

# THE FINAL STRONGHOLD OF THE INFINITIVE: (SILENT) MODALS IN ROMANIAN AND SOUTHERN ITALY

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**Abstract.** Romanian and the Romance and Greek varieties of the extreme south of Italy show various degrees of diachronic and diatopic microvariation in the loss and retreat of the infinitive, whilst displaying at the same time a high degree of overall structural uniformity in their parallel preservation of the (bare) infinitive in: (1) restructuring contexts; (2) infinitival relatives; and (3) negative imperatives. On the surface, there is nothing *a priori* to suggest that these three contexts should be connected in any way. Yet the discussion below demonstrates how these three uses can be reduced to a single structural explanation which views the infinitive as a reduced clausal constituent (*viz.* *v*-VP) generated in a monoclausal structure selected in all cases by a modal, temporal or aspectual auxiliary which is phonologically overt in (1), but oscillates between overt and covert phonological realizations in (2) and (3) in accordance with crosslinguistic variation. The result is a unified analysis which allows us to capture the distribution of (bare) infinitival complementation in all the relevant varieties quite simply in terms of a so-called restructuring configuration in line with Hill's (2013a,b, 2017) intuition that the Romanian (and more generally Balkan) bare infinitive instantiates a monoclausal structure selected by a T-related auxiliary.

**Keywords:** Romanian, Italo-Greek, Calabrian, Salentino, infinitive, auxiliary, restructuring.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The extension of finite subjunctive complementation to the detriment of infinitival complementation represents one of the most notable linguistic phenomena of the so-called Balkan *Sprachbund* (cf. Joseph 1983), leading to the complete loss of the infinitive in some varieties such as Greek, Tosk Albanian and Macedonian and to a very restricted use in others such as Gheg Albanian, Bulgarian and Serbian (Mišeska Tomić 2004: 31). Romanian (Jordan 2009; Hill 2013b, 2017) together with the Romance and native Greek dialects of the extreme south of Italy (Ledgeway 2013) belong to this latter group, in that they show a reduced, albeit productive, distribution of the infinitive (for overview and bibliography, see Ledgeway 2016: 1023–27). Thus, in contrast to Aromanian and Megleno-

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Romanian and to all Greek dialects, with the notable exception of Pontic (Mackridge 1987; Sitaridou 2014), (bare) infinitival complementation remains a core property of the grammars of these three varieties in the structural contexts in (1)–(3) exemplified here from Romanian:<sup>2</sup>

- (1) Nu poți **bea**. (V<sub>FUNCTIONAL</sub> + infinitive: restructuring)  
 NEG can.2SG drink.INF  
 ‘You cannot drink.’
- (2) N- ai ce **bea**. (wh<sub>RELATIVE</sub> + infinitive: infinitival relative)  
 NEG have.2SG what drink.INF  
 ‘You’ve got nothing to drink.’
- (3) Nu **bea!** (NEG + infinitive: 2SG negative imperative)  
 NEG drink.INF  
 ‘Don’t drink!’

Superficially, it is difficult to see what, if anything, the three contexts in (1)–(3) have in common from a structural perspective that might explain the otherwise exceptional survival of infinitival complementation in precisely these three, and only these three, contexts. In particular, while (1) is clearly an example of the infinitive in a complement position selected by a functional predicate, the validity of this conclusion for the distribution of the infinitives in (2)–(3) is less obvious, inasmuch as the infinitive is neither selected by the *wh*-item nor by the negator. Nonetheless, the infinitive exceptionally survives in all three contexts across all three varieties (on the negative imperative in Italo-Greek, see however §4). This suggests that the observed distribution of the (bare) infinitive can hardly be accidental but, rather, reflects some deeper structural parallelism. Indeed, in what follows I will suggest a unified analysis of the three contexts in (1)–(3) which builds on and extends the analysis of structures such as (1) to the contexts in (2)–(3), highlighting at the same time how the latter can and should also be analysed as core cases of infinitival complementation based on Hill’s (2013a,b, 2017) intuition that the Romanian (and more generally Balkan) bare infinitive instantiates a monoclausal structure selected by a T-related auxiliary.

