

# Alleged obligatorily controlled inflected infinitives

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This paper examines the arguments presented in Modesto (2009, 2018) and Sheehan (2013, 2018) in favor of the idea that inflected infinitival complements of desideratives, commissives, and object control verbs such as *persuadir* 'persuade' in Portuguese can be obligatorily controlled. It argues that the relevant complements are not instances of obligatory control (OC); they rather contain *pro*, interpreted by the same operations that govern its interpretation in finite clauses. This conclusion reinforces Landau's (2015) claim that the presence of agreement inflection blocks control in attitude complements. Focusing on European Portuguese, the paper argues that this conclusion allows for a precise characterization of the distribution of the inflected infinitive in verbal complement position: the inflected infinitive is barred in the complement position of restructuring verbs and in interrogative complements. The paper offers an account of this distribution that is based on the idea that inflected infinitives are bare TP projections. Evidence in favor of this claim comes from an examination of the distribution of pre-verbal subjects. The restrictions on subject reference found in inflected infinitival complements of different OC attitude verbs in European Portuguese stem from the particular status of Actional complements in OC contexts (Farkas 1992; Jackendoff & Culicover 2003).

## 1. Introduction

As is well known, Portuguese has two types of infinitives: regular, non-inflected infinitives (1a), and infinitives that bear person and number agreement morphology (1b) (all of the examples mentioned in this section are from the European variety of Portuguese):

- (1) a. *Non-inflected infinitive*  
Eles lamentam ter                   chegado atrasados.  
they regret.3PL to.have.INF arrived late  
'They regret it that they arrived late.'

b. *Inflected infinitive*

Eles lamentam (nós) termos                      chegado atrasados.

they regret.3PL we      to.have.INF.1PL arrived      late

'They regret it that we arrived late.'

In (1a), the subject of the embedded clause is a referentially dependent empty category that displays the usual properties of controlled PRO (locality, sloppy readings under ellipsis, etc.). In (1b), the subject bears independent reference and it may be overt or null. When it is overt, it bears nominative case. When it is null, it has the properties of the pronominal category *pro*. In (1a), by contrast, the subject may not be overt.

Inflected infinitives have a more restricted distribution than non-inflected infinitives (Âmbar 1994; Gonçalves et al. 2014; Madeira 1994; Raposo 1987; Sitaridou 2002). They may appear in standard non-obligatory control (NOC) contexts: as sentential subjects and sentential adjuncts. In verbal complement position, they may combine with verbs of perception, causatives, factives (1b) and epistemic/declarative verbs (2) (following common practice, I use the label "propositional complement" to refer to complements of epistemic and declarative verbs):

(2) *Propositional complement*

Ela afirmou/julga                      termos                      chegado atrasados

she claimed/believes have.INF.1PL arrived      late

'She claimed/believes that we arrived late.'

However, they are barred from occurring in interrogative complements (3) and they are utterly incompatible with restructuring verbs, such as *querer* 'want', *tentar* 'try', *conseguir* 'manage' (4):

## (3) a. Não sabemos quando falar                      com ele.

not know.1PL when      talk.INF with him

'We don't know when to talk with him.'

## b. \*Não sei                      quando falarmos                      com ele.

not know.1SG when      talk.INF.1PL with him

## (4) Eles querem / tentaram / conseguiram falar(\*em)                      com ela.

they want      / tried      / managed      to.talk(.3PL) with her

'They want/tried/managed to talk to her.'

Non-restructuring OC verbs such as commissives (*prometer* 'promise') and desideratives (*preferir* 'prefer') allow both types of infinitival complement:

## (5) a. Os pais                      prometeram à                      Maria chegar                      às                      10:00.

the parents promised      to.the Maria arrive.INF at.the 10:00

'Her parents promised Mary to arrive at 10:00.'

- b. Eu prometi à Maria chegarmos às 10:00.  
 I promised to.the Maria arrive.INF.1PL at.the 10:00  
 'I promised Mary that we would arrive at 10:00.'
- (6) a. Nós preferíamos ir ao cinema.  
 we preferred go.INF to.the movies  
 'We would prefer to go to the movies.'
- b. Preferia irmos ao cinema.  
 preferred.1SG go.INF.1PL to.the movies  
 'I would prefer for us to go to the movies.'

Object OC verbs such as *convencer* 'convince' or *persuadir* 'persuade' also allow for both forms:

- (7) a. A mãe convenceu as crianças a almoçar cedo.  
 the mother convinced the children to lunch.INF early
- b. A mãe convenceu as crianças a almoçarem cedo.  
 the mother convinced the children to lunch.INF.3PL early  
 'Their mother convinced the children to have lunch early.'

In inflected infinitival complements of the type of (5), (6) and (7), the range of interpretations available for a null subject appears to be severely constrained. This can be clearly seen when these complements are compared with propositional complements. (8) and (9) contain two independent clauses so that an antecedent is provided for the null subject in the second clause. While (8) is fine for all speakers, the status of (9) is questionable for many (here I use the % sign to indicate that speakers vary in their judgements):

- (8) Eles vão chegar atrasados. Julgo terem apanhado  
 they go arrive.INF late think.1SG have.INF.3PL caught  
 muito trânsito.  
 lots traffic  
 'They are going to arrive late. I believe they got trapped in traffic.'
- (9) Tu não estás nada bem, %prefiro telefonares já  
 you not are nothing well prefer.PRES.1SG call.INF.2SG immediately  
 ao médico.  
 to.the doctor  
 'You don't look well; I prefer for you to call the doctor right away.'

Even though speakers may vary in their judgement of examples comparable to (9) (Sheehan 2013, 2018), everyone agrees that (10) is considerably better:

- (10) Tu não estás nada bem, prefiro telefonarmos já  
 you not are nothing well, prefer.PRES.1SG call.INF.1PL immediately  
 ao médico.  
 to.the doctor  
 ‘You don’t look well; I prefer for us to call the doctor right away.’

Similarly, (11a) is of questionable status when compared to (11b):

- (11) a. % Eu convenci a Ana a almoçares às dez.  
 I convinced the Ana to have.lunch.INF.2SG at.the ten  
 ‘I convinced Ana that you would have lunch at ten.’  
 b. Eu convenci a Ana a almoçarmos às dez.  
 I convinced the Ana to have.lunch.INF.1PL at.the ten  
 ‘I convinced Ana that we would have lunch at ten.’

In view of contrasts such as these, it has been proposed in recent years that inflected infinitival complements can be obligatorily controlled. Modesto (2009, 2018), on the basis of Brazilian Portuguese (BP), and Sheehan (2013, 2018), based on data from European Portuguese (EP), argue that the (a) and (b) examples in (5), (6), (7) are all instances of OC. For Modesto, the empty category in (the Brazilian counterparts of) (5b), (6b) and (7b) is a special type of PRO, namely Cased PRO; for Sheehan, it is a special type of OC *pro*.

In this paper, I focus on inflected infinitival complements of desideratives, commissives, and object control verbs such as *persuadir* ‘persuade’, *convencer* ‘convince’, the predicates that Modesto (2009, 2018) and Sheehan (2013, 2018) draw their arguments from. I argue that there are no grounds to posit special mechanisms for the null subject in these contexts, on either variety. When an inflected infinitive is allowed as complement of these verbs and the subject is null, the relation established between the null subject and its antecedent is not one of OC, but is rather governed by the general mechanisms responsible for the interpretation of *pro* in finite clauses. These may vary depending on whether the language is a consistent null-subject language, as is the case of EP, or a partial null-subject language, as is the case of BP (Holmberg 2005; Modesto 2007; Rodrigues 2004), but in both cases, there is no need to assume that the status of the null subject in inflected infinitives is special. This conclusion is in line with Landau (2015), who claims that the presence of *phi*-feature agreement inflection blocks control in attitude complements.<sup>1</sup>

1. Landau (2015: 18) defines attitude contexts as “domains in which the denotation of linguistic expressions is determined relative to the episodic or bouletic state of a participant in the reported situation and not relative to the actual world” The verbs discussed here are all attitude verbs under this definition.

This paper is organized as follows. Sections 2–5 focus on EP. In Section 2, I provide arguments that the null subject of inflected infinitival complements in the relevant contexts is not obligatorily controlled. Section 3 discusses the implications that this conclusion has for an analysis of the syntax of inflected infinitives. In particular, the inflected infinitive is allowed in complements of verbs that impose constraints on the temporal orientation of their argument clauses (contra Gonçalves et al. (2014)). It is barred only in two verbal complement contexts: in the complement position of restructuring verbs and in interrogative complements. I adopt Grano's (2015) suggestion that non-restructuring infinitives project a semantically vacuous T $\emptyset$ . On the reasonable assumption that a T projection is minimally required for the licensing of an inflected infinitive, the availability of the inflected infinitive in non-restructuring environments follows. The fact that inflected infinitives are not allowed as complements of restructuring verbs is explained on the assumption that restructuring verbs realize functional heads in the inflectional layer of the clause thus giving rise to monoclausal structures (Grano 2015).

In Section 4 I propose that the unavailability of an inflected infinitive in an interrogative complement is due to lack of a C (=Force) projection. By hypothesis, inflected infinitives are bare TP projections. Evidence in favor of this claim comes from the distribution of pre-verbal subjects. Building on previous work on the syntax of subjects in the null subject languages of the consistent type (Barbosa 1995, 2000) I show that the constraints on the distribution of pre-verbal subjects in inflected infinitival complements of attitude verbs (with the exception of factives) in EP are due to lack of a projecting C.

In Section 5, I address the issue of the restrictions on subject reference found in inflected infinitival complements of different OC attitude verbs. I argue that they are not due to syntax proper, but are accounted for in the semantics. In particular, they stem from the particular status of Actional complements in obligatory control contexts. In the spirit of Jackendoff & Culicover (2003), I assume that commissive verbs and object control attitude verbs such as *convince* require their infinitival complement to be a volitional Action and impose restrictions on the choice of Actor of the Action. Inflected infinitival clauses with a subject with independent reference can only be embedded as complements of these verbs when they are coerced into volitional Actions. This explains their restricted distribution, thus contributing to the illusion of OC.

Concerning volitionals such as *preferir* 'prefer', *desejar* 'hope', I argue that the restrictions on subject reference that are found in inflected infinitives can only be understood once obviative subjunctives are brought into the picture. With these verbs, an inflected infinitival complement with a non-dependent subject is not possible precisely in the contexts that trigger obviation in a subjunctive complement (typically in Actional complements). Drawing on the competition based account of

obviation proposed by Farkas (1992), I suggest that the restrictions on the reference of the subject in inflected infinitival complements follow from competition with the other two alternative forms, the subjunctive and the non-inflected infinitive.

Finally, in Section 6, I turn to BP. I examine Modesto's arguments in favor of the idea that inflected infinitival complements are obligatorily controlled and I show that the dependent behavior of the null subject in inflected infinitives is not peculiar to infinitives; it also holds in finite clauses and is rather a feature of BP null subjects in general, given its status as a partial null subject language. This strongly suggests that there is no need to assume that the status of the null subject in inflected infinitives is special. In the literature, there are different analyses of the nature of the finite null subject in BP (Barbosa 2019; Kato 1999; Ferreira 2000; Holmberg 2005; Modesto 2000, 2008; Nunes 2019; Rodrigues 2004). Whichever the analysis assumed, there are no grounds to posit a special status for the null subject of an inflected infinitive. I thus conclude that the null subject of inflected infinitival complements of OC attitude verbs is not obligatorily controlled in either EP or BP.

