**Inflected infinitives in Brazilian Portuguese and the theory of control [[1]](#footnote-1)\***

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**Abstract:** In this chapter, we describe the distribution of inflected infinitives in BP, and discuss the possible interpretations of their subjects when null. In so doing, we address the debate between Modesto 2010 and proponents of the movement theory of Control (MTC, particularly Boeckx and Hornstein 2006 and Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013) as to whether inflected infinitives constitute a serious argument against the MTC; and whether gender agreement with epicene nouns in finite embedded clauses in Brazilian Portuguese and Italian constitutes a valid argument in favor of the MTC. The facts supporting the later argument are in fact inconclusive, as argued by Modesto. The facts involving the former argument were tested using a grammaticality judgment task, presented here. The experiment indicates that inflected infinitives are perfectly grammatical in obligatory Control contexts; but its grammaticality is uncertain in non-control ones, supporting Modesto’s claims. The chapter concludes that, after discounting the interference of written language, the behavior of inflected infinitives in BP is explained by recent linguistic theory that assumes PRO to be a minimal pronoun (Kratzer 2009, Landau 2015).

**Key words:** Minimalism, Control, inflected infinitives, Brazilian Portuguese, Movement theory of Control, Two-tiered Theory.

**1. Introduction**

The interpretation and distribution of inflected infinitives in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) have not been fully nor properly described; probably due to two factors. The first factor is in fact a rumor: that inflected infinitives would have been “lost”, so they would not belong to BP grammar, when considered as an I-language (Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013). RH are only half-correct. It is indeed a fact that some BP speakers will only be exposed to inflected infinitives at school, when they (hopefully) come in contact with literature and are taught what is considered to be “standard BP”[[2]](#footnote-2). Other speakers, however, deal with inflected infinitives since birth because their parents use inflected infinitives at home. RH are wrong if claiming that no BP speaker use inflected infinitives at home, because that would mean that no BP speaker uses the variant with most social prestige, colloquially.[[3]](#footnote-3) RH’s claim about inflected infinitives not belonging to BP I-grammar seems to confuse the spoken dialect that has social prestige with the “standard” language taught at school. No one speaks “standard BP”; however, there are speakers in Brazil who still have subject-verb agreement obligatorily and, for some such speakers, subject-verb agreement is overtly marked in nonfinite clauses as well (in the plural, since all singular persons receive a zero morpheme in nonfinite paradigms in BP).[[4]](#footnote-4) Those inflecting speakers do use inflected infinitives (infl infs from now on), sometimes in contexts not sanctioned by normative grammar (which shows clearly that they are not applying the rules of “standard BP” to their speech). In other words, the dialects with social prestige in Brazil (spoken in big cities like Rio, São Paulo and Salvador), which are inflecting variants, are not equal to “standard BP” (the language taught in schools in order to pass university exams). This is crucial because infl infs in BP have not been studied due to a misunderstanding. Inflecting speakers tend to have more years of formal education because, for historical reasons, they also tend to be wealthier (Gorski 2000, Oushiro 2015, Lucchesi 2012); however, it is not the case that they inflect their infinitives because they went to school – as RH claim – more likely the other way around, in fact, the school teaches infl infs because those people still use them). Of course, that is only a sociolinguistic tendency; there are many educated and wealthy non-inflecting speakers. In fact, the rumor that BP has lost infl infs probably started because many influential Brazilian linguists are non-inflecting speakers. A few contexts of use of infl infs are sanctioned (and required) by normative grammar and inflecting speakers, who also tend to be schooled speakers, tend to use infl infs obligatorily in such contexts. The contexts are: in the presence of an overt subject (1a, b) and in object-control structures (1c).[[5]](#footnote-5)

(1) a. Eu lamento muito **os jogadores do teu time**

I regret much the players of.the your team

**estarem** todos machucados.

be-inf-pl all injuried

‘I’m very sorry about your team’s players being all injured.’

b. É importante **os jogadores estarem** em boa forma.

is importante the players be-inf.pl in good shape

‘It is important that the players are in good shape.’

c. Eu convenci **os jogadores a usarem** capacete.

I convinced the players to wear-inf-pl helmet

‘I convinced the players to wear helmets.’

The second factor that led to infl inf use in Brazil not to be fully described so far was the interference from written language (the normative pressure) and the generative *modus operandi* based on intuitions. Since innovative uses of infl infs go against normative grammar, there is a tendency for Brazilians, even inflecting speakers, not to accept the data. The problem of data collection is well known by Brazilian linguists, who had to weed out the influence of written language when describing the use of null subjects in finite clauses in BP. In writing, BP is a pro-drop language just like European Portuguese (EP), so the problem, there, was reverse: much data that “sounds ok” was shown to be ungrammatical in BP. It actually took a lot of work (including sociolinguistic quantitative work) from several Brazilian linguists for us to arrive at the conclusions we take for granted today (that BP is not a Romance-type pro-drop language, as discussed in section 2 below). The same effort now has to be applied to nonfinite contexts, but in reverse: structures that were thought to be ungrammatical are in fact used by speakers and should have their grammaticality pointed out. In describing the usage of infl infs here, I will correct some judgments in Modesto 2010 (since I was not free of prejudice towards infl infs myself, and data collection in the last five years sometimes surprised me). Almost all examples in here are either taken or adapted from Internet data.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Besides the rumor that infl infs have disappeared in BP, and the normative pressure, there is a general impression (another rumor) that infl inf use in Brazil is related to formality. Example (2) below, taken from the Internet, shows that this is not the case. Modesto’s (2010) intuition that infl infs are used in Partial Control (PC) contexts in BP is confirmed by (2) below, and the example makes it clear that infl inf use is not related to formality. The example was taken from a web site where people (usually very young) post questions to be answered. In this particular example, a boy asked how to get a girl to kiss him, and then somebody replied (2), from <http://br.askingg.com/115233/como-pedir-pra-uma-mina-ficar-com-voc%C3%AA> (last seen on June 2nd 2014).

(2) Chega nela, **espera ficarem** a sós e

arrive-imp at.her wait-imp-3sg stay-inf.pl at alone and

diz que gosta dela, vai chegando junto e tchum.

say-imp that like her, go.imp arriving together and bam

‘Go to her, wait until you are all alone and tell her that you like her, get closer and bam.’

The stretch of discourse above presents several aspects of unmonitored informal speech. In fact, (2) could have been uttered in any informal situation exactly as it is given here. However, it includes an example of PC induced by the use of an infl inf. The presence of an infl inf in (2) hardly seems the result of social pressure to use the educated norm, especially in such a discourse context. Also importantly, (2) does not abide to written BP norms. In written BP and EP, structures like (2) are considered substandard (cf. Duarte, Gonçalves and Santos 2012). Normally, EP (and BP normative grammar) does not license infl infs in the complement of volitional or desiderative predicates (cf. Raposo 1987 and the work cited immediately above), so it is very unlikely that the author of (2) would be guiding hirself by something learnt in school. This and many other examples show that infl infs are truly part of everyday oral and virtual exchanges (at least for some Brazilians), *pace* Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013.

This chapter, then, will defend that infl inf use in BP is a scientifically interesting object of study, since it is part of the language spoken by big communities of speakers (mostly in big cities), contra RH’ claims. It will describe the contexts of use of infl infs and discuss what that data implies for theories of control. It will show that inflecting variants of BP can be explained using most recent linguistic apparatus (especially Landau 2015). I will assume that, having only a number specification (but no person feature), T in BP is almost inert: it does not license null subjects (finite or nonfinite) and it does not interfere with Control. Before getting to business, however, still a few points must be made in this (lengthy) introduction.

That the linguistic community in Brazil is polarized in two groups (one that uses infl infs in normal speech, characterized here as the inflecting variant; and one group who do not use infl infs, the non-inflecting variants) has been noticed by Lightfoot (1991) and has been most forcefully argued by Lucchesi 2001, 2004 and Lucchesi, Baxter and Ribeiro 2009. In a series of work, Lucchesi details the historical relationship between “the process of irregular linguistic transmission created by the abrupt and massive contact between languages, which comprises a precarious acquisition of Portuguese by part of indigenous Brazilians and African slaves, the socialization of that Portuguese between those groups and its nativization, departing from defective models, by the endogamous descendants of those Indians and African slaves” (Lucchesi, Baxter and Ribeiro 2009: 51) and the sociolinguistic polarization in Brazil. By reading Lucchesi’s work and the references therein, it is abundantly clear that there are two BPs (at least). One, usually called “popular” BP (to which I refer here as the non-inflecting variants) is in many ways descendant from the Portuguese of the slaves and Indigenous people and it dominates rural areas (mostly). Another Portuguese, spoken mainly in urban contexts (at all times in Brazilian history) is in many ways a continuation of the language spoken by the colonizers. The two variants of BP, of course, have been mixed and influence one another, as also discussed by Lucchesi, in the passage below, producing mixed varieties (as also noted by Lightfoot 1991).

“The transition [from slavery] to paid-work was strongly pushed forward by the arrival in Brazil of more than 3 million immigrants from Europe and Asia, between the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. Those immigrants, in their majority, entered the base of the Brazilian social pyramid, going to work as rural labor. In those circumstances, the most accessible acquisition model to them was the one from farm supervisors and other field workers, who in their majority were former slaves or their endogamous descendants; that is to say, the Portuguese that those immigrants – Italians, Japanese, Germans, etc. – learnt, when arrived in Brazil, was the popular Portuguese, with its deep changes caused by the process of irregular linguistic transmission that that Portuguese had been through. However, because of their cultural background, those immigrants quickly ascended the social structure, bringing to the heart of the cultured norm some of the structures of popular origin that they acquired in their initial contact with Portuguese.” (Lucchesi, Baxter and Ribeiro 2009:53, my translation)

Influence also occurs in the opposite direction: during the 20th century, mass communication media and education became more available to more people (a process that is still in its course in Brazil), mixing up the two varieties of BP. The result of these processes is a 21st century BP that is a homogeneous syntactic system, in most respects, but one with a lot of variation w.r.t. agreement. However, agreement (suj-verb agreement in finite and nonfinite contexts) has recently been shown by sociolinguistic work to be on the rise toward the socially approved inflecting variant by all social classes (Lucchesi 2012; Oushiro 2015; Scherre and Naro 2006). Therefore, it is inaccurate to say even that BP is marching towards a language with no agreement (in finite and nonfinite contexts).