## 2. RESTRUCTURING INFINITIVALS

As noted above, within the languages of the so-called Balkan *Sprachbund* the infinitive is not by any means universally defunct, but exceptionally survives to the present day in Romanian and the extreme south of Italy, where it is still employed, to varying degrees and often alongside competing finite subjunctive complements, in conjunction with a class of high frequency restructuring predicates (Cinque 2004, 2006). However, as a full clausal irrealis complement (viz. CP), the infinitive is little used in Romanian (see Hill 2013b, 2017; Hill and Alboiu 2016: ch.7) and in the extreme south of Italy (Calabria: south of Nicastro-Catanzaro-Crotone; northeastern Sicily: province of Messina; Salento: south of

<sup>2</sup> I do not discuss here the distribution of the *a*-infinitive in non-selected positions which also represents a productive option for the infinitive in modern Romanian (Pană Dindelegan 2013: 216–17, 221–22), but not in the extreme south of Italy.

Taranto-Ostuni), in the latter case undoubtedly due to historical and in some places ongoing contact with the indigenous Greek dialects of *Magna Graecia* which show a similar distribution (Ledgeway 2013; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri in prep.: ch. 6). Rather, irrealis complements are predominantly realized as finite clauses variously introduced by (SI ‘if’ >) D-Ro. *să*, ((QUO)MODO ‘how’ >) SCal., NWSic. *mu/ma/mi*, (QUO(MODO) ‘how’ >) Sal. *cu*, and ItGr. (*hína* ‘in order that, so that’ >) *na*. Consequently, the distribution of the infinitive as a complement in these varieties is predominantly limited to a reduced clausal type (viz. *v*-VP) selected by a number of functional predicates in restructuring contexts (Hill 2011: 39, 2013b: 14; Ledgeway 2012 [2013], 2015, 2016: 1024; Nicolae 2015; Pană Dindelegan 2013: 216–20; Nedelcu and Paraschivi 2017: 73), although even here the infinitive is also frequently rivalled by a finite subjunctive complement. For example, in the normal spoken registers of standard Romanian, the bare infinitive is today principally found as the complement of the future and conditional auxiliaries (4), and the modal CAN (Alboiu and Motapanyane 2000: 19–20; Hill 2013a), alongside rival *să*-clauses (5), but is excluded after other functional predicates such as MUST (6). However, in more formal (written) styles and registers – and probably under the influence of the models of French and Italian (Pană Dindelegan 2013: 221) –, the *a*-infinitive is found in a greater range of contexts (cf. Alboiu and Hill 2000: 39) including, for example, as a more formal competitor to a *să*-clause after functional predicates such as the aspectual and conative predicates BEGIN and TRY (7).

- (4) Va / Ar [v-VP **dansa.**] (Ro.)  
 AUX.FUT.3SG AUX.COND.3SG dance.INF  
 ‘She will/would dance.’
- (5) Poate [v-VP **dansa**] / [CP **să** **danseze.**] (Ro.)  
 can.3SG dance.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> dance.SBJV.3  
 ‘She can dance.’
- (6) Are \*[v-VP **dansa**] / [CP **să** **danseze.**] (Ro.)  
 must.3SG dance.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> dance.SBJV.3  
 ‘She must/will dance.’
- (7) Începe / Încearcă [CP **a** **dansa**] / [CP **să** **danseze.**] (Ro.)  
 begin.3SG try.3SG A dance.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> dance.SBJV.3  
 ‘She begins to dance.’

The historical process of infinitive-subjunctive replacement (for which see Hill 2013b, 2017) is still far from complete today, but depends on various factors (Pană Dindelegan 2013: 221). Register is but one such factor which is further correlated with the bare vs *a*-infinitive structural distinction (Hill and Alboiu 2016: 199), in that the greater use of the infinitive in formal registers involves exclusively the *a*-infinitive (cf. 7), which instantiates a full CP clausal constituent (Hill 2013b: 14). This, in turn, explains the availability of the subjunctive complement in (5) which replaces an earlier *a*-infinitive complement after CAN attested until the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Hill 2013a,b, 2017; Nedelcu 2016: 235), but also the survival of the bare infinitive in (5) which, as a *v*-VP constituent, was not a target of subjunctive replacement (Hill 2011: 39). Indeed, in earlier varieties of Romanian a (bare) (long/short) infinitival complement was also licensed by other functional predicates such as WANT, MUST, KNOW, BEGIN, TRY and DARE (Pană Dindelegan 2013: 220; Nedelcu 2016: 235). Although such infinitival structures have not survived into the modern standard

language, they continue to the present day, including after various verbs of movement (Vulpe 1963: 135), in many conservative north(west)ern regional varieties in northern Crişana, northern Transylvania and Maramureş (8)–(9), contrasting with the innovative south(east)ern regional varieties of Muntenia, Dobrogea, southern Moldova and, to a lesser degree, Oltenia which show a marked preference for subjunctive complements with very little, if any, use of the infinitive (Vulpe 1963; Farcaş 2006).