## 2. Arguments that inflected infinitival complements of OC attitude verbs in EP are not obligatorily controlled

This section focuses on EP and presents a series of arguments that show that the null subject of an inflected infinitive selected by an OC attitude verb differs in crucial ways from the null subject of a non-inflected infinitive. I argue that the contrasts noted can all be explained under the assumption that the latter is an instance of OC PRO while the former is not, it is *pro*, a pronominal category whose reference is governed by the same mechanisms that govern the interpretation of (unstressed) pronouns, namely variable binding and coreference.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1 Split antecedents

In a well-behaved consistent null subject language like EP, the null subject of a finite clause, *pro*, may take split antecedents:

- (12) O João<sub>i</sub> disse à Maria<sub>k</sub> que *pro*<sub>*i+k*</sub> deviam partir.  
 the João said to.the Maria that *pro* should.3PL leave  
 'John told Mary that they should leave.'

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2. Throughout the paper, I do not assume a particular analysis of OC PRO and I do not address the issue of the categorial status of PRO vs. *pro*, as these aspects would take me too far afield. What matters really is that these non-inflected infinitival complements are instances of OC while the inflected infinitival counterparts are not. For a discussion of the status of *pro*, see Barbosa (2019).

In infinitival clauses, there is a clear contrast between the empty subject of a non-inflected infinitival complement and that of an inflected infinitive: while the former may not take split antecedents, the latter can. In order to fully appreciate this, it is necessary to clarify the distinction between two different phenomena: split antecedent control and partial control. I illustrate these distinctions with English examples, and then I turn to EP. Consider the following English sentence:

- (13) *Partial Control* (Landau 2000: 44)  
 John<sub>i</sub> told Mary<sub>k</sub> that he<sub>i</sub> preferred PRO<sub>i+</sub> to meet at 6.

(13) is a case of partial control: the embedded collective predicate occurs with a controller in the singular, namely 'he'. Partial control is OC, so the unique singular controller and PRO must be clause mates.

A characteristic property of partial control is that it is semantic. If the embedded clause contains an anaphor that requires a syntactically plural subject, the same configuration is no longer grammatical (Landau 2000: 48):

- (14) \*John told Mary that he preferred to meet each other at 6.

Now consider the following example (Landau 2000: 49):

- (15) Mary<sub>i</sub> thought that John<sub>k</sub> said that [PRO<sub>i+k</sub> helping each other<sub>i+k</sub>] is crucial.

In (15), PRO can bind the anaphor because it is syntactically plural. Thus, this is a case of split antecedent control: the controller is represented by two DPs, each occupying a different structural position. Split antecedent control can be found in NOC contexts (15) and in a restricted set of cases of OC. In OC cases of split antecedent control, both antecedents must be contained in the same clause as the infinitival complement. In this case, a plural anaphor is fine, given that PRO is syntactically plural:

- (16) *Split Control*  
 John<sub>i</sub> proposed to Mary<sub>k</sub> to PRO<sub>i+k</sub> meet each other at 6.

As discussed in Landau (2000: 55), as well as Jackendoff & Culicover (2003: 523), split OC control appears to be a property of particular verbs (such as 'propose' or 'ask'). As illustrated by (17c), the OC verbs 'promise' and 'persuade' do not license split control in English:

- (17) Jackendoff & Culicover (2003: 523)  
 a. Sally persuaded Ben to take better care of himself.  
 b. Sally promised Ben to take better care of herself.  
 c. \*Sally persuaded/promised Ben to take better care of themselves.

With this much in place, let us now consider the following EP paradigm:

(18) *Non-inflected infinitive*

- a. O Pedro disse à Ana que preferia reunir  
 the Pedro said to.the Ana that prefer.PAST.IMP.3SG meet.INF  
 às dez.  
 at.the ten  
 'Pedro told Ana that he would prefer to meet at ten.'
- b. \*O Pedro disse à Ana que preferia ir morar  
 the Pedro said to.the Ana that prefer.PAST.IMP.3SG go.INF live.INF  
 um com o outro.  
 one with the other  
 '\*Pedro told Ana that he would prefer to live with each other.'

(19) *Inflected infinitive*

- O Pedro<sub>i</sub> disse à Ana que preferia irem morar  
 the Pedro said to.the Ana that prefer.PAST.IMP.3SG go.INF.3PL live.INF  
 um com o outro.  
 one with the other  
 'Peter told Mary that he would prefer for them to go and live with each other.'

(18a) is a case of partial control. Both (18b) and (19) contain an anaphor that requires a syntactically plural subject. Since one of the potential antecedents is not contained in the same clause as the infinitival complement, we are sure that we are not dealing with a context of split OC. As expected, (18b), with a non-inflected infinitive, is out due to the presence of the anaphor. (19), with an inflected infinitive, by contrast, is fine. This shows that the null subject of the inflected infinitive is syntactically plural. Therefore, this cannot be an instance of OC.

As in English, non-inflected infinitival complements of *persuadir* 'persuade' and *prometer* 'promise' do not license split control:

- (20) a. \*O Pedro prometeu à Maria proteger-se um ao outro.  
 the Pedro promised to.the Maria protect.INF-SE one to.the other
- b. \*O Pedro convenceu a Maria a ir morar um com o outro.  
 the Pedro convinced the Maria to go.INF live.INF one with the other

Now consider the counterparts to (20) with an inflected infinitive:

- (21) a. O Pedro prometeu à Maria protegerem-se um ao outro.  
 the Pedro promised to.the Maria protect.INF.3PL-SE one to.the other  
 'Pedro promised Maria that they would protect each other.'



- b. O Pedro convenceu a Maria a irem morar um com  
 the Pedro convinced the Maria to go.INF.3PL live one with  
 o outro.  
 the other  
 ‘Pedro convinced Maria that they would live together.’

When the infinitive bears plural inflection, the sentences become acceptable. These contrasts between the two types of infinitival complement can all be explained on the assumption that (18b), (20a), (20b) are instances of OC (with a PRO subject), while (19), (21a), (21b) are not and rather feature a *pro* (=pronominal) subject, which may take split antecedents. This is the view defended in Pires (2006) and Sitaridou (2007). Under an OC analysis of (19), (21a), (21b), however, this account is lost.

## 2.2 Long-distance dependencies

A non-inflected infinitive in an OC context doesn’t allow a long distance antecedent:

- (22) Eles<sub>i</sub> disseram-me que os médicos<sub>k</sub> prometeram não PRO<sub>k/\*i</sub>  
 they tell.PAST.3PL-me that the doctors promise.PAST.3PL not PRO  
 sentir nada durante a intervenção.  
 feel.INF nothing during the procedure  
 ‘They told me that the doctors promised not to feel anything during the procedure.’

(22) minimally contrasts with its counterpart with an inflected infinitive (here I use the neutral label *ec* to represent the null subject of the inflected infinitive):

- (23) Eles<sub>i</sub> disseram-me que os médicos<sub>k</sub> prometeram não *ec*<sub>k/i</sub>  
 they tell.PAST.3PL-me that the doctors promise.PAST.3PL not *ec*  
 sentirem nada durante a intervenção.  
 feel.INF.3PL nothing during the procedure  
 ‘They told me that the doctors promised that they wouldn’t feel anything during the procedure.’

This contrast casts doubt on the idea that the null subject of the embedded clause is obligatorily controlled. Similar minimal pairs can be constructed with object control verbs, in my own judgement:

- (24) a. \*Eles<sub>i</sub> disseram-me que a assistente conseguiu convencer o  
 they tell.PAST.3PL-me that the assistant managed convince.INF the  
 médico a PRO<sub>i</sub> ser recebidos cedo.  
 doctor to PRO be.INF received early  
 ‘They told me that the assistant managed to convince the doctor that they should be received the following day.’

- b. Eles<sub>i</sub> disseram-me que a assistente conseguiu convencer o  
 they tell.PAST.3PL-me that the assistant managed convince.INF the  
 médico a *ec<sub>i</sub>* serem recebidos cedo.  
 doctor to *ec* be.INF.3PL received early  
 'They told me that the assistant managed to convince the doctor that they  
 should be received early.'
- (25) a. \*Ele<sub>j</sub> convenceu a chefe<sub>i</sub> a PRO<sub>j+</sub> reunir sem ela<sub>i</sub>.  
 he convinced the boss to *ec* meet.INF without her  
 b. Ele<sub>j</sub> convenceu a chefe<sub>i</sub> a *ec<sub>j+</sub>* reunirem sem ela<sub>i</sub>.  
 he convinced the boss to *ec* meet.INF.3PL without her  
 'He convinced his boss that they would meet without her.'

On the surface, these data appear to contradict Sheehan's (2018) results, which are obtained on the basis of survey data. In my assessment of these data, I start by examining object control verbs:

- (26) Sheehan (2018: Example (37a))  
 O Pedro convenceu a Maria a viajarem amanhã.  
 the Pedro convinced the Maria to travel.INF.3PL tomorrow  
 'Pedro convinced Maria to travel tomorrow.'  
 = 0%, ? = 0%, OK = 100%, *n* = 24
- (27) Sheehan (2018: Example (37b))  
 O Pedro convenceu a Maria a viajarem amanhã sem ela.  
 the Pedro convinced the Maria to travel.INF.3PL tomorrow without her  
 'Pedro convinced Maria to travel tomorrow without her.'  
 = 38%, ? = 8%, OK = 54%, *n* = 24

While (26) gets an acceptance rate of 100%, only half of the speakers accept (27). Sheehan concludes that this split is due to microparametric variation. For 46% of the speakers, an inflected infinitive is totally acceptable only when partially overlapping in reference with the matrix subject.

On the basis of the variability in judgements elicited in (27), it could be argued that I belong to the dialect that allows (27). However, I do find that there is indeed a contrast between (26) and (27), but there is an alternative explanation for this contrast. While in (26), there are two antecedents available for the embedded plural null subject, in (27) there is only one, so a certain amount of effort is required to accommodate the plural null subject (no context was provided for these sentences). In this perspective, the difference between the two sentences is not due to control, but rather to the availability of split antecedents for the embedded plural in (26) as opposed to (27).

Note that when the right context is provided and a referent for the null plural subject is made easily accessible, configurations that are similar to (27) become perfectly acceptable:

- (28) [O diretor do departamento]<sub>i</sub> convenceu [a presidente do the director of.the department convinced [the president of.the Conselho]<sub>k</sub> a *ec<sub>j</sub>* sermos autorizados a fazer a reunião Council] to *ec* be.INF.1PL allowed to do the meeting sem eles<sub>i+k</sub> without them  
 ‘The head of department convinced the president of the Council for us to be allowed to meet without them.’
- (29) a. Eles<sub>i</sub> convenceram a Maria<sub>j</sub> a *ec<sub>i</sub>* reunirem-se sem ela<sub>j</sub>. they convinced the Maria to *ec* meet.INF.3PL-SE without her  
 ‘They convinced Maria meet without her.’  
 b. O João<sub>i</sub> disse ao Carlos<sub>j</sub> que *pro<sub>i</sub>* tinha convencido a Maria<sub>k</sub> the João told to.the Carlos that *pro* had convinced the Maria a *ec<sub>i+j</sub>* reunirem-se sem ela<sub>k</sub>. to *ec* meet.INF.3PL- REFL.3 without her  
 ‘João told Carlos that he had convinced Maria to meet without her.’