The correct description of infl infs in BP is important since it relates to the ongoing debate in the generative literature about the correct analysis of control structures. Hornstein (1999, *et seq*.) argues that controllers are raised from an embedded subject position, passing through a second thematic position, ending up in a Case position of an immediate higher clause. Such movement theory of Control (MTC) has faced a lot of criticism (Culicover and Jakendoff 2001, 2006; Landau 2003, 2004, 2007, 2013; Bobaljik and Landau 2009; Barbosa 2009; Ndayiaragije 2012; Modesto 2010; Sheehan 2012, 2014; Wood 2012). BP data like (2) above shows that, in PC structures, the controlee may trigger plural nonfinite agreement even when the controller is singular. Such a fact shows clearly that control structures do not involve movement of the controller from the embedded nonfinite clause (see section 3).

The MTC has also been used to analyze *finite* null subjects in BP; cf. Rodrigues 2004; Nunes 2008, which are alleged to be controlled subjects – though in finite contexts. Such analyses have been shown untenable in Modesto 2007a, 2011. The analyses of null finite subjects will be tangentially relevant here, when we discuss RH’s work, in section 3, so section 2 discusses verbal agreement and the pro-drop status of BP. Section 3 also presents the results of a pilot experiment on the interpretation of infl infs, to test one of the claims in Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013. Section 4 describes the distribution of infl infs in BP and, finally, in section 5, we discuss how such a distribution can be explained by current linguistic theory. Section 6 offers a conclusion.

**2. BP inflection and pro-drop**

The broad scenario of this discussion is that BP is *not* a pro-drop language like European Portuguese (EP) or Italian. Whereas in EP and Italian null subjects are freely used in most contexts, null subjects are much more restricted in BP, as seen in (3) below (see also Duarte 1995 for quantitative data on null subjects in BP, and Modesto 2011 for discussion on the differences between null subjects in BP and EP). In (3b), the BP 2nd person pronoun *você* used to be a “treatment form” (something like “your grace” in English, which takes third person agreement, but can be applied to common people). Since *você* substituted the pronoun *tu* (2nd person singular in EP) in the majority of BP dialects, the nonfinite verb in (3b) is inflected with the zero morpheme characteristic of 3rd person and the pronoun has to be pronounced. In (3a), since EP still uses the pronoun *tu*, the nonfinite verb carries 2nd person agreement and the pronoun is usually null. The verbal paradigms used in Portugal and Brazil are given in (4). Inflecting speakers of BP use the paradigm BPι. BPρ speakers have some residual morphology but overt agreement is never required (in any person). Obviously, no BPρ speaker uses infl infs, and only some BPι speakers do.

(3) *European Portuguese*

a. Fico contente por *ec* teres gostado do presente.

stay-1sg happy for have-inf-2sg enjoyed the gift

‘I am happy that you enjoyed the gift.’

*Brazilian Portuguese*

b. (Eu) fico contente de \*(você) ter gostado do presente.

(I) stay happy of you have-inf.Ø enjoyed the gift

‘I am happy that you enjoyed the gift.’

(4) Verbal paradigm in the present for *cantar* ‘to sing’.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | EP | BPι | BPρ | infinitive |
| 1sg | cant**o** | cant**o** | cant**o**/canta | cantar |
| 2sg | canta**s** | canta | canta | cantar |
| 3sg | canta | canta | canta | cantar |
| 1pl | canta**mos** | canta**mos**/canta | canta | cantar**mos**/cantar |
| 2pl | canta**m** | canta**m** | canta(**m)** | cantar**em**/cantar |
| 3pl | canta**m** | canta**m** | canta(**m)** | cantar**em**/cantar |

The fact that BP is not a Romance-type pro-drop language is a joint conclusion of Moreira da Silva 1984; Figueiredo Silva 1994; Duarte 1995; Negrão 1997; Kato 1999; Galves 1993, 2001; Modesto 2000; Ferreira 2004; Rodrigues 2004; the collection of articles in Roberts and Kato 1993 and Kato and Negrão 2000.[[7]](#footnote-7) After losing second person morphology (due to the substitution of the second pronoun *tu* ‘you’ by the form *você*) BP cannot license referential null subjects anymore, as seen in (5).[[8]](#footnote-8)

(5) a. O que \*(eu) quero é sambar.

what (I) want is samba-inf

‘What I want is to samba.’

b. O Pedro disse que \*(nós) estávamos/parecíamos cansados.

the Pedro said that (we) were/seemed tired

‘Pedro said that we were/seemed tired.’

c. Eu acho que \*(eles) estão na praia.

I think that (they) are on.the beach

‘I guess they’re on the beach.’

d. \*O Juca1 disse que a Maria2 acha que *ec*1 é feio.

the Juca said that the Maria thinks that is ugly-m

‘Juca said that Maria thinks he is ugly.’

e. \*[A filha dos Clinton1]2 acha que *ec*1 vão

the daughter of.the Clintons thinks that go-prs-3pl

ganhar as eleições.

win-inf the elections

‘The Clintons’ daughter thinks that they will win the elections.’

Example (5d) shows that a null finite subject in BP must have a local antecedent, which is relevant, since examples like (6) are fully grammatical (and used in speech, most importantly). Example (5e) shows that the antecedent must c-command the null subject.

(6) O Juca1 disse que *ec*1 gosta da Maria.

the Juca said that likes of.the Maria

‘Juca said that he likes Maria.’

All examples in (5) are grammatical in EP, a “strong” Agr language. BP inflection is weak, in the sense of not licensing null referential subjects.

Expectedly, null referential subjects are not common in nonfinite clauses as well. I take all examples in (7) below to be ungrammatical in spoken BP (though grammatical in EP and maybe also in written BP, where inflection is “strong”). Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013 claim that such sentences are still grammatical, which is very surprising.

(7) a. \*[A filha dos Clinton1]2 lamentou *ec*1 perderem

the daughter of.the Clinton regretted loose-inf-pl

as eleições.

the elections

‘The daughter of the Clintons regretted that they lost the elections.’

b. \*O professor exigiu *ec* fazermos um trabalho.[[9]](#footnote-9)

the teacher demanded do-inf-1pl a homework

‘The teacher demanded of us to do a homework.’

The examples in (7) would be derived by the grammar of “standard BP” (if someone spoke it), so maybe that is where the confusion is. It must be clear that educated speakers understand the sentences in (7), though they are ungrammatical in the spoken language (or so is claimed in Modesto 2010 and here). One has to differentiate standard BP and the inflecting spoken variant of BP. Sentences like (7) are simply not used in speech. The sentences in (8), on the other hand, are still used in spoken language, and clearly contrast with those in (7) w.r.t. grammaticality. Several examples like (8) have been collected by me in the past 5 years on several different discourse contexts and media. The difference between (7) and (8) is that in the latter sentences the null nonfinite subject has a local c-commanding controller.

(8) a. O Juca convenceu as meninas1 a *ec*1 ficarem com ele.

the Juca convinced the girls to stay-inf-pl with him

‘Juca convinced the girls to stay with him.’

b. Mesmo depois de muito derrotados nas primárias, o Bill

even after of much defeated-pl in.the primaries the Bill

Clinton1 ainda espera *ec*1+ ganharem as eleições.

Clinton still hopes win-inf-pl the elections

‘Even after losing a lot on the primaries, Bill Clinton still hopes that they will be elected.’

c. O primeiro casal que entrou já decidiu imediatamente

the first couple that entered already decided immediately

ficarem com a casa.

stay.inf.pl with the house

‘Already the first couple who entered (the house) immediately decided to buy the house.’

In order to investigate the grammaticality status and the interpretations speakers allow for inflected infinitives, the next section presents a grammaticality judgment experiment conducted online, in which 45 linguistics students from 7 Brazilian states gave their native intuitions about 20 sentences (for each informant) from a total of 60 test-sentence tokens. The results show that controlled inflected clauses are grammatical to every speaker in every discourse context; whereas non-controlled (NC) nonfinite inflected clauses are not grammatical in every context (which seems to confirm Modesto’s claim). The explanation for the sentences that are in fact acceptable, according to the speakers, is the influence of the written language, which seems to confound the informants when giving judgments. Even if that explanation is wrong, the important point here is that the experiment shows that controlled and non-controlled inflected nonfinite clauses are judged differently by BP speakers. The former is widely accepted, whereas the grammaticality of the latter is uncertain, as the discussion of the experiment in section 3.1 demonstrates.

After linguists demonstrated that BP was not a run of the mill pro-drop language, they had to explain the licensing of the null subjects that are effectively found in speech. Building on Galves 1993, Modesto 2000, 2008 proposed that subjects can be elliptical in BP because they occur in an A-bar position (in an exploded C domain), so they may form a topic-chain with some referential constituent in the next C domain up. My current formal expression of the proposal assumes most of what is proposed in Miyagawa 2010 but; particularly for BP, we assume that only the feature [number] is inherited by T in BP; [person] stays in the C domain and enters the derivation accompanied by the Topic feature in the first projection of the C domain, which I refer to as FinP, following Rizzi 1997. The structure of example (6) above would be like in (9).

(9) [FinP O Juca1 [TP ~~o Juca~~ disse [CP que [FinP ~~ele~~1 [TP ~~ele~~ gosta...

the Juca the Juca said that he he likes

In this proposal, the pro-drop character of BP (even after the impoverishment of the inflectional paradigm) is explained by its “topic prominent” character (cf. Li and Thompson 1976; Huang 1984 for discussion of topic prominent languages and Pontes 1983; Galves 1993, 2001; Negrão 1999; Negrão and Viotti 2000; Modesto 2008 for arguments that BP is one such language). Movement analyses have been shown not to derive the BP facts correctly (Modesto 2007a, 2011), so I will keep on assuming (9).

Likewise in finite contexts, if null subjects are possible in nonfinite clauses with weak agreement, there must also be a mechanism that licenses their interpretation. It will be shown here that such a mechanism is nonfinite Control.