- (8) Mustaţa a început **a-i creşte.** (NRo.)  
 moustache.DEF have.3SG begin.PTCP A=him.DAT grow.INF  
 ‘His moustache has begun to grow.’
- (9) Mergem **a cosi.** (NRo.)  
 go.1PL A reap.INF  
 ‘We’re going to harvest [the crops].’

The Romance and Greek varieties of the extreme south of Italy show a broadly similar picture with a progressive diachronic retreat of the infinitive, albeit characterized by considerable diatopic and idiolectal variation (for an overview, see Manzini and Savoia 2005, II: §3.11; Ledgeway 2013: 19–206; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri in prep.: ch. 6). In particular, the infinitive after CAN represents once again an option in all varieties (10)–(13), although not the sole option in Calabrian (10) or in the Greek of Calabria (viz. Greko, 11) or Salento (viz. Griko, 13) where a subjunctive complement is also available (Rohlf 1977: 191; Tommasi 1998: 185; Cacciola 2011: 92–93; Morabito 2011: 94–95; De Angelis 2013).

- (10) Lu tu padre non pote **hatigare/ ’u hatiga.** (SCal.)  
 the your father NEG can.3SG work.INF COMP<sub>SBIV</sub> work.3SG  
 ‘Your father cannot work.’
- (11) En sonno **ipe** tipote / sònise **na pàise.** (Greko)  
 NEG can.1SG say.INF nothing can.2SG COMP<sub>SBIV</sub> go.2SG  
 ‘I can’t say anything / You can go.’
- (12) Pozzu **ccumpagnare** Lucia. (Sal.)  
 can.1SG accompany.INF Lucia  
 ‘I can accompany Lucia.’
- (13) ’E sozo **erti** / ’En isoze makà **na pratisi.** (Griko)  
 NEG can.1SG come.INF NEG can.PST.3SG NEG COMP<sub>SBIV</sub> walk.3SG  
 ‘I cannot come / She couldn’t even walk.’

On a par with the variation in the distribution of the infinitive vs subjunctive observed above for non-standard varieties of Romanian in terms of a northwestern vs southeastern split, similar synchronic patterns of variation are found in the extreme south of Italy. One of the most obvious of these concerns the differing behaviour of aspectual predicates and the modal MUST, which in Italo-Greek both invariably align with finite complementation (14a–b), while in Calabrese and Salentino (15a–c) they either freely alternate between infinitival and finite complementation (aspectuals) or favour infinitival complementation (MUST).

- (14) a. Émbenne **na grázzi** / Ensìgnase **na prafisi**. (Greko/Griko)  
 enter.PST.3SG COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> write.3SG begin.PST.3SG COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> walk.3SG  
 ‘She began to write / to walk.’  
 b. Έχο **na pío** / T’ ixa **na kamo?** (Greko/Griko)  
 have.1SG COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> drink.1SG what have.PST.1SG COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> do.1SG  
 ‘I must drink / What was I supposed to do?’
- (15) a. kumintfa **a kiovire / u kjovi**. (Polistena, Cal.)  
 begin.3SG to rain.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> rain.3SG  
 ‘It begins to rain.’  
 b. Lu Giuseppe non spiccia **di fumare / cu fuma**. (Sal.)  
 the Giuseppe NEG finish.3SG of smoke.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> smoke.3SG  
 ‘Giuseppe won’t stop smoking.’  
 c. Nuju ndavi **a parlari / M’ ha’ scusari**. (S Cal./Sal.)  
 nobody have.3SG to speak.INF me= have.2SG excuse.INF  
 ‘Nobody must speak / You must apologize to me.’