I now move on to subject control verbs, such as *preferir* ‘prefer’, *desejar* ‘hope’ and *prometer* ‘promise’. Starting with *preferir* ‘prefer’, Sheehan (2018: 37) observes that, of the 42% of people who fully or marginally accepted (30), nobody fully accepted (31):

- (30) Sheehan (2018: Example (31))  
 %O João preferia reunirem-se mais tarde.  
 the João prefer.IMP.PAST.3SG meet.INF.3PL-SE more late  
 ‘John would prefer to meet later.’  
 \* = 58%, ? = 8%, OK = 34%, *n* = 24
- (31) Sheehan (2018: Example (32))  
 %O João preferia reunirem-se sem ele.  
 the João prefer.IMP.PAST.3SG meet.INF.3PL-SE without him  
 ‘John would prefer for them to meet without him.’  
 \* = 88% ? = 12% OK = 0%, *n* = 24

A later survey, however, with 68 respondents, revealed less clear results. First, fewer speakers found (32) acceptable; secondly, for some speakers, (33) is actually better than (32), which is the opposite pattern of (30) and (31).

## (32) Sheehan (2018: Example (33))

%O João preferia reunirem-se amanhã  
 the João prefer.IMP.PAST.3SG meet.INF.3PL-SE tomorrow  
 'John would prefer to meet tomorrow.'

\* = 65% ? = 20% OK = 15%,  $n = 68$

## (33) Sheehan (2018: Example (34))

%O João preferia reunirem-se sem ele.  
 the João prefer.IMP.PAST.3SG meet.INF.3PL-SE without him  
 'John would prefer for them to meet without him.'

\* = 57% ? = 19% OK = 24%,  $n = 68$

Sheehan observes that all of those speakers who accept (32) reject or find (33) marginal. She thus concludes that, for a subset of speakers, inflected infinitives are acceptable in this context on the condition that they are controlled. She further observes that the same subset of speakers consistently rejected (34):

## (34) Sheehan (2018: Example (36))

\*Eu preferia reunirem-se mais cedo  
 I prefer.IMP.PAST.1SG meet.INF.3PL-SE more early  
 'I would prefer for them to meet earlier.'

\* = 88%, ? = 4%, OK = 7%,  $n = 68$

Even though (34) is rejected by 88% of the speakers, it is possible to find comparable examples on the web. Here I mention two such examples. (35) was taken from a comment on a news site:

- (35) Sinceramente sendo portista se a coisa da lesão foi fingida  
 sincerely being a.Porto.adept if the thing of.the injury was faked  
 acho que fizeram mal pq não permito falcatruas no meu  
 think.1SG that did.3PL wrong because not allow cheating in.the my  
 clube e preferia virem dizer que se enganaram...  
 club and prefer.PAST.1SG come.INF.3PL say.INF that SE were.mistaken  
 'Honestly, being a Porto adept, if that injury was faked, I think they did wrong  
 because I don't allow cheating in my club and I would rather they came and  
 said that they went wrong...'³

3. <https://www.zerozero.pt>, consulted on 29-12-2020

- (36) sabem se vai haver um novo kit de sócio para a  
 know.PRES.3PL if will there.be a new kit of membership for the  
 nova época? É que quero comprar uns mas  
 new season is that want.PRES.1SG buy.PRES.1SG some but  
**preferia serem dos novos...**  
 prefer.PAST.1SG be.INF.3PL of.the new  
 'Do you know whether there will be a new membership kit for the new season?  
 I want to buy some, but I would prefer for them to be the new ones...'<sup>4</sup>

In these examples, the null subject refers back to a third person plural null subject that is not local. In the example below, the null subject of the inflected infinitive denotes the addressee:

- (37) **Preferia virem cá e ficar na minha casinha.**  
 prefer.PAST.1SG come.INF.3PL here and stay.1SG in.the my little.house.  
 'I would prefer for you to come here and to stay at home.'<sup>5</sup>

(37) is a case of hearer control. However, hearer control is a feature of non-obligatory control, not of OC. Therefore, this example cannot be an instance of OC.

The existence of these examples, by itself, doesn't undermine Sheehan's claim. For her, there are multiple grammars of the inflected infinitive. The problem I see with this approach, however, is that, if there are different grammars, one would expect internal consistency within a grammar. However, there's little consistency in the results of, say, (34) and (33). The results show that there are speakers who reject (34) and yet accept (33). If, on the other hand, fluctuation in judgements is, at least in part, due to difficulty in assigning an interpretation to the plural null subject (i.e., finding an accessible plural antecedent), it is less surprising that speakers should fluctuate in their judgements. Independent evidence in favor of an approach along these lines, comes from a comparison of the results obtained for the different verbs in cases of partially overlapping reference ((38b) corresponds to the first survey):

- (38) a. Sheehan (2018: Example (22))  
 Os professores persuadir(am) o diretor a reunir(%em)-se  
 the teachers persuaded the director to meet.INF.(3PL)-SE  
 mais tarde.  
 more late  
 'The teachers persuaded the director to meet later.'  
 uninflected OK = 68%; inflected OK = 97% ( $n = 37$ )

4. <https://serbenfiquista.com/forum/geral/1/assuntos-de-socio-e-casas-do-benfica/37/2760>, consulted on 20-3-2020.

5. <http://repositorio.esepf.pt>, consulted on 20-3-2020

- b. Sheehan (2018: Example (31))  
 O João preferia reunir(%em)-se mais tarde.  
 the João prefer.IMP.PAST.3SG meet.INF.(3PL)-SE more late  
 'John would prefer to meet later.'  
 \* = 58%, ? = 8%, OK = 34%,  $n = 24$
- c. Sheehan (2018: Example (20))  
 O Pedro prometeu à Ana reunir(%em)(-se) em Braga  
 the Pedro promised to.the Ana meet.INF.(3PL)(-SE) in Braga  
 'Pedro promised Ana to meet in Braga.'  
 uninflected OK = 70%; inflected OK = 95% ( $n = 37$ )

When these examples are compared, we observe that the results for *persuadir* 'persuade' and *prometer* 'promise' are comparable. In particular, the inflected infinitive is almost unanimously accepted. With *preferir* the acceptance rates are lower (42%). This is precisely what is expected under a coreference or split antecedent account of plural inflection on the infinitive. In (38a), the plural null subject can be understood as referring to the director plus the professors. In (38c) it can refer to Pedro plus Ana. In (38b), by contrast, there is no plural referent readily available. I believe that this is why the number of speakers who accept the sentence is lower. For half of the speakers (or an even lower proportion of speakers in the second survey), it is possible to interpret the null subject as denoting a plurality of individuals of which João is a member. However, this requires a certain amount of effort, which may explain the low ratings. The fact that, for some speakers who accept (38b), adding the adjunct *sem ele* 'without him' makes the sentence worse is not so surprising as more effort is required to accommodate the unspecified subject. Under an OC analysis, by contrast, the difference between (38b) and the Examples (38a) and (38c) is unexpected. Moreover, it can only be captured at the expense of positing the existence of multiple grammars, a hypothesis that I find hard to motivate on independent grounds.

### 2.3 Other tests for OC

In this section, I examine other tests for OC by systematically comparing non-inflected infinitival complements with inflected infinitival complements of the relevant verbs. I start by considering c-command. In OC the controller must c-command the subject of the infinitive (Hornstein 1999). When the relevant non-inflected and inflected infinitival complements are compared, I find a very clear contrast between the two in this regard. While (39a), (40a) are utterly ungrammatical, (39b), (40b) are not:

- (39) a. As crianças estão muito excitadas. \*A professora convenceu [a the children are very excited the teacher convinced the mãe delas]<sub>i</sub><sub>k</sub> a PRO<sub>i</sub> ir à visita de estudo sem ela<sub>k</sub>. mother of.them to PRO go.INF to.the visit of study without her  
'The children are very excited. The teacher convinced their mother to go to the field trip without her.'
- b. As crianças estão muito excitadas. O professor<sub>k</sub> convenceu [a the children are very excited the teacher convinced the mãe delas]<sub>i</sub><sub>j</sub> a ec<sub>k+i</sub> irem à visita de estudo sem ela<sub>j</sub>. mother of.them to ec go.INF.3PL to.the visit of study without her  
'The children are very excited. Their teacher convinced their mother that they should be allowed to go to the field trip without her.'
- (40) a. As crianças têm de arrumar as coisas. \*O funcionário prometeu the children have to collect the things the employee promised ao pai delas<sub>i</sub> PRO<sub>i+k</sub> estar prontas às dez. to.the father of.the children PRO be.INF.3PL ready at.the ten  
'The children have to get ready. The employee promised the their father that they would be ready at ten.'
- b. As crianças têm de arrumar as coisas. O funcionário prometeu the children have to collect the things the employee promised ao pai delas<sub>i</sub> ec<sub>i</sub> estarem prontas às dez. to.the father of.them ec be.INF.3PL ready at.the ten  
'The children have to get ready. The employee promised their father that they would be ready at ten.'

In Sheehan's (2018) study, subjects were asked to rate sentences with inflected infinitival complements which minimally differed from each other with respect to whether the antecedent was c-commanding or not. A subset of the speakers studied favored c-commanding antecedents over non-commanding antecedents ones. Sheehan concludes that the evidence obtained is suggestive, but not conclusive.

One other environment commonly used to test for OC is VP ellipsis. OC complements are known for allowing only a sloppy interpretation in comparison with pronouns (including *pro* in a consistent null subject language such as EP), which are ambiguous between a strict or sloppy interpretation. Now consider the following examples:

- (41) #Os médicos prometeram à minha mãe operá-la às dez the doctors promised t<sub>my</sub> my mother operate.INF-her at.the ten e a secretária também prometeu. and the secretary also promised  
'The doctors promised my mother to operate her at ten and so did the secretary.'

- (42) O médico prometeu à minha mãe operarem-na às dez  
 the doctor promised to.the my mother operate.INF.3PL-her at.the ten  
 e a secretoária **tamboém** prometeu.  
 and the secretary also promised  
 ‘The doctor promised my mother that she would be operated at ten and so did the secretary.’

While (42) allows a strict interpretation (with the secretary promising mother that she would be operated on at ten), (41) strongly favors an interpretation according to which the secretary also promised to perform the operation. Likewise, in my own judgement, the following examples are fine with a strict interpretation:

- (43) a. O médico convenceu os crianças a serem operadas no dia  
 the doctor convinced the children to be.INF.3PL operated on.the day  
 seguinte e o director convenceu a mãe delas.  
 following and the director convinced the mother of.them  
 ‘The doctor convinced the children that they would be operated the following day and the director convinced their mother.’  
 b. Eles<sub>i</sub> disseram que o pai<sub>k</sub> prefere  $ec_{i+k}$  serem atendidos às  
 they said that the father prefers  $ec_{i+k}$  be.INF.3PL received at.the  
 dez e que a secretária também prefere.  
 ten and that the secretary also prefers  
 ‘They said that their father prefers for them to be received at ten and that so does the secretary.’

Sheehan (2018) included examples with ellipsis in her questionnaire (44).

- (44) O João preferia reunirem-se de manhã e a Maria também  
 the João preferred meet.INF.3PL-SE of morning and the Maria also  
 preferia (mas sem / ela).  
 preferred (\*but without her).  
 ‘João would prefer to meet in the morning and Maria also would prefer, (but without her).’

Concerning this test item, Sheehan (2018: 40) reports the following: “Possibly because the example was provided in the survey out of context, only 8 speakers accepted the baseline example [...] Of these 8 speakers, 6 found it less acceptable with a pronoun co-referential with Maria, suggesting that they require a sloppy reading”. Again, this evidence doesn’t seem to be definitive enough.

