in which they occur with a non-finite complement (the supine and the infinitive) with a view to identifying whether they evince control and/or raising properties. I provided evidence that, in Romanian, aspectual verbs with a supine complement are *bona fide* verbs of control, whereas aspectual verbs which occur with the infinitive display hybrid behaviour. They behave like English aspectual verbs, which have also been proved to be ambiguous between control and raising (Perlmutter 1968, 1970; Ross 1972). A partial overlap between aspectual verb semantics, non-finite complement type, and control or control/raising behaviour has been observed. The verbs in the *a termina* (finish) class take supine complements and pass all the control diagnostic tests. The ones in

the *a începe* (begin) and the *a continua* (continue) classes take infinitive complements and they evince hybrid control/raising behaviour.

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Endnotes

[1] Example from https://www.wattpad.com/story/5654416

[2] Example from https://www.viva.ro/vedete-si-evenimente/interviuri-vedete-si-evenimente/interviu-ilinca-vandici-cancan-tabloide-2317159

[3] The verb *a prinde* in Romanian literally means "catch", but here it is used with its other meaning, that of "begin".

[4] The verb *a apuca* (begin to, get to) selects mostly the supine. In Old Romanian it could rarely be found with the infinitive (Guţu Romalo 1961/2013, 76, fn.7).

[5] Given the various analyses with respect to the status of null subjects in non-finite clauses in Romanian (PRO, *pro*, unpronounced copy), at this point I will simply indicate the existence of the null subject as an empty category *e*.

[6] Example 30c from: https://doxologia.ro/cuvinte-cheie/inceteaza-cugeta-cum-sa-dobandesti-cinste

[7] Example from http://stefanvoda.info/ultima-ora/2512-copacii-de-pe-strada-tefan-cel-mare-de-pe-malul-r-gealair-sunt-curii.html

[8] Example from http://moldnova.eu/ro/discriminare-tortura-si-amenintari-cu-moartea-cum-se-respecta-drepturile-omului-republica-moldova-si-restul-lumii-13311.html/

[9] Example from http://ro-en.gsp.ro/index.php?d=e&q=ape

[10] Example from http://www.crestinortodox.ro/calendar-ortodox/soborul-sfintilor-arhangheli-mihail-gavriil-al-tuturor-cerestilor-celor-fara-trup-puteri-35823.html

[11] Example from https://books.google.ro/books?isbn=6066660616

[12] Example from https://books.google.ro/books?isbn=6067419262

[13] Example from http://www.studio-l.md/index.php/en/social/video/42?start=90

[14] Example from https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regulile_jocului_de_%C8%99ah

Two Types of Complement for One (Type of) Aspectual Verb in Romanian

Maria Aurelia Cotfas

Abstract: Among the class of aspectual verbs, which in (modern) Romanian select the subjunctive, the verb *a termina* 'finish' is interesting in that it prefers supine complements which exhibit restructuring properties otherwise unavailable for any type of subjunctive complement. However, it can also take subjunctive complements – albeit less so than other predicates of the aspectual class. The paper focuses on the syntactic and semantic differences between these two types of complement, trying to ascertain whether they are in free alternation or whether the choice of one type of complement is motivated by other (syntactic or semantic) reasons. While there are cases where the two do seem to alternate freely, we focus on cases when the choice of a subjunctive over a restructuring supine is motivated syntactically and may also bring about a change in the aspectual meaning of the selecting verb.

Keywords: restructuring, supine, subjunctive, Romanian aspectual verbs, termination, cessation, completion

0 Focus and aim of the paper

In the present paper, the general focus is on aspectual verbs in Romanian which encode *termination* of an (embedded) event, such as *a termina* "finish", *a încheia* "end", *a sfârşi* "end", *a isprăvi* "finish, be done with", *a înceta, a se opri* "cease, stop". Each of these verbs has particular selectional idiosyncrasies which we will not dwell on. What we are interested in is to discuss complement choice with one particular type of aspectual verbs in Romanian, i.e., those verbs which encode completion (i.e., boundedness) of the embedded event.