Overall the biggest difference, however, concerns the extent of the spread of finite complementation which has progressed to different degrees in the four dialect groups, reaching its height in Griko where it is now obligatory with all functional predicates other than CAN (cf. 13), followed by Greko where, broadly speaking, it has entirely replaced the infinitive after all predicates except CAN, HEAR and, to a lesser extent, KNOW and MAKE, and finally to a much lesser extent in Calabrese and Salentino. In the latter, finite complementation today only proves obligatory with a handful of functional predicates (viz. (WANT >) COME > GO), but otherwise alternates, in decreasing order of frequency, with the infinitive after LET, MAKE, KNOW, MUST, HEAR and CAN.

In summary, we have seen that one of the last bastions of infinitival complementation in both Romanian and the extreme south of Italy is in restructuring contexts following functional predicates, typically future and conditional auxiliaries (Romanian only) and CAN, but also, in accordance with diachronic and diatopic variation, various other modal and aspectual predicates. Following Hill (2013a,b, 2017), I take such configurations to instantiate a monoclausal structure in which the infinitive represents a reduced  $v$ -VP complement selected by a temporal, modal or aspectual auxiliary first-merged in the T-domain, as informally sketched in (16):

- (16) [TP V<sub>FUNCTIONAL</sub> ... [<sub>v</sub>-VP V<sub>INF</sub>]]

### 3. INFINITIVAL RELATIVES

I employ here the traditional term ‘infinitival relative’ (cf. also Gheorghe 2011) to refer to structures such as (2) in which the infinitive is preceded by a wh-relative which is itself the complement of an existential predicate, typically HAVE or BE, or, less frequently, a so-called dynamic predicate denoting coming into being or view, or availability, e.g., EMERGE, CHOOSE, LOOK FOR, FIND, DISCOVER, SEND, OBTAIN (Grosu 2004: 406; Šimik 2011: §2.2; Caponigro 2021: 11). In the literature there is considerable debate about the syntactico-semantic analysis of these structures, variously termed non-indicative wh-clauses (Izvorski 1998), irrealis free relatives (Grosu 1994; Grosu and Landman 1998), existential

free relatives (Caponigro 2003, 2004, 2021; Mantenuto and Caponigro 2020), modal existential constructions (Grosu 2004, 2013; Šimík 2008, 2011, 2013; Cinque 2020: 105–106), kind-defining headless relatives (Benincà and Cinque 2014: §2.2), and indefinite free relatives (Kotek and Erlewine 2016: §3.2), the details of which need not detain us here. Suffice it to note for our purposes that infinitival relatives can broadly be described as existentials in which the fronted *wh*-phrase has the semantic force of a narrow-scope indefinite (Caponigro 2004: 46, 2021: 11; Grosu 2004: 406) and the infinitive is marked by the inclusion of a possibility/ability modal operator (Izvorksi 1998: 160; Grosu 2004: 402; Šimík 2008: 127), as witnessed by the use of modal CAN in the paraphrase of (2), namely, *You have nothing that you can drink*, as well as the optional realization of CAN before the infinitive in such examples as Italian *non ho dove (posso) lavorare* ‘NEG have.1SG where (can.1SG) work.INF (= I’ve nowhere to work)’. Caponigro (2003: 99), by contrast, argues that the modal flavour of these constructions is ambiguous between possibility/availability and necessity readings (cf. also Cinque 2020: 197), with the result that an example such as Italian *Flavio ha con chi parlare* can be paraphrased both as ‘Flavio has somebody he can talk to’ (cf. *F. ha con chi può parlare*) and as ‘Flavio has somebody he must/has to talk to’ (cf. *F. ha con chi deve parlare*).

As noted by many (Grosu 2004: 409; Šimík 2011: §2.2.6, 2013: 1169; Caponigro 2021: 11–12, 3–36), this semantic modal operator is typically made visible by irrealis marking on the verb, variously encoded by infinitival or subjunctive morphology in accordance with crosslinguistic variation. Both options are found in Romanian (17; Sandfeld and Olsen 1936: 254–55; Gheorghe 2011, 2016: 488–89; Grosu 2013: 657–62; Pană Dindelegan 2013: 218–19; Nedelcu 2016: 247) and in the extreme south of Italy (18–19; Rohlfs 1969: 105, 1977: 191; Cacciola 2011: 92–94, 103; Morabito 2011: 69).