One other control diagnostic discussed by Sheehan are bound variable readings under association with Focus. Sheehan mentions the following example:



- (45) Só o director preferia reunir-se fora no caso  
 only the director preferred gather.INF.3PL-REFL.3 outside in.the case  
 de incêndio.  
 of fire  
 ‘Only the headmaster would prefer to gather outside in case of a fire.’

According to Sheehan, work with native informants suggests that (45) is only felicitous in a situation in which no other teacher would prefer to gather outside with his/her class in the event of a fire. It is not compatible with a scenario in which the headmaster is the only person who has a preference for him and his class to gather outside, i.e., where all the other teachers do not want him and his class to gather outside. I do not think that this reading is unavailable. In particular, I detect a difference between (45) and (46) with respect to the availability of this latter reading:

- (46) Só o director preferia reunir-se fora no caso  
 only the director preferred gather.INF-REFL.3 outside in.the case  
 de incêndio.  
 of fire  
 ‘Only the headmaster would prefer to gather outside in case of a fire.’

While (46) definitely lacks the relevant reading, (45) doesn’t rule it out, in my own judgement. The native speakers I have consulted have the same judgement.<sup>6</sup>

## 2.4 Binding versus coreference

The contrasts above can all be captured on the assumption that the non-overt subject of the inflected infinitive is *pro*. In apparent cases of “partial control” the relation established with the antecedent is a relation of (accidental) coreference governed by pragmatics rather than by OC. If coreference rather than control is what accounts for these cases of overlapping reference, one clear prediction is made, namely that partially overlapping reference should not be available with non-referring expressions. Consider the following sentences:

- (47) O Carlos<sub>i</sub> prometeu que *pro*<sub>i+</sub> pagavam a conta.  
 the Carlos promise.PAST.3SG that *pro* pay.PAST.3PL the bill  
 ‘Carlos promised that they would pay the bill.’

6. Sheehan (2018: 41) also tested for *de se* readings. Since I got very disparate judgements from my informants and I myself find the relevant sentences very hard to judge, I decided not to consider this test here.

- (48) Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu que *pro*<sub>\*i+/j</sub> pagavam a conta.  
 noone promise.PAST.3SG that *pro* pay.PAST.3PL the bill  
 ‘Nobody<sub>i</sub> promised that they<sub>j</sub> would pay the bill.’

The plural subject of the embedded clause in (47) can be understood as denoting a group that includes the individual Carlos. In (48), by contrast, it is not possible to get a partially overlapping reference interpretation. In order to get an anaphoric interpretation, the embedded subject must be singular, in which case *pro* is interpreted as a bound variable.

- (49) Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu que *pro*<sub>i</sub> pagava a conta.  
 noone promise.PAST.3SG that *pro* pay.PAST.3SG the bill  
 ‘Nobody promised to pay the bill.’

Likewise, I find it very hard to interpret (50), with a collective predicate, as a case of partially overlapping reference:

- (50) Ninguém prometeu que *pro* (se) reuniriam ali.  
 noon promised that *pro* (SE) meet.COND.PAST.3PL there  
 ‘Nobody promised that they would meet there.’

Now consider sentences with infinitival complements. When the infinitive is not inflected, the embedded subject is controlled by the matrix QP.

- (51) Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu PRO<sub>i</sub> pagar a conta.  
 nobody promised PRO pay.INF the bill  
 ‘Nobody promised to pay the bill.’  
 (52) Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu PRO<sub>i+</sub> reunir(-se) às 10.  
 nobody promised PRO meet.INF(-SE) at.the 10.  
 ‘Nobody promised to meet at ten.’

When the infinitive is inflected, it is not possible to get a partially overlapping reference interpretation:

- (53) \*Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu *ec*<sub>i+</sub> pagarem a conta.  
 nobody promised *ec* pay.INF.3PL at.the 10.  
 (54) \*Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prometeu *ec*<sub>i+</sub> reunirem(-se) às 10.  
 nobody promised *ec* meet.INF.3PL(-SE) at.the 10.

The same observations apply to the other OC verbs under discussion:

- (55) a. Não consegui convencer ninguém<sub>i</sub> a PRO<sub>i+</sub> reunir(-se)  
 not manage.PAST.1SG convince.INF noone to PRO meet.INF.(-SE)  
 às 10.  
 at.the 10.  
 'I didn't manage to convince anyone to meet at 10.'
- b. \*Não consegui convencer ninguém<sub>i</sub> a *ec*<sub>i+</sub> reunirem  
 not managed.PAST.1SG convince.INF noone to *ec* meet.INF.3PL  
 às 10.  
 at.the 10.
- (56) a. Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prefere PRO<sub>i+</sub> reunir(-se) de madrugada.  
 noone prefers PRO meet.INF(-SE) at dawn  
 'Noone prefers to meet at dawn.'
- b. \*Ninguém<sub>i</sub> prefere *ec*<sub>i+</sub> reunirem(-se) de madrugada.  
 noone prefers *ec* meet.INF.3PL(-SE) at dawn

Sheehan (2018) acknowledges this fact and offers an explanation that relies on the claim that negative QPs lack a referential index; therefore, they are not capable of valuing D (= checking the EPP) on the relevant head, a process that plays a key role in Sheehan's analysis of *pro* control. However, negative QPs can bind *pro*, as shown in (49). On the assumption that variable binding is coindexation under c-command, one must conclude that the negative QP (or its trace under a quantifier raising analysis) bears an index. Moreover, negative QPs can check the EPP, so it is not very clear why they shouldn't be able to do so in this particular context.

## 2.5 Conclusions

In view of the arguments just presented, it is legitimate to conclude that when an inflected infinitive is allowed as complement of an OC attitude verb and the subject is null, the relation established between the null subject and its antecedent is not one of OC, but is rather governed by the mechanisms responsible for the interpretation of *pro* in general, either variable binding or coreference. When *pro* is c-commanded by its antecedent and bears the same index as the antecedent, it can be interpreted as a bound variable. In the absence of c-command, it is interpreted by coreference, like a regular pronoun. Apparent cases of partial control are instances of partially overlapping reference.

### 3. Implications for the syntax of inflected infinitives

The conclusions reached thus far are in line with Landau's (2004, 2015) characterization of the contrast between non-control (NC) complements and OC complements. Landau's most recent formulation of the OC-NC contrast states that the presence of  $\emptyset$ -feature agreement inflection blocks control in attitude complements, but not in non-attitude complements. The verbs examined thus far all select attitude complements (see footnote 1), so our data bears on the first half of Landau's generalization. In particular, it confirms the prediction that, when an inflected infinitive is allowed as complement of an attitude verb, it is not an instance of OC.<sup>7</sup> In addition, our conclusions disconfirm the claim put forward by Gonçalves et al. (2014) that the inflected infinitive is barred in the complement position of verbs that impose a temporal orientation on the embedded complement. The verbs *persuadir* 'persuade', *prometer* 'promise' and *decidir* 'decide' impose posterior temporal orientation on their infinitival complement, as shown in (57):

- (57) a. \*O Carlos persuadiu a Maria a ter ido às  
the Carlos persuade.PAST.3SG the Maria to have.INF gone to.the  
compras com ele.  
shopping with him  
\*Carlos persuaded Maria to have gone shopping with him.  
b. \*O Carlos prometeu/decidiu ter ido às compras com ela.  
the Carlos promised/decided have.INF gone to.the shopping with her  
\*Carlos promised/decided/prefer have gone shopping with her.

Gonçalves et al. (2014) claim that the inflected infinitive is not allowed in such complements and propose that the cases that appear to violate this restriction are not instances of real inflected infinitives and are rather pseudo-inflected infinitives. In their list of verbs that impose temporal orientation on the embedded complement and presumably allow pseudo-inflected infinitives as complements, they also include the verb *querer* 'want', a restructuring verb in EP. However, there is a very clear contrast between *querer* 'want' and the attitude verbs in (57). While the latter allow for an inflected infinitival complement in the manner described above, embedding an inflected infinitival complement under *querer* 'want' is not an option at all. In effect, a search on the web for the strings *prefiro serem* 'prefer.PRES.1SG be.INF.3PL', *prometo serem* 'promise.PRES.1SG be.INF.3PL', *decidi serem* 'decide.PAST.1SG be.INF.3PL', restricted to sites from Portugal, retrieves abundant examples in which the inflected infinitive heads a complement clause. The string *quero serem*

7. Since an examination of the behavior of inflected infinitives in non-attitude complements is well beyond the scope of the present paper, I will not discuss those here.

‘want.1SG be.INF.3PL’, by contrast, retrieves none. This shows that there is a qualitative difference between *querer* ‘want’ and the other attitude verbs in this regard. Therefore, I conclude that the combination of a future oriented non-restructuring attitude verb with an inflected infinitive is a possibility allowed by the grammar in EP. As will be argued below, this possibility is not completely free and is subject to semantic constraints. Yet, it is not ruled out by the grammar.

This conclusion allows for a more precise characterization of the distribution of the inflected infinitive in complement position in EP. In particular, the inflected infinitive is barred from occurring only in two verbal complement contexts: in the complement position of restructuring verbs — implicative (*tentar* ‘try’, *conseguir* ‘manage’), aspectual, modal, desiderative (*querer* ‘want’) — and in interrogative complements.

(58) Contexts in which the inflected infinitive is barred:

- a. *Restructuring verbs*
  - i. Eu tentei/quis                    falar(\*mos)        com ele.  
I    try.PAST/want.PAST talk.INF.(\*1PL) with him  
‘I tried/wanted to talk with him.’
  - ii. Eu comecei    a falar(\*mos)        com o    Pedro.  
I    begin.PAST to talk.INF.(\*1PL) with the Pedro  
‘I began to talk with Pedro.’
- b. *Interrogative complements*  
Não sei                    quando viajar(\*mos).  
not know.PRES.1SG when    travel.INF.(\*1PL)  
‘I don’t know when to travel.’

Within the realm of subject control attitude predicates, the inflected infinitive is allowed (with some restrictions, to be spelled out below) in the complement position of desiderative, commissive, propositional and factive predicates.<sup>8</sup>

The fact that inflected infinitives are not allowed as complements of restructuring verbs can be easily explained on the assumption that restructuring predicates like TRY, BEGIN OR WANT realize functional heads in the inflectional layer of the clause thus giving rise to monoclausal raising structures (Cinque 2006; Grano 2015; Wurmbrand 2003). Given the monoclausal status of the projection headed by restructuring verbs, it is not surprising that they are incompatible with an inflected infinitive. In the case of non-restructuring verbs, by contrast, the lexical verb introduces a clausal complement, so an inflected infinitive is, in principle, possible there, on a par with a non-inflected infinitive with a PRO subject.

8. This empirical description is actually in conformity with Raposo (1987).

On the basis of a detailed examination of sequence of Tense phenomena, Grano (2015) argues that non-restructuring infinitives project a semantically vacuous  $T\emptyset$ . Here I adopt this view and extend it to the inflected infinitive. On the reasonable assumption that a T projection is minimally required for the licensing of an inflected infinitive in EP, the availability of an inflected infinitive in the complement position of non-restructuring predicates is expected. In other words, the inflected infinitive doesn't impose any particular temporal requirements that are not also present in the non-inflected infinitive.