Termination can be viewed either as *cessation* or *completion,* and this distinction can be marked both lexically and syntactically. That is, either via the very choice of (aspectual) verb (e.g. *a termina* "finish"/*a încheia* "end"/*a sfârşi/a isprăvi* "finish" – for completion vs. *a înceta/a se opri* "cease, stop" – for mere cessation), or via selection of different types

of complement in terms of internal structure, restructuring possibilities, (non-)finiteness, etc. We aim to investigate whether the choice of different types of complement (viz., the subjunctive vs. the supine) with the same (type of) completive aspectual verb is simply a matter of free alternation (influenced by frequency or register) or is otherwise motivated. What we hope to show is that the choice of type of complement is not a matter of free alternation, and that the less frequent, but nonetheless quite widespread choice of a subjunctive complement by a completive aspectual predicate (of which *a termina* is the most frequent) brings about a widening of the otherwise more restricted possibilities of the supine with respect to embedded lexical aspect, event readings, types of pronominal clitics involved and the interpretation of the internal argument. Moreover, this may correlate with a change in the aspectual meaning of the selecting verb, in that the choice of a subjunctive changes the completion reading of the selecting verb into one encoding cessation.

1 Briefly on aspectual verbs and their complements in (contemporary) Romanian

One very important idea to start from and to bear in mind is that (modern) Romanian is a "subjunctive" language (see also Cotfas 2012) – a trait which it shares with other languages of the "Balkan Sprachbund", in spite of being part of the group of Romance languages (i.e., it belongs to what some linguists call "East Romance"). More precisely, it has mostly lost the infinitive as complement to verbs, such that the "*conjunctiv*"/subjunctive is now used instead of the infinitive, with the exception of modal *a putea* "can", for which the infinitive still freely alternates with the subjunctive (with the relevant syntactic differences).

Like all the other languages, Romanian has aspectual verbs that mark the three basic aspectual distinctions, as illustrated and exemplified in (1) below. Within brackets is indicated the type of complement that each of these verbs selects, with those in between brackets as the less frequent choice:

(1)   (a) ***inception***: *a începe* "begin, start" (+ (inf)/subj); *a purcede* "proceed" (+ inf/(subj)), *a prinde* "start" (+ inf/(subj)); *a se pune (pe)* /*a se apuca (de)* (+ inf/supine/(subj)) "begin")
        (b) ***continuation*** (*a continua* "continue"; *a-şi vedea (mai departe) de* (+ supine/NP/(inf)) "keep (on)")
        (c) ***termination*** (*a termina, a încheia, a sfârşi, a isprăvi* "finish" (= **completion**) (+ supine/(subj)); *a înceta* "stop, cease"*, a (se) opri* (+ subj/din-PP) (= **cessation**))

The variation with respect to the type of complement selected or favoured by each of these verbs (subjunctive/infinitive/supine) generally correlates with frequency of use, register and, quite often, different interpretation (see below). Among completion verbs, unlike *a termina* "finish", the verbs *a sfârşi* and *a isprăvi* "finish, end, complete" are confined to the literary register and are rather obsolete nowadays (especially *a isprăvi)*. The same goes for *a purcede* and *a prinde* (+ infinitive) as compared to *a începe*, as far as inception predicates are concerned: the former verbs are rare and mostly encountered in old texts. A quick search in online corpora reveals that aspectual verbs of inception, continuation and cessation (*a începe* "begin"*, a continua* "continue"*, a înceta* "cease") overwhelmingly occur with the subjunctive and on extremely few occasions with the *de*-supine[1]. Conversely, while it is an established fact that completion verbs prefer the supine, they also seem to allow the subjunctive as complement[2].

Consequently, there seems to be a certain asymmetry within the class of aspectual predicates with respect to the possibility of alternating/allowing different types (and sizes) of complements (i.e., the *de*-supine vs. the subjunctive): completion verbs seem to be more lenient than the others as far as complement choice is concerned. Thus, the aim of the present paper is to focus precisely on this alternation in complement choice (with completive aspectual predicates), to see what motivates it and to discuss its possible effects.

2 A closer look at completive aspectual predicates and their restructuring and non-restructuring complements (supines vs. subjunctives)

2.1 Briefly on Restructuring (in Romanian)

Crosslinguistically, restructuring refers to "shrunken domains", and verbs analysed as "restructuring" predicates are those which are functional rather than lexical in nature, allowing a sort of "union" between the matrix and the embedded domains. That is, these clause-reduction verbs allow for the formation of complex predicates. Several types of restructuring have been discussed in the literature, according to the type of predicate involved: lexical restructuring, functional restructuring and, more recently, voice restructuring (for more details, see Wurmbrand 2001, 2004, 2015, a.o.)

Generally, restructuring has been shown to be possible with deficient complements (viz., tenseless domains). The best candidates are