- (17) N-am cu cine vorbi / să vorbesc. (Ro.)  
 NEG=have.1SG with who speak.INF COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> speak.1SG  
 ‘I’ve got nobody to talk with.’
- (18) Nd’haju a cchi ffari! / Non ndaiu i chi mmi campu (SCal.)  
 have.1SG to what do.INF NEG have.1SG of what COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> live.1SG  
 ‘I’ve got things to do / I don’t have anything to live on.’
- (19) En échi pu pái / pu na stasi. (Griko)  
 NEG have.3SG where go.INF where COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> stay.3SG  
 ‘She hasn’t got anywhere to go / to stay.’

Also probably to be included here are indirect interrogative structures like those in (20)–(22) which again fluctuate between the infinitive – albeit at best marginal in modern standard Romanian (Sandfeld and Olsen 1936: 255, 355; Grosu 2004: 421) and in Italo-Greek (just 2 examples in a corpus of some 6000 infinitival tokens) – and the subjunctive.

- (20) Nu mai știau ce face / nu știau ce să  
 NEG= more know.PST.3PL what do.INF NEG know.3PL what COMP<sub>SBJV</sub>  
 crează (19-c. Ro., Ispirescu 1907: 325/42)  
 believe.SBJV.3PL  
 ‘They no longer knew what to do / They don’t know what to believe.’
- (21) Non sapìa chi cosa fari! / Non sapianu chi mi fannu. (SCal.)  
 NEG know.PST.3SG what do.INF NEG know.PST.3PL what COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> do.3PL  
 ‘She didn’t know what to do / They didn’t know what to do.’

- (22) En izzèrane ti **cài** / En ìssere pu **na stasi** (Griko)  
 NEG know.PST.3PL what do.INF NEG know.PST.3SG where COMP<sub>SBIV</sub> stay.3SG  
 ‘They didn’t know what to do / She didn’t know where to stay.’

Although there is no consensus in the literature regarding whether indirect interrogatives can be conflated with relative infinitives (Izvorksi 1998) or whether they should be kept distinct (Grosu 2004; 2013; Benincà 2012), there is nonetheless wide recognition of some degree of formal and semantic overlap between the two (Caponigro 2003: 101, 2021: 22; Grosu 2004: 419–23, 2013: 657; Gheorghe 2011: 397–98). Indeed, this is partially confirmed by my own data which exhibit the use of the infinitive alongside the subjunctive in both structures. Furthermore, on a par with infinitival relatives, indirect interrogatives also license a modal operator, typically linked to deontic necessity, hence the use of MUST/SHOULD in paraphrases of (20) (viz. *They no longer knew/know what they **should** do/believe*), although the non-deontic possibility/availability reading is not entirely ruled out either (i.e., ...*what they **could** do/believe*).

Drawing these facts together, I would like to propose that the observed possibility (and necessity) reading of infinitival relatives (and indirect interrogatives) can be interpreted in structural terms as evidence for the presence of a null modal auxiliary (henceforth represented as AUX), in most cases a phonologically unrealized variant of CAN but also MUST in some instances as we have just seen, which selects for an infinitival complement along the lines of (23). Further evidence for this view comes from the observation (cf. Manzini and Savoia 2005, I: 662) that in some dialects of southern Italy the modal auxiliary which is typically null can (24a) or must (24b) be overtly spelt out.

- (23) ...[CP wh- [TP AUX<sub>CAN/(MUST)</sub> ... [V-VP V<sub>INF</sub>]]]  
 (24) a. Nu ssippe cce (**ia**) **dicere**. (Lecce, Sal.)  
 NEG know.PST.3SG what must.PST.3SG say.INF  
 ‘She didn’t know what (she was supposed) to say.’  
 b. Nu sacciu du **aggiu scire**. (Taviano, Sal.)  
 NEG know.1SG where must.1SG go.INF  
 ‘I don’t know where (I have) to go.’

This analysis based on the availability of null modal auxiliaries in all three varieties not only provides us with a unified analysis of infinitival complements to restructuring predicates and in infinitival relatives, reducing the latter to a variant of the former, albeit involving a silent restructuring predicate, but it also explains the observed difference in the distribution of the infinitive in indirect interrogatives. While in the Calabrian and Salentino dialects of southern Italy the infinitive in indirect interrogatives proves productive (21), we noted that in modern Romanian and in Italo-Greek its use in the same contexts proves, at best, marginal today (20, 22). This difference follows from our previous observation (cf. §2) regarding the distribution of the infinitive after MUST: while the Romance dialects of southern Italy favour infinitival complementation following MUST (15c), and by implication also after silent MUST in indirect interrogatives (21), standard Romanian and Italo-Greek today employ a finite subjunctive complement after MUST (6, 14b), hence their general avoidance of the infinitive in indirect interrogatives after silent MUST. Those rare examples of the infinitive such as (20, 22) variously represent therefore residues of a former

stage of the languages when MUST could still license an infinitival complement (cf. Ledgeway 2013: 197–200), a regional (northern) usage in which the former infinitival option after MUST survives (cf. Vulpe 1963: 128, 142), or a reading in which the modal operator is lexicalized by a silent version of CAN rather than MUST.<sup>3</sup>