**3. Rodrigues and Horstein (2013)**

Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013, RH from now on, is a reply to Modesto 2010 that claims “Modesto’s arguments based on Brazilian Portuguese inflected infinitives is [sic], at best, inconclusive, and at worst, incorrect, the reason being that under well-controlled experimental situations, Brazilian Portuguese speakers show the ability to assign a NOC [non-obligatory Control] interpretation to inflected infinitival clauses, although it is unclear that these verbal forms are fully mastered by these speakers or how much their (late, explicitly tutored) mastery reveals about the basic operations of the grammar.” It should be clear by now that “speakers show the ability to assign a NOC interpretation to inflected infinitival clauses” because they learned that in school. That is the confusion RH make between normative grammar and speakers’ intuitions. Although I intend to show here that RH’s conclusions are incorrect, two facts must be conceded: PC structures with inflected infinitives (infl infs from now on) are indeed rare in speech (since inflection in that context is usually optional); and infl infs are only used by a part of the Brazilian speakers, as discussed in the introduction. However, those speakers who use nonfinite inflection use it all the time (as has been noted by Lightfoot 1991), so infl infs are not scarce at all in the speech of those speakers (contra RH). PC structures with nonfinite inflection, though rare, are clearly grammatical for such speakers; and examples can be found anywhere. PC with inflected infinitives does not need to be abundant to show that the MTC is problematic.

One of the experiments run by RH to show that NC readings were still possible in BP involved asking speakers the truth-value of a sentence based on some context previously read. Since all informants were schooled, it is no surprise that most of them answered correctly (according to “standard BP”). This is even more the case since RH used a test-sentence that Modesto 2010 was claiming to be ungrammatical in speech, so the only chance of interpreting the sentence, even for inflecting speakers, was to follow standard BP grammar.[[10]](#footnote-10), [[11]](#footnote-11) And, of course, since a big portion of BP speakers are not inflecting speakers, the only way to interpret the sentence was to assume “standard BP” grammar. In this way, the experiment really only tested if the informant was schooled. It is important that RH (and any linguist who work on BP) observe that the rules of written Portuguese are not equal to the rules governing the use of infl infs in speech in Brazil; that has to be taken into account when doing experimental syntax (in BP).

In order to test the acceptability and interpretation of infl infs by BP speakers, we knew it would be necessary to test several sentences in both contexts: OC contexts, which Modesto claims to be grammatical; and NC contexts, in which the controller is non-local, which Modesto claims are ungrammatical[[12]](#footnote-12) (not used in speech) and RH claim are grammatical. We then tested 60 token sentences (30 in each context). The experiment is described below.

*3.1 The experiment*

For this pilot experiment, we chose 6 verbs (3 propositional: *acreditar* (to belive), *concluir* (to conclude) and *perceber* (to realize); and 3 factive: *lamentar* (to regret), *odiar* (to hate) and *aceitar* (to accept)). We combined the 6 verbs with 5 different inflected nonfinite verbal complements (*estarem* (be-inf-3pl), *serem* (be-inf-3pl), *terem* (have-inf-3pl), *estarem sendo* (be-inf-3pl be-ger) and *terem sido* (have-inf-3pl be-prt) producing 30 skeletons of sentences. Each sentence was then put in a context that forced either a controlled reading or a NC reading, producing 60 token test sentences. Test sentences were constructed in that semi-automatic way in order to prevent a biased experimenter constructing “better-sounding” sentences in one context or the other. So all sentences involve the same sequences of verbs and auxiliaries, varying only in context, which makes one reading more salient.

All the contexts involved *Will Robinson*, the younger son of a family from Earth who are lost in space, and *Moia Glic*, the daughter of a family from planet Kandor who are also lost in space. Will and Moia met in Kandor before the Glics got lost and now they talk through the radio and exchange experiences and information about their families. This introduction was presented to every informant before rating sentences. A sample of the sentences tested is presented below. NC reading is intended in (10a, c) and an OC reading is intended in (10b, d).

(10) a. Depois de conversar com os Glic, o Will concluiu

after of talking with the Glics, the Will concluded

estarem em Marte.

be-inf-pl in Mars

‘After talking to the Glics, Will concluded that they were in Mars.’

b. Quando os Robinson viram o Sol, o Will concluiu

when the Robinsons saw the Sun, the Will concluded

estarem em Marte.

be-inf-pl in Mars

‘When the Robinsons saw the Sun, Will concluded that they were in Mars.’

c. Os Glic não podem voltar pra casa. O Will lamenta

the Glics not can go.back to home. the Will regrets

estarem perdidos.

be-inf-pl lost

‘The Glics can’t return home. Will is sorry that they are lost.’

d. Os Robinson não podem voltar pra casa. O Will lamenta the Robinsons not can go.back to home. the Will regrets

estarem perdidos.

be-inf-pl lost

‘The Robinsons can’t return home. Will is sorry that they are lost.’

Each informant judged one sentence (randomically chosen from 3 possibilities) from each of the ten templates below in both contexts. For half the informants, in the first part of the test, all sentences were in a NC context and, in a second part, all were in a OC context. Since it is admissible that the ordering of contexts could bias the answers, the other half of the informants was presented the contexts in the reverse order. Summing up the conditions, every informant judged 10 sentences with an OC reading and 10 with a NC reading from a pool of 60 target sentences. The number of informants was 45; 24 informants responded to a questionnaire in one order of contexts, 21 responded to a questionnaire in the reverse order.[[13]](#footnote-13)

(11) a. propositional verb + serem (be-inf-pl)

b. factive verb + serem (be-inf-pl)

c. propositional verb + estarem (be-inf-pl)

d. factive verb + estarem (be-inf-pl)

e. propositional verb + terem (have-inf-pl)

f. factive verb + terem (have-inf-pl)

g. propositional verb + estarem sendo (be-inf-pl, be-ger)

h. factive verb + estarem sendo (be-inf-pl, be-ger)

i. propositional verb + terem sido (have-inf.pl, be-prt)

j. factive verb + terem sido (have-inf.pl, be-prt)

The responses were very similar for every informant. The only significant variable was if the sentence was being interpreted under a NC or an OC context.

Table 1 below shows the probability density function obtained for the sentences when considered under a NC context (dark gray) and under OC context (light gray). It is important to note that the vertical axis shows the probability density and not the percentage of responses. The table, then, reads that whenever a BP speaker is presented with a nonfinite inflected complement in an OC context, the probability of that speaker rating the sentence as fully grammatical (grade 5) is much higher than the probability of the speaker assigning any other grade. For NC contexts, the probability of getting grades 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 as responses from speakers is more or less the same. This seems to indicate that BP speakers are guessing in NC contexts. This is expected, since the interpretation of those sentences in NC contexts depends on the written BP grammar that speakers acquired in school and not on their I-grammar. Statistically speaking, the two distributions are very significantly different (the result of the Wilcoxon test is: W= 40216.5, p-value < 0.001).

*Table 1: probability density function of grammaticality ratings for inflected infinitives interpreted under NC (dark gray) and OC (light gray)*

From the result of the experiment, we could also conclude that NC readings are grammatical. Of course, it would be harder to explain why a grammatical reading *that is sanctioned* by the normative grammar is also so rejected by speakers. Still, this result makes it complicated to talk about (un)grammaticality. It may be safer to say about NC readings of inflected infinitives exactly what RH said about infl infs in general, that they are a peripheral aspect of BP, learnt in school, but not really determined by BP as an I-language. Controlled infl infs, on the other hand, as argued in Modesto 2010, seem to be completely grammatical and not peripheral.

*3.2 Partial Control structures*

Partial Control is a central aspect in the dispute about the correct characterization of Control as a syntactic operation (cf. Landau 2004, 2007, 2013; Modesto 2010; Sheehan 2012, 2014, this volume; Hornstein 2003; Boeckx and Hornstein 2004, 2006; Rodrigues 2007; Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010, for discussion). As mentioned in the introduction above, PC raises serious problems for the MTC, because “the relationship between the controller and PRO appears to be a subset-superset relation, wholly unlike movement-derived chains” (Sheehan 2014).[[14]](#footnote-14) One attempt to reconcile the MTC with PC is presented in Rodrigues 2007, and RH mention that analysis as a possible solution to the problem raised by Modesto involving infl infs.[[15]](#footnote-15) However, Landau (2013) and Sheehan (2014) have already pointed out problems with Rodrigues’ proposal, as discussed below.

*3.2.1 The complex DP analysis*

Rodrigues (2007) proposes that PC interpretations emerge when a null pronoun adjoins to a DP in its argumental position and forms a big DP, [DP *pro* DP], then the internal DP is moved out to become the controller, stranding *pro* in the thematic position (the embedded Spec, vP position). According to Rodrigues, the null pronoun that is optionally adjoined to the argumental DP would be equivalent to an associative morpheme, found in languages like Japanese and Chinese. In those languages, when the associative morpheme is attached to a name, say John, it yields a plural denotation, meaning “John and his group”. The null associative *pro* would then be responsible for PC interpretations. It is important to notice that Rodrigues wants to explain why, according to her, “exhaustively or partially obligatory-controlled PRO does not trigger ϕ-feature agreement independently of its antecedent” (Rodrigues 2007: 215). Citing Koizumi 1993, Rodrigues claims that the secondary predicate in (12) is adjoined to VP, but it is “predicated of the DP in the closest spec of TP”. Since the controller has moved out of the big DP to the embedded spec of TP stranding the associative *pro* in spec VP, the secondary predicate records the syntactic number agreement of the controller (that may be singular), although its interpretation is semantically plural, as seen in (12a).

(12) a. A vítima quer se encontrar bêbada/\*bêbadas.

the victim wants refl meet drunk-f-sg/\*drunk-f-pl

‘The victim wants to meet drunk.’

b. As vítimas querem se encontrar \*bêbada/bêbadas.

the victims want refl meet \*drunk-f-sg/drunk-f-pl

‘The victims want to meet drunk.’

Since Rodrigues’ analysis is designed to explain why the syntactic features of the controller are retained in PC complements, RH’s mention of Rodrigues’ 2007 analysis makes little sense, because Modesto 2010 had shown exactly the opposite: that in BP the controlee may trigger plural agreement even when the controller is singular (as seen in (2) and (8) above). Rodrigues’ 2007 analysis is also at odds with languages like Russian, Icelandic and British English, in which the features of the controller are not retained in OC complements (Landau 2008, Bobaljik and Landau 2009, Landau 2013). The data in (12) can be explained by the null comitative analysis of Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010, which is shown by Sheehan (2014) to be a common place in Romance: in (12a), PRO is singular and, therefore, triggers singular agreement (on the verb and on the secondary predicate); the PC reading, in that case, is given by a null comitative.[[16]](#footnote-16)

Even if the big DP analysis could be used to explain the BP data, it faces the challenge of isolating PC interpretations in the right syntactic contexts (embedded tensed nonfinite clauses, according to Landau 2004), since the associative null *pro* could, in principle, be attached to any argumental DP (even in finite clauses, producing all sorts of ungrammatical sentences). Based on examples like (13), Rodrigues assumes, contra Landau 2004, that PC is not linked to embedded semantic tense: “Arguably the linguistic requirement on partial control is that the null associative plural pronoun must occur within the scope of a modal.” (Rodrigues 2007: 223).