In fact, I fail to detect any significant differences between the two types of infinitive regarding their temporal properties. It has often been claimed that inflected infinitival complements of epistemic and declarative verbs have a special tense requirement (Raposo 1987). The main motivation for this is that they require perfective morphology in the context of an episodic eventive predicate:

- (59) a. A professora disse termos respondido bem.  
           the teacher said have.INF.1PL answered well  
           'The teacher said that we answered well.'  
       b. \*A professora disse respondermos bem.  
           the teacher said answer.INF.1PL well

This contrast, however, is not peculiar to inflected infinitives. It also shows up when the infinitive is not inflected:

- (60) a. Os alunos disseram ter respondido bem.  
           the students said have.INF.1PL answered well  
           'The students claimed to have answered well.'  
       b. \*Os alunos disseram responder bem.  
           the students said answer.INF well

The parallelism between (59) and (60) indicates that the requirement in question is a characteristic feature of propositional infinitival complements and is independent from whether they are inflected or not.<sup>9</sup> For this reason, I conclude that there are no substantial differences in the temporal properties of the two types of infinitive.<sup>10</sup>

If this approach is on the right track, however, a number of questions arise. The first question regards the unavailability of an inflected infinitive in interrogative complements. The second question is why an overt pre-verbal subject is not allowed in some of the contexts examined:

9. For a detailed discussion of this requirement in relation to complements of *claim* in English, see Grano (2015).

10. For an analysis of the temporal properties of infinitives, see Cunha & Silvano (2008).

- (61) a. \*Eu convenci as crianças a elas irem à festa.  
 I convinced the children to they go.INF.3PL to.the party  
 b. Eu convenci as crianças a irem elas à festa.  
 I convinced the children to go.INF.3PL they to.the party  
 'I convinced the children that they should be the ones to go to the party.'

Finally, the question arises of why inflected infinitival complements of the OC verbs discussed in Section 2 display such severe restrictions on subject reference. In the next section I address the first two questions. I start by examining the second question and, in so doing, I will provide an answer to the first. In Section 4, the third question is addressed.

#### 4. Inflected infinitives lack C(=Force)

The attitude verbs discussed in Section 2 do not display a uniform behavior with respect to their degree of tolerance of a subject in pre-verbal position. With object OC verbs that take the prepositional complementizer *a* 'to', a pre-verbal subject is completely impossible (of. (61a, b); *preferir/esperar* and *prometer* are more permissive, even though they do not easily tolerate a pre-verbal subject:

- (62) a. ??Prefiro / espero os meus pais serem  
 prefer.PRES.IMP.1SG / hope.PRES.IMP.1SG the my parents be.INF.3PL  
 atendidos ainda hoje.  
 received still today  
 'I prefer/hope for my parents to be received today.'  
 b. ??Prometo as fotografias estarem prontas às dez.  
 promise.PRES.1SG the photographs be.INF.3PL ready at.the ten  
 'I promise for the photographs to be ready at ten.'

Raposo (1987) mentions a somewhat similar restriction in inflected infinitival complements of epistemic and declarative verbs.<sup>11</sup>

- (63) a. ??Penso os deputados terem votado essa proposta.  
 think.PRES.1SG the delegates have.INF.3PL voted that proposal  
 'I think that the delegates have voted for that proposal.'  
 b. Penso terem (os deputados) votado essa proposta  
 think.PRES.1SG have.INF.3PL (the delegates) voted that proposal  
 (os deputados)  
 (the delegates)

11. Raposo (1987) judges (63a) as ungrammatical, but Âmbar (1988) considers equivalents of (63a) to be milder violations (cf. ?? vs. \*). (63b) is likely to be used in a formal register, but it is not ungrammatical.

Raposo (1987) interpreted this restriction as the result of obligatory Infl raising to Comp. However, as noted in Âmbar (1988), when the subject is modified by a focus particle, (63a) becomes completely well-formed.

- (64) Penso só os deputados terem votado essa proposta.  
 think.1SG only the delegates have.INF.3PL voted that proposal  
 'I was told that only the delegates have voted for that proposal.'

The grammaticality of (64) casts doubt on a V-movement account of the contrast between (63a) and (63b).

Raposo (1994: 40) observes that "the possibility of material occurring before the inflected infinitive is much more general", "the whole gamut of affective operators may occur there, and the phenomenon is not restricted to subjects". By "affective operators" he means quantificational operators such as universal or negative QPs, which are inherently non-referential:

- (65) *Subjects*  
 Disseeram-me [muita gente / ninguém ter visto esse filme].  
 tell.PAST.3PL-me many people / noone have.INF.3SG seen that movie  
 'I was told that a lot of people / noone saw that film.'
- (66) *Objects*
- a. Disseeram-me [nada terem esses turistas visitado].  
 tell.PAST.3PL-me nothing have.INF.3SG those tourists visited  
 'I was told that those tourists visited nothing.'
  - b. Disseeram-me [só essa cidade terem os turistas visitado]  
 tell.PAST.3PL-me only that city have.INF.3SG the tourists visited  
 'I was told that the tourists visited only that city.'

These examples show that the pre-verbal position is not restricted to subjects. As in the case of subjects, this position can only host objects that are inherently non-referential. The following example shows that a referential DP object cannot appear pre-verbally in this context.

- (67) ???Disseeram-me, essa proposta, não (a) terem conseguido  
 tell.PAST.3PL-me that proposal not (it) have.INF.3SG managed  
 aprovar.  
 approve.INF  
 'They told me that, that proposal, they hadn't been able to approve (it).'

In sum, regardless of their status as objects or subjects, there is a contrast between referential DPs and inherently non-referential QPs: only the latter may appear in the left-periphery of the inflected infinitival complement.



In order to understand why there is this asymmetry, I will first concentrate on the case of peripheral objects. In EP, there are basically two strategies for placing an object in the front of the clause. One is the Topic-Comment articulation, which comes in two varieties: the Topic may be doubled by a resumptive clitic, in the construction known as Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD), or it may be simply associated with a gap, in the construction known as Topicalization (Duarte 1987). None of these possibilities is allowed in a propositional complement with the inflected infinitive (67).

The other strategy, which is akin to a scrambling operation, is restricted to apply to expressions that cannot be topics, such as non-referential QPs or DPs modified by focus particles. These include “the whole gamut of affective operators”, to borrow Raposo’s 1994 expression. This strategy is variably referred to in the literature as “emphatic movement” (Raposo 1994), “quantificational operator movement” (Vallduví 1992), or “focus movement” (Martins 1994). It can be applied within a propositional inflected infinitival complement, as illustrated in (66).

In Barbosa (2000) I argued that the parallelism between subjects and objects that is observed in propositional inflected infinitival complements follows from the particular status of pre-verbal subjects in EP. In Barbosa (1995) I proposed that, in a consistent null subject language such as EP, there is no EPP-related movement to pre-verbal position, a view that is also defended in Pollock (1997); Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou (1998); Ordóñez & Treviño (1999); Manzini & Savoia (2002); Platzack (2004). Even though the particular implementations of this proposal vary, all of them have one key feature in common: the functional head bearing subject agreement has a nominal specification (a D-feature), interpretable/valued  $\emptyset$ -features, probably also Case, to the effect that it has the status of a pronominal affix in T capable of checking the EPP. A corollary of this analysis is that there is no EPP-related movement to Spec,TP and pre-verbal subject constructions are derived by means of independently attested operations of placing an argument in front of the clause, namely the Topic-Comment articulation or quantificational operator movement (in the restricted set of cases of expressions that cannot be Topics, such as non-referential QPs or DPs modified by focus particles). Viewed in this light, the deviance of (63a) is due to the Topic status of the pre-verbal DP rather than failure of V raising to C. (67) constitutes independent evidence that a Topic is not allowed in that position.

Interestingly, it is possible to find independent support in favor of this hypothesis by looking at a variety of Portuguese that has inflected infinitives, but is no longer a consistent null subject language, namely Brazilian Portuguese. Modesto (2018: 89) provides examples in which propositional complements with an inflected infinitive take a pre-verbal subject:

- (68) a. Eu não acredito eles estarem te roubando!  
 I not believe they are.INF.3PL CL.2SG stealing  
 'I can't believe that they are stealing from you!'
- b. O governo admite eles venderem os imóveis ...  
 the government admits they sell.INF.3PL the buildings ...  
 'The government admits that they sell property ...'

If indeed subjects in BP are not necessarily Topics and raise to Spec,TP (Barbosa et al. 2005; Barbosa 2009), the differences between the two varieties in this regard follow without any further stipulation. An account of these contrasts in terms of V-movement, however, would require a number of additional assumptions.

I now turn to the question why a Topic is not allowed in the left-periphery of these inflected infinitival complements, as in (63a) and (67), while quantificational operator movement is possible, as in (64) and (65). In order to answer this question, I must lay out my assumptions regarding the analysis of Topics.

There are two main lines of analysis of the Topic-Comment articulation in the literature. One influential approach is that of Rizzi (1997), who proposed that CLLDed Topics are introduced by a Topic head which establishes a kind of "higher predication" between the Topic in [Spec,TopP] and the rest of the clause. The other approach (Demirdache 1992; Anagnostopoulou 1997; Raposo 1996; De Cat 2005) assumes that the Topic-Comment articulation is licensed by "rules of predication" (Chomsky 1977) that require that the Topic be "base-generated" in a position of adjunction to the XP that is predicated of it, namely either TP (in embedded clauses) or CP (in root clauses). The pronominal clitic (or a gap) provides the open position required for the clausal projection to function as a predicate. Here I adopt the latter analysis. On this analysis, (67) (with a doubling clitic) is analysed as in (69a) and (63a) is analysed as in (69b).<sup>12</sup>

- (69) a. V... [TP [essa proposta]<sub>i</sub> [TP não a<sub>i</sub> terem ... aprovar *ec<sub>i</sub>*]]  
 b. V... [TP [os deputados]<sub>i</sub> [TP ter-em<sub>i</sub> *pro<sub>i</sub>* votado ...]]

The Topic is adjoined to the clausal projection that is predicated of it, which I take to be the highest inflectional projection, namely TP.<sup>13</sup>

12. Besides CLLD, EP also has Topicalization, i.e., an object Topic configuration without a doubling clitic (Duarte 1987; Raposo 1998). Raposo (1998) proposed an analysis of Topicalization in EP that is just like CLLD, but with a null D in place of a clitic pronoun. Therefore, the analysis proposed in (69a) extends to object Topicalization.

13. This projection may turn out to be FinP pending on further evidence. For the sake of simplicity, I use the cover term TP; what really matters is that it is the highest projection in the inflectional domain.

Following previous work, I take subject *pro* to occupy the post-verbal position, wherefrom it is linked to (pronominal) Agr, in a manner that is similar to the empty category associated with the pronominal clitic in (69a).

Example (64), by contrast, involves movement to pre-verbal position. This kind of movement is not A-movement, given that it doesn't necessarily apply to subjects, as evidenced by (66). I assume this is a type of A-bar movement (or scrambling) that targets the specifier position of TP, which is not an A-position on this analysis. Thus, (64) and (66b) are analysed as in (70a, b) respectively:

- (70) a. V... [TP [ só os deputados ]<sub>i</sub> [T' terem *t<sub>i</sub>* votado ...]]  
 b. V... [TP [ só essa cidade ]<sub>i</sub> [T' ... os turistas visitado *t<sub>i</sub>* ]]

(69) and (70) differ configurationally: (69a, b) involve adjunction to TP; (70a, b) involve movement to Spec,TP.

In Barbosa (2000), I proposed an analysis of the marginal status of (69) that relies on this difference. It has often been proposed that adjunction to an argument is not allowed (Chomsky 1986; McCloskey 1996; Bosković 1996). In the spirit of Bosković (1996), I suggested that the inflected infinitival complement lacks a C (= Force) projection, so TP in (69) and (70) is an argument of matrix V. On this account, the marginal status of (69) follows from the ban on adjunction to an argument. By hypothesis, violations of this kind are rejected by native speakers, even though they are not judged as completely ungrammatical.

