

Bare Passive infinitives in Old Romance

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Introduction

Romance passive infinitives are characterized by their passive periphrastic morphology ($be_{INF} + V_{PstPrf}$), as in (1, 2), or by a SE reflexive pronoun (3, 4). Raising effects are due to the defective value of T, like in raising constructions (5). Other Null Object Constructions (NOC) such as *tough*-movement constructions (TMC) (REŽAĆ, 2006; Hicks 2009) (6), infinitival relatives (7) or other object deletion constructions (8) have not been considered real passives.

The data

Some Old Romance varieties exhibit a kind of infinitives without any passive morphology and (apparently) not being selected by a *tough*-predicate (9 – 11). We call them *Bare Infinitive Passives* (BPI). In (9) and (10), there is an overt postverbal internal subject. In (11) there are no overt arguments. Moreover, the passive meaning seems to be obtained contextually.

Some relevant properties of BPI

The main properties of BPI are the following. (a) The predicates selecting the BPI are *psich*-predicates of FEAR type. (b) The interpreted agent of the BPI receives an arbitrary interpretation, like the one of the subject of a SE-passive. (c) The Internal Argument appears in most cases in postverbal position.

The analysis

We argue for the following points:

- A. The predicates selecting the BPI in Old Occitan and Old French, of the FEAR type, selected a negated subordinate clause in Latin. They share with *tough*-predicates a modal interpretation. Therefore, some type of CP –ModP or SigmaP– is merged over T.
- B. The null agent argument is an arbitrary complex operator with a null DP (Hicks 2009).
- C. The BPI clause projects a PP and/or a CP, which acts as a barrier for the control of the null agent by the subject of the main clause.
paour a [_{CP} de [_{TP} [_{DP}DP [_{PRO}_{arb}]] ocire son destrier]
- D. This possibility is lost when FEAR predicates lose their negation selecting properties. The absence of a CP/ModP projection causes PRO to be coreferent with the main subject.
- E. This PP/CP is a necessary intermediate landing site for an arbitrary Complex Operator to escape in hits way to the main clause in the case of the argument of *tough*-predicates, may be in a *smuggling* way (Hicks, 2009; Collins 2005).
[[_{DP} lo dit fet] [_T era ... [_{AP} fàcil [_{CP} de [_{lo dit fet}] [_T ésser tret [_{DP} lo dit fet]]]]]]
- F. In OR infinitival SE-constructions, the arbitrary pronoun is the DP of the Complex Op.

Theoretical consequences and further extensions

An interesting follow up of our analysis is the fact that passive interpretation is not to be tied to some specific morphology. Rather, it is to be considered an epiphenomenon resulting of the interaction of agreeing properties, the internal structure of the DPs, and move operations.

From an evolutionary perspective, it is interesting (a) to establish a connection between the presence/absence of SE-passives and the structures presented, and (b) the show the statistical progression of *tough*-constructions whereas the BPI disappear.

Examples

- (1) No me acostumbro a ser halagado (Spa.)
Not ME.go used to be honored
- (2) avié muy grande miedo de seer justiciado.
Had very big fear to be punished
(OSpa.: Berceo, Vida de Santo Domingo de Silos, 446).
- (3) Su pasión crecía y con ella, el miedo a delatarse
His passion grew up and with it his fear to denounce himself
(Spa., apud Hernanz 199: 2281)
- (4) ovo miedo de se ver en algún afrenta. (Ibid.)
had fear of SE see in some outrage
- (5) John seems to be a liar
- (6) Linguists are tough to please (Hicks, 2009: 535)
- (7) Una tarea sin terminar (CSpa.: Hernanz 1999: 2299)
A task without finish.INF
- (8) The flowers are pretty to look at (Hicks 2009: 535)
- (9) car paür a gran de nafrar sun caval (OOcc.: *Jaufré*, apud Jensen 1986, §726)
because fear has great of wound.INF his horse
- (10) grant paour a d'ocire son destrier (OFr.: apud Jensen 1986, §726)
big fear has of kill.INF his horse (= be killed)
- (11) car paor an e temensa d'aucir e de desfar
because fear have and fear of kill.INF (=be killed) and of distroy.INF (=be destroyed)
(OOcc.: *Crois. Albig.* 186, 22, apud Jensen 1986, §727).
- (12) lo dit fet era ... fàcil de ésser tret en exemple
The mentioned fact was easy of be.INF take.PP as an example
(OCat.: *Epist. Val. Med.*, 156, 12).

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