(13) I can’t meet tomorrow. My daughter is getting married.

Landau (2013: 167-8) raises four additional problems with Rodrigues’ analysis. First, the scopal condition on the null associative pronoun is stipulated, not explained. In fact, Rodrigues gives no account of why the associative pronoun should be able to survive only in the scope of a modal.

Second, examples like (13) are not representative and, in fact, extremely isolated, in the sense that the collocation *can meet* is quite exceptional in this respect. As seen in (14) below, once the modal or the collective predicate are changed, PC fails.

(14) a. \*I can’t gather tomorrow.

b. \*I don’t think George can fix the fence together.

In third, data in (15), also from Landau 2013, indicates that modality is not an adequate substitute for semantic tense in explaining the distribution of PC: none of the other EC predicates displays any “modal effect”.[[17]](#footnote-17)

(15) a. \*The chair can start to gather in the conference room.

b. \*It can be impolite of Bill to giggle together at the dinner table.

In contrast, factive predicates do not introduce a modal context, yet PC is licensed in their complements. Landau gives the examples in (16), saying that “this proves that modality is not just insufficient, but also unnecessary for PC.”

(16) a. I regretted [PRO1+ killing Sam the way we did] because he

was such a nice guy.

b. Bill regretted/hatted [PRO1+ meeting without a concrete agenda].

Fourth and last, the associative *pro* account fails to explain why raising complements never exhibit PC, as shown by Landau’s examples in (17).[[18]](#footnote-18) Landau points out that “many raising predicates are clearly modal, demonstrating again the insufficiency of the modal condition for licensing PC.”

(17) a. \*We thought that the chair was likely to gather once more.

b. \*We expected Bill to work together more willingly.

Concluding, Rodrigues’ complex DP analysis cannot be used to explain PC interpretations (either in BP or in English) even when non-inflected infinitives are used. The use of infl infs in PC in BP just adds to the problems of Rodrigues’ analysis.

*3.2.2 Inflected infinitives are controlled, null finite subjects are not*

RH make two major claims about inf infs in their paper. They start by claiming that inf infs are “NOC [non-obligatory control] configurations” (p. 297); then they say that it doesn’t really matter because infl infs do not exist in BP, when considered as an I-language. We tackle each claim separately. The first claim, as mentioned before, confuses written BP with the actual spoken dialects of BP. Written BP tries to follow the normative grammar of EP. The use of infl infs in “NOC configurations” (in fact, non-controlled (NC) contexts) is then a feature of written BP because it is characteristic of EP. However, written language says nothing about the internalized grammar of BP. In the spoken inflecting dialect of BP, infl infs are not used in NC or NOC contexts, as the experiment described above indicates. In fact, in written BP and EP, infl infs license referential *pro* subjects (Raposo 1987), so describing them as “NOC configurations” do not seem appropriate (therefore, I will keep using “NC contexts”). The right question to be asked, considering that infl infs are still used in BP is, exactly, what happened with the contexts of use and the interpretation of infl infs after BP suffered a loss of 2nd person morphology, which (as believed) led to a weakening of BP inflection (Galves 1993, 2001; or, the other way around as argued by Negrão 1999). If referential null subjects are not licensed in BP anymore, even in finite contexts, what occupies the subject position of nonfinite inflected clauses in BP? RH’s bet is to say that it is “NOC pro”. Within the MTC, NOC *pro* is a pronoun with free interpretation available only because movement (which would derive control) is somehow unavailable. That is already highly problematic. It is unclear why movement would be unavailable from nonfinite clauses with weak agreement, since Rodrigues 2004, Nunes 2008 and Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010 argue that movement is available even from *finite* indicative clauses in BP, which are inflected, so movement out of *nonfinite* clauses, inflected or not, would be expected in *their* theory.[[19]](#footnote-19) Putting all this aside, data shows that inflected clauses are in fact controlled, as will be shown below. As for finite null subjects, there are several differences between them and controlled nonfinite subjects (cf. Modesto 2008; Holmberg, Nayudu and Sheehan 2009; Holmberg and Sheehan 2010).

Subjects of finite clauses in BP are possibly null when bound by a c-commanding subject in a superordinate clause (or, when bound by a conversational topic), as seen in section 2. RH claim that finite null subjects in BP are controlled in the same sense as nonfinite subjects. However, as noted by Modesto 2000, 2007a, 2008 (and Rodrigues 2004), finite controlled subjects are unlike nonfinite controlled subjects in not allowing control by an object. When a verb like *avisar* ‘to warn’ (and other verbs of that class) takes a *nonfinite* complement, *object* control is obligatory (18a); when it takes a *finite* complement (with a null subject), *subject* control is obligatory (18b). That shows that, although the two syntactic mechanisms may be called Control, they are not the same mechanism. A grammatical version of (18b) with the intended “object control” reading would require an overt pronoun, as in (18c).[[20]](#footnote-20) Incidentally, Holmberg and Sheehan (2010) also argue that the relation between the controller and the null subject (in several partial null subject languages) differs from OC in several crucial respects.

(18) a. Ele1 avisou a Maria2 pra *ec*\*1/2 fechar a janela.

he warned the Maria to close-inf the window

‘He told Maria to close the window.’

b. Ele1 avisou a Maria2 que *ec*1/\*2 vai viajar.

He warned the Maria that go-prs-3sg travel-inf

‘He told Maria that he will travel.’

c. Ele1 avisou a Maria2 que ela2 vai viajar.

he warned the Maria that she go-prs-3sg travel-inf

‘He told Maria that she will travel.’

Also unlike in Control contexts, as noted by Modesto (2000), null finite subjects may find their antecedent not in the immediately upper clause, but one up, when the closest subject is non-referential:

(19) a. O Zé1 acha/disse que *ec* parece que *ec*1 vai viajar.

the Zé thinks/said that seems that goes travel-inf

‘Zé thinks/said that it seems that he is going to travel.’

b. O Zé1 disse que *ec* é claro que *ec*1 vai na tua festa.

the Zé said that is clear that goes to.the your party

‘Zé said it is obvious he will go to the party.’

RH’s claim that infl infs are “NOC configurations” leads one to expect that infl infs would be used in (clearly) NOC configurations. However, that is not the case.[[21]](#footnote-21)

(20) Comer(\*em) pizza com mostarda é um péssimo

eat-inf(-pl) pizza with mustard is a lousy

hábito dos cariocas.

habit of.the cariocas

‘To eat pizza with mustard is a lousy habit of Cariocas (people born in Rio de Janeiro).’

Also, inflected nonfinite null subjects need an antecedent in BP. This is clearly seen in (21). If there is no antecedent, as in (21a, b), only the uninflected infinitive is possible. If inflected infinitives were “NOC configurations,” there should be no reason for (21b) to be ungrammatical.[[22]](#footnote-22)

(21) a. Essa tecnologia possibilita melhorar o produto.

this technology enables improve-inf the product

‘This technology makes it possible to improve the product.’

b. \*Essa tecnologia possibilita melhorarmos o produto.

this technology enables improve-inf-1pl the product

‘This technology makes it possible for us to improve the product.’

c. Essa tecnologia nos possibilita melhorar(mos) o produto.

this technology refl enables improve-inf-1pl the product

‘This technology enables us to improve the product.’

Not only inflected infinitives need an antecedent, the antecedent must be local:

(22) a. As jogadoras disseram que o treinador2 resolveu

the players said that the coach decided

não *ec*2 usar uniforme.

not wear-inf uniform

‘The players said that the coach decided not to wear a uniform.’

b. \*As jogadoras1 disseram que o treinador resolveu

the players said that the coach decided

*ec*1 não usarem uniformes.[[23]](#footnote-23)

not wear-inf-pl uniforms

‘The players said that their coach decided that they would not wear uniforms.’

That inflected infinitives are controlled is corroborated by the fact that sentences like (23) display only a sloppy reading in VP ellipsis contexts. The strict reading is not available.

(23) A Dilma tinha declarado terem contido a inflação

the Dilma had declared have-inf-pl held the inflation

e a Cristina Kirchner também tinha.[[24]](#footnote-24)

and the Cristina Kirchner too had

‘Dilma had declared to have held up inflation and C. Kirchner had declared so too.’

The absence of strict readings in ellipsis contexts and the absence of *de re* interpretations are widely assumed to be characteristics of OC (see Bouchard 1985, Chierchia 1989, Higginbotham 1992, and Hornstein 1999). Sentence (24a) is interpreted *de se*, the *de re* reading being unavailable, so that indicates that the nonfinite clause is controlled in (24a).[[25]](#footnote-25)

(24) a. Os pacientes acreditam terem recebido uma medalha.

the patients believe have-inf-pl received a medal

‘The patients believe to have received a medal.’

b. Os pacientes acreditam que eles receberam uma medalha.

the patients believe that they received a medal

‘The patients believe that they received a medal.’

Considering the classic context of amnesiac patients, sentence (24a) cannot be used if the patients have no memory of having received a medal themselves. In contrast, the same is not true of (24b), with an overt pronoun, that can be used if the patients saw themselves getting a medal on TV, but have no idea that the war heroes on TV are actually themselves.

Further evidence that inflected nonfinite complements are obligatorily controlled in BP comes from sentences like (25a). It entails what Fodor (1975: 133-4) calls ‘epistemic privacy’: the dictators are the only ones to believe of themselves to have commanded the country well (so all the democratic presidents must believe that they did not govern well: probably a false statement). Sentence (25b), on the other hand, is not restricted to one’s belief about oneself. Epistemic privacy is also taken to be a distinguishing property of OC (see Bouchard 1985 and Hornstein 1999). Minimal pairs like the one in (25) show that neither *pro* or NOC PRO/pro is licensed in nonfinite clauses in BP, otherwise the contrast between the two sentences should not exist.[[26]](#footnote-26)

(25) a. Só os ditadores acreditam terem governado bem

only the dictators believe have-inf-pl governed well

o país.

the country

‘Only the dictators believe to have governed the country well.’

b. Só os ditadores acreditam que eles governaram bem

only the dictators believe that they governed well

o país.

the county

‘Only the dictators believe that they governed the country well.’