Independent evidence in favor of the idea that C (=Force) fails to project in complements with the inflected infinitive comes from their inability to host *wh*-movement, in contrast to non-inflected infinitives. As mentioned in the previous section, an interrogative complement cannot host an inflected infinitive (compare Examples (71a) and (71b) with (71c)):


- (71) a. Não sabia / já estarem aqui.  
 not know.PAST.1SG already be.INF.3PL here  
 'I didn't know you were already here.'  
 b. Não sabíamos onde ir.  
 not know.PAST.1PL where go.INF  
 'We didn't know where to go.'  
 c. \*Não sabia onde irmos.  
 not know.PAST.1SG where go.INF.1PL

Assuming that inflected infinitival complements do not project all the way up to C (=Force), the ungrammaticality of (71c) follows, given that, in EP, *wh*-movement targets Spec,CP in embedded questions (Barbosa 2001). The grammaticality of (71b), by contrast, indicates that the non-inflected infinitival complement does project up to C.

This account predicts, of course, that when C projects, a pre-verbal referential subject should be allowed (as happens in finite complements with an overt complementizer), and this is precisely what happens. The directive verb *pedir* ‘pedir’ selects for the prepositional complementizer *para* ‘for’ and its complement may take a pre-verbal referential DP subject:

- (72) Eu pedi para as crianças saírem mais cedo.  
 I asked for the children leave.INF.3PL more early  
 ‘I asked for the children to leave earlier.’

I now turn to an examination of other classes of verbs, namely the OC verbs under discussion in this paper. Concentrating first on subject OC verbs, I detect a contrast between referential and non-referential QPs in the following paradigms:

- (73) a. ??Preferia os nossos funcionários serem mais bem pagos.  
 prefer.PAST.1SG the our employees be.INF.3PL more well paid  
 ‘I would prefer for our employees to be better paid.’  
 b. Preferia todos os nossos funcionários serem mais  
 prefer.PAST.1SG all our employees be.INF.3PL more well  
 bem pagos.  
 paid  
 ‘I would prefer for all of our employees to be better paid.’
- (74) a. ??A gerência prometeu os trabalhadores receberem o  
 the management promised the workers receive.INF.3PL the  
 salário mais cedo este mês.  
 salary more early this month  
 ‘The managers promised that they would receive their salary earlier this month.’  
 b. A gerência prometeu ninguém ficar  sem salário  
 the management promised nobody receive.INF.3PL the salary  
 nos próximos meses.  
 more early in.the coming months  
 ‘The managers promised that nobody would receive his salary earlier in the coming months.’

These contrasts between the two types of nominal expressions suggest that dislocation is what is at stake here.

Independent confirmation that the null subject property (of the consistent type) is the key factor here comes from BP, where comparable examples are fine. (Modesto 2018: 89) mentions the following BP example:

- (75) Eu prefiro elas ficarem com o pai delas mesmo.  
 I prefer they stay.INF.3PL with the father of.them really  
 'I prefer for them to stay with their father, really.'

According to Modesto (2018: 89), in BP "the only contexts in which non-finite inflection does not license overt subjects are in object control structures (that use the prepositional complementizer *a* 'to') and in *nom-inas* that also govern the use of *a* 'to'". Curiously, these are the same contexts that strongly reject a pre-verbal subject in EP, (cf. (61a) above and the following minimal pair):

- (76) a. Consegui convencer os médicos a ser adiada  
 managed.PAST.1SG convince.INF the doctors to be.INF.3SG postponed  
 a operação por causa da pandemia.  
 the operation per cause of.the pandemic  
 'I managed to convince my doctors to postpone the operation because of the pandemic.'
- b. \*Consegui convencer os médicos a a operação  
 managed.PAST.1SG convince.INF the doctors to the operation  
 ser adiada por causa da pandemia.  
 be.INF.3SG postponed per cause of.the pandemic

Example (76b) is much worse than (73a) and (74a). In view of the fact that a similar effect obtains in BP, I conclude that the ungrammaticality of (76b) should be accounted for on independent grounds. Modesto (2018) observes that when the same verbs select the prepositional complementizer *de* 'of', a pre-verbal subject is possible in BP and the same happens in EP:

- (77) Eu convenci-a de as crianças necessitarem de  
 I convinced-CL.3SG.FEM of the children need.INF.3PL of  
 ajuda especializada.  
 help specialized  
 'I convinced/persuaded her that the children need specialized assistance.'

In this respect *de* behaves like *para* in (72). For these reasons, I conclude that the unavailability of a pre-verbal subject in (76b) and (61a) above is not due to syntactic constraints, but rather follows from idiosyncratic morphophonological requirements imposed on the morpheme *a*. Setting this case aside, there is indeed a difference between EP and BP regarding the availability of an overt subject in pre-verbal position. In EP, though not in BP, the occurrence of a pre-verbal subject results in (mild) unacceptability in inflected infinitival complements of desiderative, commissive, epistemic and declarative predicates.

The only exception to this pattern are the complements of factive verbs (1b), which freely allow for the subject to appear in pre- and post-verbal position. Factive complements are known for being special when compared to propositional complements. Kiparsky & Kiparsky (1971) claimed that factive complements have more complex structure, with a nominal-like projection above CP. Adapting this suggestion to inflected infinitives and keeping with the proposal that they do not project C, it could be maintained that the factive verb selects a nominal projection above TP, in which case TP wouldn't be an argument. Hence adjunction would be possible and a dislocated subject would be allowed.<sup>14</sup> A full discussion of the syntax of factive complements, however, is well beyond the scope of the present paper, so I will have to leave the discussion at that.

Summarizing the results of this section, the restrictions on the occurrence of pre-verbal subjects that have been described for EP inflected infinitival complements (with the exception of factive complements) partly follow from the status of pre-verbal subjects in EP as a consistent null subject language. In particular, they do not apply in BP, which is not a consistent null subject language any more.

The restrictions found in EP allowed us to probe into the structure of inflected infinitival complements: these are clausal projections that lack C (=Force). This hypothesis explains yet another peculiar property of inflected infinitives, namely that they cannot be interrogative.

Now that I have answered questions one and two raised at the end of the previous section, I move on to the issue of why there are severe semantic restrictions on inflected infinitival complements of OC verbs.

## 5. Why are these inflected infinitival complements semantically constrained?

In the preceding sections I have quoted examples in which inflected infinitival complements of OC verbs have a different subject from the matrix clause. However, in order for such examples to be felicitous, the embedded verb needs to be either

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14. For an argument against this view, see Duarte (2018). She observes that inflected infinitival complements of factive verbs do not allow a left-dislocated object in the left periphery. However, I do not rule out the following sentence:

- (i) Lamento, a Maria, não se (?lhe) poder dizer nada.  
 regret, to.the Maria, not REFL (DAT.3SG) can say nothing  
 'I regret it that we cannot say anything to Maria.'

Quite generally, sentences with object topics are informationally marked relative to sentences with subject topics. Barbosa & De Cat (2019) discuss evidence from French that shows that object CLLD doesn't exactly have the same distribution as subject CLLD.

stative or passivized. In this section, I argue that this restriction is not syntactic and can be accounted for in the semantics.

I start by observing that the contexts that license an inflected infinitive with independent reference are strongly reminiscent of the contexts that license control shift. Consider the following English sentences:

- (78) *Control shift* (Landau 2000: 184)
- a. Susie<sub>i</sub> persuaded the teacher [PRO<sub>i</sub> to be allowed to leave].
  - b. Grandpa promised the children<sub>i</sub> [PRO<sub>i</sub> to be able to stay up for the late show].

*Persuade* is an object control verb and yet, in this sentence, it allows subject control. *Promise* is a subject control verb, but in (78b) it allows control by the object. As Landau (2000) puts it, the possibility of control shift depends on a number of factors including the semantics of the embedded event, pragmatics (i.e., authority relations) as well as language/dialect-particular factors. These are roughly the factors that play a role in the licensing of an inflected infinitive with a different subject as complement of these verbs. Here, I provide an account of this effect which is based on the theory of control shift of Jackendoff & Culicover (2003).

Jackendoff & Culicover (2003) observe that the verb *promise* as well as the verbs *persuade* and *convince* select for volitional Actions.

- (79) Fred promised (Louise) ... / Fred persuaded Louise ...
- a. *Volitional Actions*  
to run the race / to be quiet / to be examined by a doctor
  - b. *Non-volitional Actions*  
\*to grow taller / \*to strike Simmy as smart / \*to realize it was raining

The complements that express volitional Actions are called ACTIONAL complements. The authors show that the heads that select for Actional complements determine unique control (=OC) and attribute this fact to the existence of a limited number of basic predicates in Conceptual Structure that select controlled Actions as arguments; each of these can serve as a component of the meaning of verbs, nouns, and/or adjectives. One such case is the semantic predicate *INTEND*, which is a two-place relation: it selects an animate entity, the intender, and an action. The actor of the action argument of *INTEND* is necessarily bound to the intender (in order to execute an intention, the intender is committed to playing an active role in the intended action). The conceptual structure of an *INTEND* predicate is represented in (80). A bound position is noted by a Greek variable, which corresponds to a superscript on the binder.

- (80) *intend/plan*  
 $x^\alpha$  INTEND [ $\alpha$  ACT]



Any verb that contains the predicate *intend* as part of its meaning has a control equation in which the intender uniquely controls the Actional complement. The verbs that fall under this class include *decide* ‘come to intend’ and *persuade* ‘cause to come to intend’. In the latter case, the intender is the object, so the verb exhibits object control.

- (81) *convince/persuade*  
 $X^{\alpha}$  CAUSE [ $Y^{\beta}$  INTEND [ $\beta$  ACT]]

Another predicate that selects an Actional complement is *be obligated*. This is a function of three arguments: person A is obligated to person B to perform some action. Since one cannot be obligated to perform someone else’s action, the action is necessarily bound to the person under obligation. The basic semantic structure of obligation is (82):

- (82)  $X^{\alpha}$ OBLIGATED [ $\alpha$  ACT] TO Y

The notion of obligation is involved in a number of control verbs, including, for our present purposes, *promise*. In this case, the person under obligation falls in subject position and this is why this verb is a subject OC verb.

In order to deal with the cases in which the designated character does not end up as controller, the authors follow the approach of Sag & Pollard (1991) and Pollard & Sag (1994), and assume that these fall under the class of specialized coercions. According to the description of intention, a verb of intending should not allow the action complement to take a different subject. This prediction, however, is contradicted by examples such as the following:

- (83) Jackendoff & Culicover (2003: 542)
- Hilary intends/plans for Ben to come along to the party.
  - Hilary plans for Ben to understand physics. (\*Ben voluntarily understands physics)
  - Hilary intends/plans for the cat to be fed. (\*The cat is voluntarily fed)

As argued in Sag & Pollard (1991) and Pollard & Sag (1994), the solution to this problem comes from observing that these sentences can be paraphrased as follows:

- (84) a. Hilary intends/plans to **bring it about** that Ben comes along to the party / understands physics.  
 b. Hilary intends/plans to **bring it about** that the cat is fed.

On the basis of these paraphrases, it is reasonable to conclude that Hilary’s intended action in (83) is the bringing about of the situation expressed in the complement. According to the sources cited, every time we find paraphrases that differ only in the presence of some extra material, we have the marks of COERCION, understood as the



conventionalized omission of semantic material in syntactic expression. This extra material is inserted in the course of converting syntax into semantics “by a conventionalized principle of interpretation” (Jackendoff & Culicover 2003: 542). Formally, the content of the coercion is the semantic predicate cause, as illustrated in (85):

(85) Hilary intends/plans for Ben to come along to the party.

- (86) a.  $x^\alpha$  INTEND [ $\alpha$  act]  
 $\uparrow$   $\ast\uparrow$   
 HILARY [BEN COME ALONG TO THE PARTY]
- b.  $x^\alpha$  INTEND [ $\alpha$  act]  
 $\uparrow$   $\ast\uparrow$   
 HILARY [Y CAUSE [SITUATION]]  
 $\uparrow$   
 [BEN COME]

Thus control diverges from the intender just in case there is coercion. With this background in mind, I now turn to EP, to the case of inflected infinitival complements of the verb types represented by *convencer* and *prometer*. Since these verbs select for Actional complements and determine unique control, it is only under coercion that an inflected infinitival complement with a different subject can be licensed. I illustrate this mechanism with the following examples. I assume that both cases involve causative coercion:

- (87) a. O João convenceu a agência a ser adiada a viagem.  
 b.  $X^\alpha$  CAUSE [ $Y^\beta$  INTEND [ $\beta$  ACT]]  
 $\uparrow$   $\uparrow$   $\uparrow$   
 JOÃO AGÊNCIA [Z CAUSE [SITUATION]]  
 $\uparrow$   
 [SER ADIADA A VIAGEM]
- (88) a. O médico prometeu à assistente sermos atendidos mais tarde.  
 b.  $X^\alpha$  IS OBLIGATED [ $\alpha$  ACT] $^y$  TO  $Y^\beta$   
 $\uparrow$   $\uparrow$   $\uparrow$   
 MÉDICO ASSISTENTE  
 $\uparrow$   
 [Z CAUSE [SITUATION]]  
 $\uparrow$   
 [pro SER MOS ATENDIDOS MAIS TARDE]

Since these cases require coercion, it is not surprising that they should be judged differently by different speakers, as manifested in Sheehan's (2018) questionnaire results.

Concerning the cases of apparent partial control, such as (89), the evidence discussed in Section 2 strongly supports the view that they are not instances of unique control. I thus propose that they too involve coercion:

- (89) a. O João convenceu a Maria a viajarem mais tarde.

b.  $X^{\alpha}$  CAUSE [ $Y^{\beta}$  INTEND [ $\beta$  ACT]]

↑

↑

↑

João MARIA [Z CAUSE [W ACT]]

↑

[*pro* VIAJAREM MAIS TARDE]

In this case, the individual referred to by the argument that is selected as unique controller is included in the group that has the role of actor of the embedded action, a fact that explains the higher acceptability rates that are found with this kind of examples in Sheehan's results (see Section 3.1).

Finally, let us consider the cases in which there is identity of reference between the unique controller and the null subject of an embedded infinitival complement:

- (90) a. O João convenceu-nos a viajarmos mais tarde.

the João convinced-CL.1PL to travel.INF.1PL more late

'João convinced us to travel later.'

- b. Eles prometeram à Maria chegarem mais tarde.

they promised to.the Maria arrive.INF.3PL more late

'They promised Mary that they would arrive later.'

Since the embedded situation in this case is an action and its agent bears the same index as the unique controller selected by the matrix verb, no coercion is required.<sup>15</sup>

15. With subject control verbs, this pattern doesn't always result in full acceptability. Here are the results obtained by Sheehan (2018) for *prometer* 'promise':

- (i) Prometemos a professora chegar(%mos) a tempo.

promised to.the professor arrive.INF.(1PL) on time

'We promised the professor that we would arrive on time.'

uninflected 100%  $n = 37$ ; inflected 47%  $n = 68$

Sheehan attributes the deviance of (i) to obviation. Since there is a strong crosslinguistic tendency for obviation to disappear whenever the antecedent is not the subject of the matrix clause (Farkas 1992), the fact that this effect is found only with subject control verbs follows.

Summing up, an inflected infinitive with independent or partially overlapping reference can appear as complement of *prometer*, *convencer* and *persuadir* only under coercion. A similar account extends to the verb *decidir* 'decide'. Consider the following examples, taken from the web:

- (91) a. Bom, decidi                      irmos        espreitar...  
           well, decide.PAST.1SG go.INF.1PL peek...  
           'Well, I decided for us to go peek ...'<sup>16</sup>
- b. Foi na       areia da       Meia Praia que decidi                      serem  
           was on.the sand of.the Meia Praia that decide.PAST.1SG be.INF.3PL  
           essas 24 Horas a       minha última reporagem para o Autosport.  
           those 24 hours the my last report for the Autosport  
           'It was on the sands of Meia Praia that I decided that those 24 hours were  
           my last report for Autosport.'<sup>17</sup>

In these examples, the situation expressed in the embedded clause is understood as being brought about by the individual referred to by the subject of the matrix.

This account cannot be extended to desideratives such as *preferir* 'prefer' or *desejar* 'wish' in view of the fact that these verbs may take non-Actional complements:

- (92) a. Eu prefiro ser       alta / saber       física.  
           I prefer be.INF tall / know.INF physics  
           'I prefer to be tall / to know physics.'
- b. Ela deseja ser       alta / saber       física.  
           she wishes be.INF tall / know.INF physics  
           'She wishes to be tall / to know physics.'

Yet, these verbs display a pattern that is similar to that of *decidir*: they tend to allow an inflected infinitive with independent reference only when the complement situation is stative; with Actional complements an inflected infinitival complement is allowed just in case there is partially overlapping reference. Thus, the distribution of the inflected infinitive appears to be sensitive to agentivity, even though coercion cannot be appealed to here. An examination of the complex issue of the semantics of verbs that indicate attitudes of preference is clearly beyond the scope of the present article. Therefore, I can only offer a gist of a hypothesis to be explored in future work.

16. <https://omundodospiratas.blogs.sapo.pt>, consulted on 14.12.2020

17. [www.velocidadeonline.co.pt/arquivos](http://www.velocidadeonline.co.pt/arquivos), consulted on 14.12.2020

One aspect of the grammar of selected complements of desideratives that is sensitive to agentivity is the phenomenon of obviation in subjunctives. Consider the following sentences:

- (93) Ela<sub>i</sub> prefere que *pro*<sub>\*i/k</sub> fale com o diretor.  
 she prefers that *pro* talk.SUBJ.3SG with the director.  
 'She prefers that he/she/you talk with the director.'
- (94) a. Ela<sub>i</sub> prefere que *pro*<sub>i/k</sub> seja aluna aqui.  
 she prefers that *pro* be.SUBJ.3SG student here  
 'She prefers it that she is a student here.'
- b. Ela<sub>i</sub> prefere que *pro*<sub>i/k</sub> seja ouvida hoje.  
 she prefers that *pro* be.SUBJ.3SG heard today  
 'She prefers to be heard today.'

In (93) the subject of the embedded clause is interpreted as disjoint in reference from the matrix subject; in (94) a coreference reading is possible. This paradigm shows that obviation is weakened in case the complement is passivized or if it contains a non-agentive main verb. Farkas (1992) observes that this situation is reminiscent of facts pertaining to controller choice in infinitives and concludes that there is a correlation between obviation and control. In particular, she proposes that the obviation effect found in selected subjunctives is due to blocking. Assuming that the infinitive is the form used to mark subject dependency, this form blocks the subjunctive option whenever a subject dependency is intended. Blocking only obtains when the controlled argument is the *initiator* of the situation in which it is a participant.

Here I wish to suggest that the distribution of an inflected infinitive in the complement position of desiderative verbs can only be understood in light of these blocking effects. In particular, the generalization appears to be that an inflected infinitival complement with independent reference is not possible in the contexts that trigger obviation effects. This generalization is confirmed by an examination of other non-obviative contexts such as counterfactual desires:

- (95) Ela<sub>i</sub> preferia que [-]<sub>i/k</sub> tivesse falado.  
 she prefer.PAST.IMP.3SG that [-] had.SUBJ.3SG talked  
 'She would rather have talked.'

In this example the matrix verb is in the imperfective past and the embedded complement contains retrospective aspect. The sentence conveys a counterfactual desire. Interestingly, inflected infinitives with an independent subject are particularly productive in this type of counterfactual context. Several examples of the type of (96) can be found on the web:

- (96) Não está fechada a eliminatória mas preferia termos  
 not is closed the finals, but prefer.PAST.IMP.3SG have.INF.1PL  
 perdido por 2-1.  
 lost for 2-1  
 ‘The finals is not closed, but I would prefer to have lost for 2-1’<sup>18</sup>

I propose an account of this correlation that is inspired in Laca’s (2015) study of the semantics of subjunctive complements of volitionals in Spanish. Laca (2015) observes that volitionals are a heterogeneous class. She examines the different patterns of temporal orientation affecting intensional subjunctives and she suggests that differences in temporal orientation are connected to the different types of semantic objects denoted by selected subjunctive argument clauses. Volitionals may be interpreted as dispositions to act, in which case the complement is construed as an OUTCOME, or else they may carry the semantics of non-factive evaluatives, in which case the complement is construed as a proposition. The term “outcome” is borrowed from Ginzburg & Sag (2001), who extend a proposal originally due to Portner (1997), and is meant to correspond to the denotata of imperatives, as well as infinitives and subjunctives embedded under directives.

Here I wish to propose that when the complement denotes an outcome and the outcome is an Action, the infinitive signals subject dependency and blocks the use of the subjunctive. From this it follows that the subjunctive is used in cases of disjoint reference. This preempts the use of any type of infinitive – including the inflected infinitive – in cases of disjoint reference.

When subject dependency is intended, the non-inflected infinitive blocks the use of the inflected infinitive. This can be seen in the ratings obtained by Sheehan (2018) for the following sentence:

- (97) Sheehan (2018: Example (17), p. 33)  
 Preferíamos receber(\*mos) um salário maior  
 prefer.1PL receive.INF(.1PL) a salary better  
 ‘We would prefer to meet later on.’  
 uninflected 100%; inflected 4%,  $n = 68$

In those cases in which the reference of the matrix subject is included in that of a plural embedded subject, there is no identity of reference so neither the inflected infinitive nor the subjunctive are blocked. Thus, both of the following options are fine:

- (98) a. Prefiro que vamos já embora.  
 prefer.1SG that go.PRES.SUBJ.1PL immediately away  
 ‘I prefer for us to leave immediately.’

18. <https://camaroteleonino.blogs.sapo.pt>, consulted on 14.12.2020

- b. Prefiro irmos já embora  
 prefer.1SG go.INF.1PL immediately away  
 'I prefer for us to leave immediately.'

By hypothesis, it is this competition among alternative derivations that gives rise to the illusion of obligatory partial control with this class of verbs. Thus, the mechanisms underlying the constraints on subject reference found in inflected infinitival complements of desiderative verbs differ from those at work in the complements of the other verbs discussed here. Curiously, (97), with identity of reference, gets considerably worse ratings than comparable examples with *prometer* (see footnote 14). This difference constitutes evidence in favor of the need for a distinct treatment of the two cases, as proposed here. Yet, in spite of the differences, there is a common link that determines superficially similar restrictions, namely the particular status of Actional complements in obligatory control contexts.

## 6. A note on Brazilian Portuguese (Modesto 2009, 2018)

In this section, I briefly discuss Brazilian Portuguese (BP). Even though it has often been claimed that inflected infinitives are gradually disappearing from colloquial BP, the fact is that they are still commonly used in writing, as can be confirmed by a cursory look at the language used in informal chats and other social media on the web. Modesto (2018) acknowledges this fact and argues that inflected infinitives are used by part of the Brazilian speakers, who have intuitions about them. He claims that these intuitions are the reflex of a grammar that is no longer that of standard EP. In particular, he claims that the null subject of any inflected infinitive in the grammar of these BP speakers is not *pro*, but rather PRO.