Concluding, after considering the data, the assumption that inflected infinitives are “NOC configurations” in BP is untenable. Infl infs are ungrammatical in clear NOC contexts, they give rise to sloppy readings under ellipsis, and *de se* beliefs, as well as epistemic privacy; all characteristics of OC. The claim that inf infs do not exist in BP is discussed in the next subsection.

*3.3 BP has nonfinite inflected clauses*

Turning now to the other main claim in RH, they wrote:

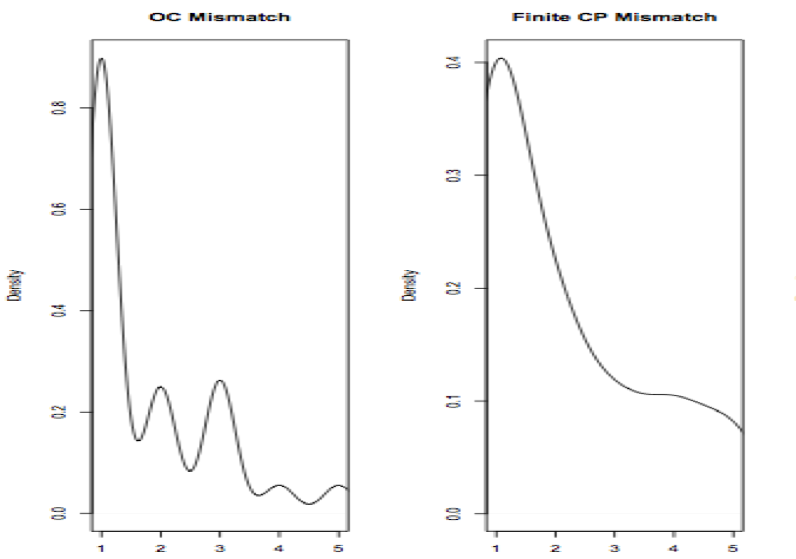
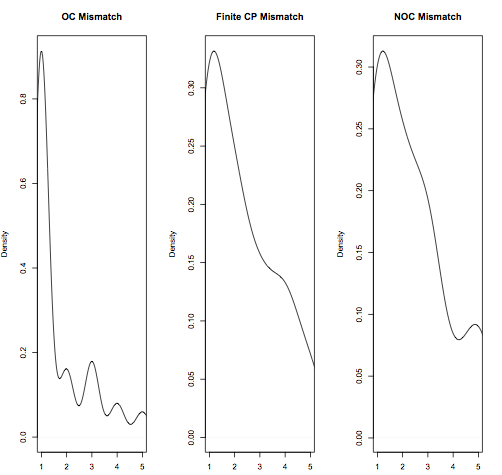
In Pires & Rothman 2010, it is argued that the majority of Brazilian Portuguese speakers do not acquire inflected infinitives via an early native acquisition process but rather via late exposure to the standard dialect at school. These authors investigated the competence of 87 upper-income Brazilian children (ages ranging from 6 to 15 years), concluding that they do not master the syntax and semantics of inflected infinitives until the age of 10–12 years, after which they display adultlike competence, with no significant individual variation. (Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013: 307)

Pires and Rothman (2010) claimed that infl infs are learned in school (based on 87 informants). However, Rothman, et al. (2013) have found inflected infinitive use in the production of 3 year olds. This shows that the matter is far from being settled. On one hand, RH are *not* arguing that infl infs are not used in BP; they seem to assume that they are used, but that use is not scientifically interesting. On the other hand, RH mention “the scarcity of inflected infinitives among native speakers [of BP]”. It is our contention that infl infs are very scientifically interesting, as long as confounds like normative grammar are weeded out. The affirmation that they are scarcely used by BP native speakers is incorrect. As Lightfoot (1991: 99-102) has noted, “there are speakers who use only the forms characterized here as innovative, and a few Brazilians use only the "standard" forms with the inflected infinitive, even in their spoken language. The bifurcation described here seems to be real…”.[[27]](#footnote-27) Lightfoot’s observations are exactly in line with what is defended here. Lightfoot does not assume that those speakers who use inflection use it because they want to sound proper (why would he?).

We believe that, if children grow up in an environment with a lot of variation (with some speakers inflecting infinitives in most contexts and some speakers not inflecting them in the same contexts), the expected result is for children to regularize infl infs use. Since variation in nonfinite inflection is in fact attested in Brazil (cf. Lightfoot 1991), it is possible that BP speakers have interpreted infl infs as controlled contexts, as argued in Modesto 2010.

*3.4 Epicene agreement and null finite subjects in Brazilian Portuguese*

Taking most postulates from Hornstein’s (1999, 2003) MTC, Rodrigues (2004) proposed a movement analysis of null finite subjects in BP as a partial pro-drop language.[[28]](#footnote-28) The same set of data had been analyzed by Modesto (2000) as an A’-binding relation between two subjects (an updated version of that analysis is given in Modesto 2008, in which the A’-binding relation is described as a topic-chain relation, similar to what happens in Chinese (see also Modesto 2007a). One of the arguments used by Rodrigues (2004) in favor of an account of finite subjects in BP in terms of Control as A-movement involved epicene nominal agreement in BP and Italian.[[29]](#footnote-29) In Boeckx and Hornstein 2006, the argument involving epicene agreement is reproduced. Modesto 2010 replied to Boeckx and Hornstein 2006, basically claiming two things: a) PC structures in BP, which can use inflected infinitives, provide evidence that control phenomena should not be treated as movement, as discussed previously, and b) BP and Italian are not as different as described by Rodrigues 2004 (the original argument). The experimental data provided by RH to counter claim (b), however, in fact confirms Modesto’s point: epicene agreement in Italian is not very different from epicene agreement in BP. In both languages, in finite contexts, epicene agreement is grammatical to every speaker, and mismatched agreement is accepted by some speakers in different degrees, as seen by RH’s results in table 2.



*Table 2 - Left: Italian finite CP mismatch contexts (from RH: p. 301)*

*Right: BP finite CP mismatch contexts (from RH: p. 300)*

To recap, Rodrigues’ and RH’s argumentation is this: epicene nouns are lexically specified as feminine, no matter what the gender of its referent. They induce feminine participle agreement in simplex clauses. According to Rodrigues 2004 and RH, epicene-feminine agreement is preserved under A-movement operations, such as raising.[[30]](#footnote-30) Rodrigues then compares Italian and BP and argues that, since the embedded subject is pronominal in Italian and a trace of movement in BP, epicene agreement should be preserved (obligatorily) in BP finite contexts, whereas in Italian epicene agreement should not be possible in the same context.[[31]](#footnote-31) She gives the paradigms in (26) in support of her analysis. Hornstein and Boeckx 2006 use the same data and analysis to argue that the MTC explains the BP facts. The data and judgments below are from Rodrigues 2004, Boeckx and Hornstein 2006 and, unexplainably also RH (example ‘a’ is in Italian, ‘b’ in BP).[[32]](#footnote-32)

(26) a. La vittima1 ha detto che *pro*1 era \*stata aggredita/

the victim-f has said that was \*been-attacked-f/

stato aggredito in strata.

been-attacked-m in street

b. A vítima1 disse que *ec* foi atacada/??atacado na rua.

the victim-f said that was attacked-f/??m in.the street

‘The victim said that he was attacked on the street.’

In a reply to Boeckx and Hornstein 2006, Modesto (2010) claimed that the ungrammaticality of epicene feminine agreement in (26a) “could not be verified with Italian speakers.”[[33]](#footnote-33) Since Boeckx and Hornstein’s 2006 argument depended on Italian being different from BP in finite CP contexts, RH had an experiment done. They applied a questionnaire with 44 sentences to be judged using a scale of 1 to 5, in which 1 corresponded to ‘not good’ and 5 to ‘perfect’, to 14 Italian speakers (and 21 BP speakers). The sentences included finite CP, OC and NOC contexts with mismatched epicene agreement, plus some distractor sentences. Unfortunately, their results show that the judgments in (26a) are in fact incorrect (see table 2 above). Epicene agreement is the preferred choice also in Italian. So we may debate on whether mismatched agreement is more grammatical in Italian than in BP (which RH end up doing), or we admit that the argument is inconclusive.

RH use statistical analysis to argue that finite embedded contexts are similar to nonfinite (OC) contexts in BP; and that finite contexts are dissimilar to OC contexts in Italian, which led them to the conclusion that finite contexts of epicene-agreement are (statistically) dissimilar in the two languages. Since RH did not statistically compare finite contexts in the two languages, the argument is clearly fallacious.[[34]](#footnote-34)

Despite their experimental results, RH do maintain their analysis; however, they are not very explicit about the fact that the argument now rests on paradigm (27), not on the one in (26): so the argument rests on the contrast between one *versus* two question marks for mismatched agreement in finite contexts.

(27) a. La vittima1 ha detto che *pro*1 era stata aggredita/ the victims-f has said that was been attacked-f/

?stato aggredito in strata.

?been-attacked-m in street

b. A vítima1 disse que *ec*1 foi atacada/??atacado na rua.

the victim-f said that was attacked-f/??m in.the street

‘The victim said that he was attacked on the street.’

Our conclusion, then, reaffirming what Modesto 2010 has claimed, is that epicene agreement is a rather weak argument, especially considering what it is an argument for: A-movement out of finite *indicative* clauses. A-movement out of indicative clauses is something rather unexpected, especially in a theory that assumes syntactic derivation by phases (as Chomsky 2001, 2008); and, in fact, A-movement out of finite indicative clauses has never been unquestionably attested in any language (except for some poorly understood phenomena examined by Ura 1994). Therefore, in order to accept A-movement out of finite indicative clauses in BP, a much stronger argument than the difference between Italian and BP w.r.t. epicene agreement would have to be presented.

**4. The distribution of inflected infinitives in BP**

Modesto 2010 claimed that nonfinite inflection was possible to occur in BP in the complement of all PC verbs, as defined by Landau 2004, in PC structures. That has been confirmed by data collected spontaneously and from the Internet (see (2) and (8c) above, for example). In (25) above, we saw nonfinite inflection occurring in an Exhaustive Control (EC) structure under a PC verb, like in (28) below. Such structures, frowned upon by normative grammar, turned out to be much more common than I expected.[[35]](#footnote-35)

(28) a. Eles tão torcendo pra ficarem sozinhos logo.

They are cheering for stay-inf-pl alone soon

‘They are hoping to be alone soon.’

b. Elas preferem não ficarem mais nesse hotel.

they preffer not stay-inf-pl more in.that hotel

‘They’d rather not stay in that hotel any longer.’

c. Os policiais admitiram terem usado armas no protesto.

the policemen admitted have-inf-pl used guns in.the protest

‘The policemen admitted using guns at the protest.’

Nonfinite inflection usually licenses overt subjects in most syntactic contexts it appears. Since inflection is used in the complement of PC verbs, overt subjects are possible in the same contexts. Although such examples may be rare (speakers prefer to use finite completive clauses), they are certainly grammatical. All sentences in (28) could have an overt subject.[[36]](#footnote-36) Complements of epistemic verbs can also license overt subjects (in pre-verbal position). Example (29b) is extracted from a corpus of spoken BP (from Gorski 2000:98). Then, w.r.t licensing overt subjects in nonfinite contexts, BP is like Turkish (Landau 2015) or the languages discussed in Sundaresan and McFadden 2009, Sundaresan 2014 and McFadden & Sundaresan 2014. The discussions in Landau 2000 and Szabolcsi 2009 also indicate that controlled subjects may not be null. All this indicates that there is no complementary distribution between PRO and overt subjects crosslinguistically (see the discussion in section 5), so the distribution in English is due to some particularity of English.

(29) a. Eu não acredito eles estarem te roubando!

I not believe they be-inf-pl cl-2sg stealing

‘I can’t believe they are stealing from you.’

b. O governo admite eles venderem os imóveis

the government admits they sell-inf-pl the homes

à pessoa...

to.the person

‘The government admits that they sell property to the person…’

The only two contexts in which nonfinite inflection does not license overt subjects are in object control structures (that use the prepositional complementizer *a* ‘to’) and in nominals (that also govern the use of *a*).

(30) a. Eu convenci as meninas a (\*os meninos) saírem.

I convinced the girls to the boys leave-inf-pl

‘I convinced the girls to leave/ \*to let the boys leave.’

b. Os americanos foram os primeiros a (\*os britânicos)

the Americans were the first to the British

pisarem na lua.

Step-inf-pl on.the moon

‘The Americans were the first to step on the moon/ \*to make the British step on the moon.’

The same contexts – object control and nominals – license overt subjects when the prepositional complementizer *de* ‘of’ is used.

(31) a. Eu convenci as meninas de (os meninos) ficarem aqui.

I convinced the girls of the boys stay-inf-pl here

‘I convinced the girls to stay here/ to let the boys stay here.’

b. O governo tem medo dos atentados atrapalharem

the government has fear of.the attacks interfere-inf-pl

a negociação.

the negotiation

‘The government is afraid that the attacks could interfere with the negotiations.’

The distribution of nonfinite inflection in BP is summarized in table 3 below. The table reads that adjunct clauses, for instance, accept nonfinite inflection (NI), subjects of such clauses may be controlled (even when the verb is inflected), may have a generic (non-control) interpretation, and may also be overt. Subject clauses, on the other hand, accept nonfinite inflection, but do not allow for controlled subjects (since there is no possible controller within its phase), and so forth. In table 3, “propositional” complements stand for those complements that may also be finite, as the complement of desiderative, factive, epistemic predicates and *verba discendi*.

Table 3: Distribution of nonfinite inflection in BP

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | NI | controlled | generic | overt |
| Nominals A | | √ | √ | \* | \* |
| Nominals De | | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Adjunct clauses | | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Subject clauses | | √ | \* | √ | √ |
| complements | modal | ?? | √ | - | - |
|  | aspectual | ?? | √ | - | - |
|  | implicative | ?? | √ | - | - |
|  | propositional | √ | √ | √ | √ |
|  | perception | √ | \* | √ | √ |
|  | causatives | √ | \* | √ | √ |
|  | interrogatives | \* | √ | \* | \* |
| Object control complements A | | √ | √ | \* | \* |
| Object control complements De | | √ | √ | √ | √ |

The ungrammaticality of inflection in the complement of EC verbs, assumed in Modesto 2010, has to be relativized, since occurrences of such kind have been found, they are just much less common (cf. Canever 2013[[37]](#footnote-37)).

(32) a. Vocês não vão gostar quando os filhos de vocês

you-pl not go like-inf when the sons of you-pl

começarem a serem mal-tratados.[[38]](#footnote-38)

start-subj-3pl to be-inf-pl bad-treated

‘You’ll not enjoy when your children start being badly treated.’

b. Eu acho que vocês se gostam e que devem

I think that you refl like and that should-pl

ficarem juntos.

Stay-inf-pl together.

‘I think that you guys like each other and that you should stay together.’

It is important to notice that, even if inflection is allowed in the complement of EC verbs, there are no PC interpretations, so (33) are all ungrammatical and never used (as predicted by Landau 2004, 2015, see section 5).

(33) a. \*O Paulo começou a serem mal-tratados.

the Paulo started to be-inf-pl bad-treated

‘Paulo started being treated badly.’

b. \*O Paulo devia ficarem juntos.

the Paulo should stay-inf-pl together.

‘Paulo should stay together.’

There are a few facts about the distribution of infl infs in BP that we would like to discuss and possibly explain, though for reasons of space, only a cursory treatment will be sketched in the next section. The first problem is to know why inflection is so rare under EC predicates; not so common in the complement of PC verbs; and very common in nominals and object-control structures. Secondly, why nonfinite inflection does not disrupt the control interpretation in BP, as predicted by Landau 2004, 2015. In third, why overt subjects with independent reference freely alternate with controlled PRO in BP and other languages. This last point shows that there might be no relation between Control and lack of (regular) Case (see Chomsky 1995), something that has been assumed since the GB era and is still very present in movement analyses (cf. Hornstein 1999), but has been challenged by Russian and Icelandic data (cf. Landau 2008; Bobaljik and Landau 2009).

**5. Making sense of the data**

The assumption that PRO is in fact a “minimal pronoun” (Kratzer 2009, Landau 2015) and that [group] is one of the features that may initiate the derivation of a pronoun, in fact explains the role of [number] in PC configurations, including those in BP. Landau assumes that a minimal pronoun is a set containing a D feature and unvalued phi-features ([D, uφ]), but all that is needed by Landau’s analysis is that the feature [person] is unvalued. Number may be interpretable and valued in PRO. In fact, if Kratzer is correct in saying that “If all number features head number projections, bound variable pronouns can never inherit number features via feature transmission on the proposed account, and this means that number features should always be interpretable on bound variable pronouns…” (p. 231), number in PRO should always be valued. Importantly, some languages, like British English and BP, assign a valued plural feature to minimal pronouns containing [group], but languages like American English assign syntactic singular to those pronouns. The [group] specification, then, though always having a semantic interpretation, will have some *syntactic* effect only in British, but not American, English. In BP, both syntactic singular and plural may be assigned to the minimal pronoun with [group], but a plural specification will be visible as agreement on the nonfinite verb for inflecting speakers. Since the minimal pronoun has an unvalued person feature (and maybe no D)[[39]](#footnote-39), the plural specification on PRO does not disrupt the syntactic processes that are involved in Control (predication in the case of EC predicates; variable binding in the case of PC predicates, or logophoric Control, following Landau 2015).

Examining languages like Greek and Turkish, Landau 2015 assumes that predicational Control is compatible with inflection and Logophoric Control is not, which is almost the opposite of what we have stated here about BP. The “problem” with the languages studied by Landau is that they all have strong agreement (pronominal agreement, or the D feature in T, see Holmberg 2005). In those languages, the use of verbal inflection is equivalent to the use of an overt referential pronoun in languages like English. Therefore, verbal inflection inside a CP complement (finite or nonfinite) in strong agreement languages excludes Control. However, in a language with a weak T (with no D feature), number agreement should be compatible even with Logophoric Control.

Recall that we assume the structure in (9) for finite complements, repeated below highlighting the phi-features introduced by C. Only number is inherited by T in BP (cf. Nunes 2008 for basically the same claim). The subject then moves to the C domain to check the person feature and may delete in PF by being in a Topic-chain.

(34) ... disse [CP que [FinP ~~ele~~ Fin[person] [TP ~~ele~~ T[number:sg] gosta...

Said that he he likes

With nonfinite complements, a very similar structure will be formed under attitudinal predicates (PC predicates). The number feature in T can be valued by PRO (with singular or plural) and that domain may be transferred to the interfaces with no unvalued feature. Logophoric Control will take place in (35) exactly as described by Landau, even if PRO has a valued number feature.

(35) ... disse [CP prox [FinP PRO Fin[person] [TP PRO T[number:pl] gostarem

said like.inf-pl

On the other hand, in predicational control, which involves EC predicates, PRO cannot have a plural specification when the controller is singular, otherwise the predication relation cannot occur (that is why inflection cannot be used to give rise to PC interpretations with EC predicates in BP). However, if the controller ends up being plural, a plural nonfinite clause should be possible (as I think it is, as mentioned in the last subsection). The fact that inflection is so rare in the complement of EC predicates is probably due to restructuring, as defended by Modesto, to appear (see also Grano 2012, Wurmbrand 2015 and Landau 2015, who argue that restructuring is universal with EC predicates). Since EC complements usually do not include a TP in BP, inflection is rarely seen in those contexts. Lack of restructuring, however, could give rise to inflected EC complements, as we have seen; and, as long as PC readings are not attempted, the sentences should be grammatical (though “unusual”).

When an overt pronoun or any DP is the subject of a nonfinite clause in BP, the pronoun (itself with valued features) will value the number feature in T and the person feature in the C system, producing a non-controlled nonfinite complement. This implies that PRO should alternate with overt DPs in BP in every context. In order to explain the two cases in which that is not true (in nominals and object-control structures headed by *a*), we have to assume that those contexts involve movement (as in Modesto 2007b, see also Sheehan, this volume). A possible derivation of an object-control structure like (36a) would be like in (36b-e). In (36b), after a nonfinite inflected TP is formed, a defective C (actually Fin) headed by the preposition *a* is merged to the structure. The object-control verb *convencer* ‘to convince’ merges with the structure in (36b), producing (36c). Since the C of the complement is defective, an overt subject is not licensed in that clause (maybe for lack of a person feature in C), so the embedded subject is moved to a theta position in the matrix VP, forming (36d). Little v is then introduced in the structure and the vP is closed off by merging the external argument, producing (36e). Movement of V to v and deletion of lower copies will then produce the word-order seen in BP.