In order to show that the null subject of an inflected infinitival complement must have an antecedent in a higher clause, Modesto (2009) mentions the following minimal pairs:

(99) Modesto (2009: 85, Example (10a,b))

- a. O presidente<sub>i</sub> preferiu / odiou *ec*<sub>i</sub> se reunirem  
 the president prefer.PAST.3SG / hate.PAST.3SG *ec* REFL meet.INF.3PL  
 às 6.  
 at.the 6  
 'The chair preferred to gather at 6:00.'
- b. \*O presidente<sub>i</sub> detestou *ec* serem entrevistados sem ele<sub>i</sub>.  
 the president hate.PAST.3SG *ec* be.INF.3PL interviewed without him

Modesto claims that (99a) is a case of partial control, where the referent of the antecedent is contained in the reference of the null subject of a collective verb.

Modesto (2018) argues that it is only when the subject of the inflected infinitive is null that it must be obligatorily controlled in BP. The evidence given in favor of OC consists in the standard diagnostics for OC: the antecedent of the null subject must be local; in VP ellipsis sentences, only the sloppy reading is available, *de se* readings are enforced; the null subject is obligatorily interpreted as a bound variable.

Having described Modesto's arguments, I now turn to what I consider to be challenges to his claim. The first obstacle is empirical. A search in Google retrieves examples by BP speakers in which the null subject of an inflected infinitive selected by subject control verbs such as *preferir* 'prefer' and *prometer* 'promise' is not controlled by an argument of the immediately higher clause.

- (100) Preferia terem gasto uma grana em um meia armador. Mais  
prefer have.INF.3PL spent a grand in a half guard more  
do que buscar um lateral...  
of.the that seek a lateral...  
'I would rather they had spent money on a half-guard instead of a lateral.'<sup>19</sup>
- (101) Sobre as obras da Etec de Itaquera, Alckmin **prometeu** **estarem**  
about the works of-the Etec of Itaquera, Alckmin promised be.INF.3PL  
prontas em três meses, mais somente vai funcionar em agosto  
ready in three months, but only will function.INF in August  
de 2014.  
of 2014.  
'As for the construction works of Etec of Itaquera, Alckmin promised they  
would be ready in three months, but it will only function in August of 2014.'<sup>20</sup>
- (102) Vai ter capítulos extras sim, mas não **prometo** *ec*  
goes have chapters extra yes but not promise.PRES.1SG *ec*  
**serem** frequentes.  
be.INF.1SG frequent  
'There will be extra chapters, yes, but I don't promise that they will be frequent.'<sup>21</sup>

19. <https://saopaulo.blog/2019/07/31/x-jr-tavares-na-esquerda-calazans-na-direita-leo-na-zaga-l-fernandes-no-meio-os-testes-de-cuca/>, consulted on 20-3-2020

20. <http://www.gazetavirtual.com.br/entrevista-alckmin-fala-sobre-seguranca-moradia-transporte-e-educacao/>, consulted on 20-3-2020.

21. <https://www.spiritfanfiction.com/historia/me-deixe-curar-sua-dor-yoonmin-9923583/capitulo36>, consulted on 20-02-2020.

These examples show that the inflected infinitive need not be controlled by an argument of the next clause up, as would be expected under an OC account. The empty subject is anaphoric to a highly accessible antecedent, but the latter is not contained in the next clause up.

This requirement for an accessible antecedent, however, is not a peculiar property of inflected infinites given that, quite generally, null subjects in finite clauses have a restricted distribution in colloquial BP and must have a sufficiently accessible antecedent. Thus, according to most sources, in sentences such as (103), the embedded subject may not be null in colloquial BP even though it can be null in the presence of a salient topic (104) (Ferreira 2000; Modesto 2000; Rodrigues 2004):

- (103) Modesto (2018: 67, Example (5b))  
 Eu acho que \*(eles) estão na praia.  
 I think that (they) are at.the beach  
 'I think that they are at the beach.'
- (104) Ferreira (2000)  
 A: E o João? B. As pessoas estão achando que viajou para  
 A: and the João B. the people are thinking that travelled to  
 a Europa.  
 the Europe  
 'A: And João? B: People think that he travelled to Europe.'

This highly restricted distribution of finite clause null subjects is related to the observation that BP is no longer a consistent null subject language and is probably best characterized as a partial null subject language (Holmberg 2005; Rodrigues 2004; Modesto 2008; Barbosa 2019). In effect, finite clause null subjects have been argued to display the range of properties described by Modesto for the null subject of inflected infinitives. In particular, the antecedent must usually c-command the null subject:

- (105) (Modesto 2008: 382, Example (6a))  
 [O amigo do Feco]<sub>1</sub> disse que ec<sub>1/2/\*3</sub> ganhou a competição.  
 the friend of.the Feco said that textitec won the competition  
 'Feco's friend said he won the competition.'

In addition, only sloppy readings are available under ellipsis:

- (106) Rodrigues (2004: 147, Example (48))  
 a. A Maria encucou que ela estava grávida e o Pedro também.  
 the Maria believed that she was pregnant and the Pedro also  
 'Maria believed that she was pregant and so did Pedro.' (=Pedro believed that she was pregnant)



- b. #A Maria encucou que estava grávida e o Pedro também.  
 the Maria believed that was pregnant and the Pedro also  
 'Maria believed that she was pregnant and so did Pedro.' (= \*Pedro believed  
 that she was pregnant)

Finite null subjects in BP have also been shown not to allow *de re* interpretations and to display only the bound variable reading when the antecedent is modified by a Focus operator (Rodrigues 2004).

There are different theories of the status of finite clause null subjects in BP. One approach assimilates them to instances of Finite OC regarded as movement (Ferreira 2000; Nunes 2019; Rodrigues 2004). Modesto (2000) adopts the view that *pro* in BP is an A-bar bound variable, and yet another view (Barbosa 2019) claims that it is best analysed as a subject anaphor. All of these theories have the potential to capture the facts just described.

In any event, independently from the analysis adopted for finite clause null subjects, what matters is to observe that the behavior of the null subject in inflected infinitives is not peculiar to infinitives. This means that there is no need to assume that the status of the null subject in inflected infinitives is special.

This is not to say that there are no differences between finite clauses and inflected infinitival clauses regarding the range of interpretations of null subjects. Finite clauses have independent tense, unlike infinitives, and this difference is bound to have an effect on how the embedded complement is interpreted. Thus, when a verb like *avisar* 'warn' or *convencer* 'convince' takes a non-finite complement, object control is obligatory, when it takes a finite complement, subject control is obligatory:

- (107) Ninguém avisou vocês pra não saírem de casa?  
 noone warned you.PL for not leave.INF.3PL of.the home  
 'Did noone tell you not to leave home?'  
 (108) Modesto (2018: 79, Example (18b))  
 Ele<sub>1</sub> avisou a Maria que *ec*<sub>1/\*2</sub> vai viajar.  
 he warned the Maria that *ec* will travel  
 'He warned Maria that he will travel.'

Modesto (2018) takes this minimal pair to show that the *ec* in each case is different. It is PRO in (108) and *pro* in (107). I believe that this paradigm, by itself, doesn't constitute an argument in favor of the idea that the status of the empty category is different in each case. In order to see why, consider the following minimal pair taken from EP (a consistent null subject language):

- (109) a. O Carlos<sub>i</sub> disse ao Pedro<sub>j</sub> que *pro*<sub>j</sub> fosse embora.  
 the Carlos said to.the Pedro that *pro* go.SUBJ.3SG away  
 'Carlos told Pedro to leave.'
- b. O Carlos<sub>i</sub> disse ao Pedro<sub>j</sub> que *pro*<sub>i</sub> foi embora.  
 the Carlos told to.the Pedro that went away  
 'Carlos told Peter that he left'

In (109a), the antecedent for the null subject must be the matrix object; in (109b), it must be the matrix subject. These different patterns are obviously connected to mood inflection in the embedded clause, which, in turn, is connected to clause type: in (109a) the complement denotes a request (probably an outcome in the sense of Laca (2015)); in (109b) it denotes a proposition. This doesn't mean, however, that the empty subject in each case is of a different nature. It is *pro* in both cases and other factors condition the way its antecedent is determined.<sup>22</sup> By parity of reasoning, I see no reason to distinguish the empty category in (107) and (108) solely on the basis of this interpretative contrast.

On the other hand, there would be grounds for positing PRO in (107) if the subject of inflected infinitives in BP were subject to the locality constraints that are typical of OC. However, the naturalistic data presented in (100), (101) and (102) clearly show that this is not true. These examples show that the null subject needs a very salient antecedent, just like the finite null subject in BP, but doesn't require an OC configuration. I thus conclude that the evidence in favor of a PRO subject in inflected infinitives in BP is too weak.

## 7. Conclusions

In this paper, I have reviewed the arguments presented in the literature in favor of the idea that inflected infinitival complements of certain OC attitude verbs are (or can be) obligatorily controlled (Sheehan 2013, 2018; Modesto 2009, 2018). I have examined the arguments based on apparent partial "control" and I have argued that these are not cases of OC either in EP or in BP. They are rather instances of *pro*, interpreted by the same operations that govern its interpretation in finite clauses in each variety. Focusing on EP, I have shown that this conclusion allows for a more precise characterization of the distribution of the inflected infinitive in verbal complement position: an inflected infinitive is barred from occurring in the complement

22. For an OC analysis of *pro* in Spanish examples comparable to (109a), see Suñer (1986). As should be clear from the argumentation developed thus far, I do not endorse this view.

position of restructuring verbs and in interrogative complements. Contra Gonçalves et al. (2014), I have argued that the temporal properties of inflected infinitives do not differ substantially from those of their non-inflected counterparts. Adopting Grano's (2015) suggestion that non-restructuring infinitives project a semantically vacuous  $T_0$ , the availability of the inflected infinitive in non-restructuring environments follows on the assumption that a T projection is minimally required for the licensing of an inflected infinitive. Incompatibility with restructuring verbs is explained under the hypothesis that these verbs realize functional heads in the inflectional layer of the clause and thereby give rise to monoclausal structures, as proposed in Cinque (2006); Grano (2015) and Wurmbrand (2003).

The unavailability of an inflected infinitive in an interrogative complement, by contrast, was attributed to lack of a C (=Force) projection, a hypothesis that was independently motivated on the basis of the distribution of overt subjects.

The restrictions on subject reference found in inflected infinitival complements of different OC attitude verbs in EP have been argued to stem from the particular status of Actional complements in obligatory control contexts.

In the spirit of Jackendoff & Culicover (2003), I assumed that 'promise'-type verbs and object control attitude verbs such as 'convince' require their infinitival complement to be a volitional Action and impose restrictions on the choice of Actor of the Action. Inflected infinitival clauses with a subject with independent reference can only be embedded as complements of these verbs when they are coerced into volitional Actions. This explains their restricted distribution, thus contributing to the illusion of OC.

As regards desideratives, I suggested that the restrictions on the reference of the subject in inflected infinitival complements follow from competition with the other two alternative forms, the subjunctive and the non-inflected infinitive.

Landau (2015) argues that the presence of  $\emptyset$ -feature agreement inflection blocks control in attitude complements, but not in non-attitude complements. The results of this paper corroborate the first part of Landau's generalization, so the question that arises now is whether inflected infinitives in non-attitude complements exhibit the properties of OC. This issue is obviously beyond the scope of the present paper and is left for future work.

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