(36) a. O Zé convenceu as meninas a saírem.

the Zé convinced the girls to leave-inf-pl

‘Zé convinced the girls to leave.’

b. [FinP a [TP as meninas saírem]]

c. [VP convencer [FinP a [TP as meninas saírem]]]

d. [VP as meninas [VP convencer [FinP a [TP as meninas saírem ]]]]

e. [vP o Zé v+convencer [VP as meninas [VP convencer [FinP a [TP as meninas saírem]]]]]

If *de* is used instead of *a*, since *de* is a non-defective C, an overt subject will be licensed in structures like (36a) (see (31a)). The same kind of derivation will apply to nominals, depending whether the nominal head selects a complement headed by *a* or *de*.

If the analysis above is on the right course, the only two facts remaining to be explained in table 3 are the lack of controlled subjects in the complement of perceptive and factive predicates; and the lack of inflection in interrogative complements. As for the latter, I have no interesting insight to offer on why a wh-phrase in C disallows inflection on a nonfinite verb in interrogative control complements, besides pointing out that the phi-features of the wh-phrase may interfere with the phi-features introduced by C and, therefore, prevent agreement between verbal inflection and the subject. However, it is unclear why the same does not happen in finite contexts. The former problem, on the other hand, seems to indicate that the structure of perceptive (and causative) complements are different from other nonfinite complements. I will assume here that the complement of perceptive verbs is headed by a nominal structure, forming a clausal DP. Such analysis purports to explain why the nonfinite subject *as meninas* in (37a) cannot be passivized and the fact that (37a) implies that the crossing was completed (something (37b) does not).

(37) a. Eu vi [DP as meninas atravessarem a rua].

I saw the girls cross.inf.pl the street

‘I saw the girls’ crossing of the street.’

b. Eu vi [CP as meninas atravessando a rua].

I saw the girls cross.ger the street

‘I saw the girls crossing the street.’

c. As meninas foram vistas \*atravessar(em)/atravessando a rua.

the girls were seen cross-inf(-pl)/cross-ger the street

‘The girls were seen crossing the street.’

Although BP data deserves a more detailed analysis, we have shown that recent theory on Control explains (and in fact predicts) a language like BP. The conclusions in Landau (2004, 2015) about the impossibility of inflection in Logophoric Control complements were prompted by the fact that most languages that present nonfinite inflection (or control into finite contexts) are also pro-drop languages. When a non-pro-drop language like BP uses nonfinite inflection, inflection may be used in PC contexts since it only marks number, leaving the person feature unvalued, producing Control.

**6. Conclusions**

In this chapter, we argued that inflected infinitives in BP are an interesting object of study, that they are used by part of the Brazilian speakers, who have intuitions about them, though normative grammar may confound them when giving judgments. The PC data in BP is very problematic for movement analysis of control, since they predict that the controller should preserve its features when moving to the matrix clause, which may not happen in PC in BP. We refuted all the claims in Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013: inflected infinitives are not “NOC configurations”, inflected infinitives are not uniformly accepted in NC contexts by BP speakers, and inflection does appear in control structures. Then we showed how to account for the data using recent linguistic theory. Though movement may be involved in the derivation of some control structures, BP data indicates that PRO (now seen as a minimal pronoun) must be part of grammar.

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2. The term “standard BP” is used here meaning the “language” taught at school in Brazil, which is similar to European Portuguese. We will not discuss “standard BP” here (and did not in Modesto 2010); we will discuss the language spoken by inflecting speakers of BP, which is also the variant with most social prestige in Brazil. I insist with the nomenclature because that may have been the source of misunderstanding by Rodrigues and Hornstein 2013. RH seem to contrast, as Pires (2006) does, “standard BP” with “colloquial BP”, but that is a mistake. On one hand, “Standard BP” is most likely not an I-language, it is not spoken by anyone in Brazil; on the other hand, the term “colloquial BP” is meaningless, because all varieties, inflecting and non-inflecting, are spoken colloquially. I will argue here that the correct division is between inflecting speakers, those who inflect verbal forms more often than do not, and non-inflecting speakers, who use inflection less often (specially in nonfinite domains). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. It is quite clear that the spoken norm in Brazil is to spell out subject-verb agreement (people who do not pronounce subject-verb agreement are discriminated against, unfortunately). This is valid for both finite and nonfinite contexts. Examples (ia, c) below are equally frowned upon (although they characterize the speech of a big portion of Brazilian speakers). Examples (ib, d) enjoy social prestige. The point here is that example (ic) could not be frowned upon if there were no alternative (no infl infs in the internalized grammar).

   (i) a. Os meninos não vai lá.

   the boys not go-prs-Ø there

   b. Os meninos não vão lá.

   the boys not go-prs-3pl there

   ‘The boys do not go there.’

   c. Eu fico contente de vocês vir aqui.

   I stay happy of you-pl come-inf-Ø here

   d. Eu fico contente de vocês virem aqui.

   I stay happy of you-pl come-inf-pl here

   ‘I like when you guys come here.’

   A comparison will make my point clearer. Third person accusative clitics (the norm in European Portuguese) are not used in BP, although they are taught at school and their use enjoys social prestige. The use of accusative clitics in Brazil is clearly below the acquisition threshold and people only acquire them through reading and schooling (a lot like what RH are claiming for infl infs). However, (iia) below is not frown upon, it is in fact the spoken norm; and (iib) is felt as bookish in most contexts. This clearly shows that infl infs are not like accusative clitics, since infl infs have not disappeared from colloquial speech as accusative clitics have.

   (ii) a. Eu quero ver ela agora.

   I want see-inf she now

   b. Eu quero vê-la agora.

   I want see-inf-cl3sg-f now

   ‘I want to see her now.’

   Even if infl infs were like accusative clitics in BP, it is not certain that they could not reveal anything “about the basic operations of the grammar”, only because they are acquired in school. I will not pursue this digression any longer here, since it seems clear that at least some BP speakers do acquire infl infs from their parents. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. For the verb *cantar* ‘to sing’, the inflected forms would be *cantar* for all singular forms, *cantar****mos*** for 1st p. pl. and *cantar****em*** for 2nd and 3rd pl. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. In (1a) the infl inf is in a factive complement clause and in (1b) it is in a subject clause. There are many other contexts in which infl infs appear and license overt subjects in BP (see section 5). Not many complement nonfinite clauses are used in spoken BP, because there is a general preference to use finite complements with propositional verbs (epistemic, factive or desiderative). Cf. Negrão 1986 and section 5. Negrão 1986 treated (1c) as a context of obligatory inflection. I will follow Rabelo 2010 in taking all contexts of nonfinite inflection as optional, because of the interaction between inflecting and non-inflecting speakers. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Besides the experiment discussed in section 3 below, I have been using the Internet as a tool to gather data. Although easily searchable Internet data is written (spoken Internet data is harder to collect), many written material on the Internet actually count as unmonitored, informal speech. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The fact that the correct analysis of BP is “a joint conclusion” and not a simple observation of the facts is a first indication that collecting BP data is not an easy task. BP data is not self-evident, as I believe English data is. Socio-historical factors contribute to that state of affairs. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Since first person subjects can generally be null in matrix clauses in BP, the null subject has to be in an interrogative or embedded clause in examples about pro-drop. This is because of a universal availability of 1st person as a discourse topic (cf. Modesto 2000, Rodrigues 2004). Even in languages like Thai (Holmberg and Phimsawat 2015), with no verbal inflection, 1st p. subjects may be null in matrix clauses. So, there is nothing special about 1st person in BP.

   (i) Cheguei/chegamos!

   Arrived-1sg/1pl

   ‘I/we are here!’

   In contexts such as (5), null subjects are not used in spoken BP (according to spoken corpora, Maria Eugenia Duarte (p. c.) and much work already cited by Brazilian linguists), though they may “sound ok, grammatical” to many speakers. Cases like (ii) have been taken to be ungrammatical with a null subject (by Figueiredo Silva 1994, Modesto 2000 and Rodrigues 2004). Holmberg, Nayudu and Sheehan 2009 claim that sentences like (ii) are grammatical in BP with a null subject. I (and most Brazilian linguists) disagree. On the reading that the null pronoun refers to the kids, the sentence is clearly ungrammatical. The reading which includes Maria in the reference of the null pronoun may be possible, but it could be an interference from written language.

   (ii) A Maria convenceu as crianças que \*(elas) deviam usar fita.

   the Maria convinced the kids that they should-3pl wear ribbon

   ‘Maria convinced the kids that they should wear a ribbon.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Note that (7b) is ungrammatical exactly because the teacher is not included in the group that will do the homework. Examples like (i) show that when the controller is included in the interpretation, a first person plural agreement is grammatical in that context, since we have a PC structure. However, examples in the first person plural in BP always need many disclaimers, because “*a gente*” a DP which takes 3rd person singular agreement competes with the first plural pronoun *nós* and sentences like (i) are not very frequent in spoken language.

   (i) O professor exigiu nos encontrarmos pessoalmente.

   the professor demanded refl meet-inf.1pl personally

   ‘The professor demanded that we met in person.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Whatever standard BP grammar is. The Brazilian state of affairs is sometimes explained as a kind of diglosia or grammars in competition (Kroch 1994). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. RH designed their experiment to show that sentences like (i) are grammatical, “although [(i)] is a clear case of noncontrol.” Modesto (2010) had claimed that such sentences are ungrammatical, not in his idiolect as RH affirm, but in BP *qua* spoken language. Assuming that there are two main spoken dialects in Brazil – the inflecting and the non-inflecting variants –, as Modesto 2010 and Lightfoot 1991 do – if (i) is ungrammatical in the inflecting variant (of which Modesto is a speaker) and infl infs are not used in the non-inflecting variants, one must conclude that such sentences are ungrammatical for every Brazilian speaker.

    (i) (\*)[O presidente Lula odiou [nos reunirmos sem ele]].

    the president Lula hated refl meet-inf-1pl without him

    ‘President Lula hated that we met without him.’

    It is difficult to get straight judgments from BP speakers of the inflecting variant about such matters, because the layperson does not differentiate the concepts of I and E-language. Sentences like (i) are taught at school as grammatical sentences. That does not make BP speakers use them in normal speech. The experiment described in section 3.1 above, if not proves Modesto’s point, at least indicates that BP speakers do judge infl infs in OC and NC contexts differently. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ungrammaticality may be much harsh a term. All Modesto 2010 has claimed is that free, NC readings are not productive anymore in BP, in fact much similarly to what RH propose for infl infs in general. This means that it is interesting to study infl infs in controlled contexts, but not very interesting to do the same with NC contexts. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Two responses had to be discarded due to technical difficulties; and one from each group was discarded since the informant did not accept any inflected infinitive as grammatical (the informant rated all sentences with 3 or less, in both contexts). So we ended up with a total of 41 interviews: 1 from AL, 1 from MA, 2 from MG, 2 from PR, 3 from RJ, 6 from RS, 26 from SP (the acronyms stand for Brazilian states). Most informants were linguistics students. Since the point of the test was to see how other linguists reacted to infl infs being used in NC contexts, no distractor sentences were presented to the informants, who probably knew what was being tested. Testing reading times will allow us to verify if lay speakers treat the two contexts equally or not, so distractor sentences will be used in that case. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Proponents of the MTC have claimed that (i) certain predicates (like *want*) are associated with a “meaning postulate” which allows overlapping reference in PC (Hornstein 2003); (ii) PC is a lexically restricted property of meet “and a handful of other verbs” (Boeckx and Hornstein 2004); (iii) PC arises from selection of embedded null comitatives (Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010). I refer the reader to Landau (2007, 2013), where all these suggestions are countered straightforwardly. The comitative analysis of BHN 2010 is examined by Sheehan (2014), who concludes that it cannot explain the English data (as well as part of the EP data) of PC. See also Pitteroff et al. 2015 for experimental evidence that German has true PC (as well as fake PC with comitatives). BP data indicates the same. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Other attempts to reconcile PC with movement analyses, not mentioned by RH, are Bowers 2008, and Barrie and Pittman 2004. Both proposals are discussed in Landau 2013. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. When PRO triggers plural agreement on the verb, it also triggers plural agreement on the secondary predicate, as seen in (i):

    (i) A vítima preferiu PRO se encontrarem bêbados / a sós.

    the victim preferred refl meet-inf-pl drunk-m-pl/alone-pl

    ‘The victim preferred for them to meet drunk/alone.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The same arguments against modality licensing PC could be given with BP examples, since modality does not license PC in BP as well:

    (i) \*O presidente pode começar a se encontrar(em) a qualquer hora.

    the chair may start to refl meet-inf(-3pl) at any time

    ‘\*The chair may start meeting at any time.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. In BP, the relevant examples would be (i).

    (i) a. \*A Maria parece estarem doentes.

    the Maria seems be-inf-pl sick-pl

    ‘Maria seems like they are sick.’

    b. \*A Maria não deve parecer estarem doentes.

    the Maria not should seem be-inf-pl sick-pl

    ‘Maria should not seem like they are sick.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. I assume here that, if inflection is weak in finite contexts in BP, it has to be weak in nonfinite contexts as well, because nonfinite verbal paradigms show even less morphological distinctions than finite paradigms in BP. Since, for the MTC, movement takes place from “porous” contexts (nonfinite, tense- or ϕ-defective finite clauses) and movement trumps pronominalization, the only expected result, *according to the MTC*, is OC in inflected nonfinite contexts in BP. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Some other verbs of the same class are *convencer* ‘to convince’; *aconselhar* ‘to suggest, guide’, *instruir* ‘instruct, tell’. It is important to note that the clausal finite complement of the verbs in this class is not an adjunct, as has been claimed (in Rodrigues 2004 and Nunes 2008; see Modesto 2011 for discussion), since it would make little sense to assume that the complement of that class of verbs is an adjunct *only* when it is finite. It is also important to notice that there is no semantic reason why the null subject in (18b) could not take the matrix object as its antecedent. The fact that that interpretation is absent in (18b) argues against a Control analysis of null finite subjects (as also discussed in Modesto 2007a). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Nonfinite 3rd person plural inflection may be used in contexts like (i) below, which are *not* NOC contexts, despite the arbitrary interpretation (see Landau 2000, 2010, Modesto 2010 for discussion).

    (i) A prefeitura já mandou cortarem essas árvores.

    the cityhall already sent cut-inf.3pl those trees

    ‘The cityhall has already sent someone to cut those trees.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Judgments are subtle here because the most common way of expressing that idea in BP would be with an object control structure like (i). Some BP speakers insist that (21b) is a grammatical sentence, but they recognize never to use such sentences in speech. The ungrammaticality of (21b) is exactly on a par with the ungrammaticality of (5c) above. Therefore, considering spoken language, only (21a, c) are fully grammatical and used by speakers.

    (i) Essa tecnologia possibilita a gente a/de melhorar(mos) o produto.

    this technology enables the people to improve.inf(.1pl) the product

    ‘This technology enables us to improve the product.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Sentence (22b) would be grammatical if the nonfinite subject was taken to include the coach and the players, characterizing PC. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Ms. Dilma Roussef is the current president of Brazil (at the time when the chapter was written) and her name is used in several examples in this chapter as a way to create pragmatically plausible examples. Ms. Cristina Kirchner is the current president of Argentina (at the time this chapter was written). [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. On every day we checked Google, phrases like *acreditam terem* ‘believe-prt-pl have-inf.pl’, which are avoided by normative grammar, appeared approximately 10% of the time phrases like *acreditam ter* ‘believe-prt-pl have-inf’ appeared. See section 5 for discussion. Sentence (i) below is the headline for a video on Youtube.

    (i) Funcionários de lojas e restaurantes que pensam estarem fazendo

    Employees of stores and restaurants that think-prt-3pl be-inf-pl doing

    um favor atendendo bem

    one favor waiting well

    ‘Stores and restaurants´ employees who think they are doing you a favor for serving you well.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. According to a few EP informants, sentence (25a) is in fact ambiguous in EP. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The innovative forms referred to by Lightfoot are nonfinite clauses with overt subjects without nonfinite inflection. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. The term “partial pro-drop language” applied to BP has created a lot of confusion: BP pro-drop is not limited to 3rd person pronouns, as in Hebrew (Borer 1989; Landau 2000, 2004). BP is best characterized as a discourse or radical pro-drop language, like Chinese (Huang, 1984; Pontes 1987; Galves 1993, Negrão and Viotti 2000; Modesto 2008). See also Barbosa 2013 for a unified account of Chinese-type and BP-type languages. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Epicene nouns (like ‘victim’ and ‘witness’) are syntactically feminine in languages like BP and Italian, though they may refer to males or females. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. In fact, epicene agreement is not obligatory in raising contexts, as implied by Rodrigues 2004 and Boeckx and Hornstein 2006. See (i).

    (i) A testemunha parece ter se contradito.

    the witness-f seems have-inf refl contradicted-m

    ‘The witness seems to have contradicted himself.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. This very strong conclusion – that epicene agreement should be impossible in Italian finite contexts – follows from Rodrigues’ assumption that pronouns always take the gender of their real world referent, rather than the gender of their binder. In other words, Rodrigues 2004, Boeckx and Hornstein 2006, and RH seem to assume that local syntactic agreement (followed by movement) is the only syntactic vehicle of agreement. Both assumptions are clearly unmotivated. As noted by Landau (2013:167): “Binding, Agree and predication are all equally capable of forcing full agreement in ϕ-features between their two relata.” Landau’s point is corroborated by the literature on agreement: Corbett (2006) and Wechsler and Zlatić (2003) show that pronouns anteceded by epicene (or “hybrid”) nouns can either show grammatical (i.e. feminine) or real world (masculine) gender. In Italian, particularly, Rodrigues’ assumption is not empirically warranted, since mismatched agreement is not obligatory in Italian finite contexts, when the referent of the epicene noun is a male (as seen by RH’s own experimental results). [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. In the sentences in (26), it is assumed that the entity referred to by *the victim* is a man. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Every Italian speaker we consulted informed me that, in finite contexts, epicene agreement was possible and, in fact, the preferred choice, though mismatched agreement was possible as well, for some speakers (not all). RH’s experimental data confirms those judgments. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. There are a number of warnings that could be given about statistical hypothesis testing, especially, considering the size of the sample used by RH (14 Italian speakers only). As noted by Moore (2003), "If the government required statistical procedures to carry warning labels like those on drugs, most inference methods would have long labels indeed." [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. Sentences like (ia) have always been considered ungrammatical in EP and BP (Negrão 1986, Quicoli 1996, Raposo 1987) and, in fact, educated speakers of BP tend not to like such sentences, because inflection is repeated and that is frowned upon by the “educated written language”. As soon as another verb intervenes, though, a complement with EC interpretation may be inflected (see (ib)) even by educated speakers. My realization that even structures like (ia) are grammatical came from spontaneous data collection (from the speech of other people and mine). Testing small sentences without context (like in (ia)) contributed to the delay in detecting the correct data.

    (i) a. ?Elas preferem esperarem.

    they prefer wait-inf-pl

    ‘They’d rather wait.’

    b. Eles preferem esperar ficarem a sós.

    They prefer wait-inf-Ø stay-inf-pl alone

    ‘They’d rather wait being left alone.’

    Lemle (1984) had already noted the possibility of nonfinite inflection in the complement of control verbs in BP. She mentions the pair in (ii) noticing that the nonfinite clause in (iia) is non-ambiguously interpreted propositionally, whereas (iib) also has the “know how to” interpretation (preferably). Lemle does not discuss infll infs much further in her book, but it was only after seeing the examples in (ii) that I started paying attention to my own use of infl infs.

    (ii) a. As italianas sabem serem elegantes. (Lemle 1984: 183)

    the Italians-f know-3pl be-inf-pl elegant

    ‘Italian women know that they are elegant.’

    b. As italianas sabem ser elegantes. (Lemle 1984: 184)

    the Italians-f know-3pl be-inf-Ø elegant

    ‘Italian women know how to be elegant.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. This is contra Modesto 2010, who judged overt subjects ungrammatical in the complement of desiderative predicates. Though the examples in Modesto 2010 do sound bad to many speakers, I have realized that structures like (i) are very common:

    (i) Eu prefiro elas ficarem lá com o pai delas mesmo.

    I preffer they stay-inf-pl there with the father of.their really

    ‘I preffer they stay there with their father.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. Working with written corpora of BP, Canever (2013) found that the frequency of inflection in the complement of aspectual verbs reaches 5.1% and only 0.3% (one instance) in the complement of modal verbs. Implicative and PC complements were not surveyed. In comparison, adjunct nonfinite clauses (final, causal and temporal) are inflected in 75% of instances; adjectival complements got 89,4% and nominal complements inflect 94.5% of the time. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Example from Fiéis and Madeira 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Though I have no space here to discuss these matters with any depth, it is unclear if minimal pronouns should have a D feature or acquire them from their binder (as also proposed by Livitz 2014). [↑](#footnote-ref-39)