#### 4. NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE

The final context in which the infinitive continues to be productively used in Romanian (cf. Pîrvulescu and Roberge 2000: 297, 302–03; Manea 2013: 561; Hill and Alboiu 2016: 96, 109; Maiden et al. 2021: 305) and the Romance dialects of southern Italy (Manzini and Savoia 2005,III: 388–90; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri 2021) is in the 2SG negative imperative (3),<sup>4</sup> a usage also found in old French, Romansh (Rohlf's 1968: 356; Tekavčić 1972: 417) and widely across Italo-Romance varieties (Rohlf's 1968: 356; Parry 2013: §3.6; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri 2021: §4). This suppletive use of the infinitive in imperative functions in Romanian (25) and the Romance dialects of Calabria (26) and Salento (27) alternates once again with a finite subjunctive structure (Rohlf's 1968: 355–56; Ledgeway 1998: 47–48; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri 2021: §4), although the illocutionary force of the latter, at least in Romanian (Zafiu 2013: 45–46, 54–55; Gheorghie 2013: 470; Vasilescu 2013: 547–48), often licenses a less direct hortative reading.

- (25) Nu **aduce** banii! / **Să** nu **aduci** banii! (Ro.)  
 NEG bring.INF money.DEF.PL COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> NEG bring.2SG money.DEF.PL  
 ‘Don’t bring any money!’
- (26) Non **jiri** a la casa! / **Nommu** **cadi!** (SCal.)  
 NEG go.INF to the house NEG.COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> fall.2SG  
 ‘Don’t go home! / Don’t fall!’
- (27) Nu **ppensare** a iḍḍi! / **Cu** nno **cati!** (Sal.)  
 NEG think.INF to them COMP<sub>SBJV</sub> NEG fall.2SG  
 ‘Don’t think about them! / Don’t fall!’

Exceptionally, in both Romanian and Calabrian this infinitival pattern has also spread beyond the 2SG. In the case of Romanian, the infinitival pattern was extended to the 2PL from as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the long form of the infinitive in *-re* which was used to mark the 2SG negative imperative, e.g. *nu aducere!* ‘NEG bring.INF’ (alongside the short form of the infinitive *nu aduce!*) was analogically extended to the plural through adjunction of the distinctive 2PL marker *-ți* to the long infinitival form, viz. *nu aducere-ți!* > *nu aducereți!* (see Hill and Alboiu 2016: 96; Manea 2016: 291–92; Maiden et al. 2021: 306). Although this formation does not survive into the modern standard language,

<sup>3</sup> The analysis developed here is also compatible with Šimík’s (2008, 2013) idea that the embedding matrix predicates (e.g., existential HAVE/BE) are restructuring predicates inserted in the T-domain which select for *v*-VP infinitival constituent.

<sup>4</sup> Italo-Greek lacks this use of the infinitive (Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri 2021: §3), not because it has lost it, but because the infinitive has never been used in this context in Italo-Greek (or any other variety of Greek for that matter), in that this use of the infinitive in the negative imperative represents a late Latin development (Parry 2013: 100).



following a gradual decline during the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century which started in Muntenian and Moldovan texts, it continues as a regionalism today in much of Banat, western Oltenia and Crişana, witness Oltenian forms such as *nu cîntăreţ/cîntăriţ/cîntărăţ!* ‘NEG sing.INF.2PL’ (cf. 2SG *nu cîntă*), *nu scriereţ/scriereţ/scriăreţ/scrireţ/scriărăţ/scrijărăţ!* ‘NEG write.INF.2PL’ (cf. 2SG *nu scri(j)e/scri(j)ě/scri(j)ă/scri!*), and *nu cosîriţ/cosîreţ/cosîărăţ!* ‘NEG reap.INF.2PL’ (cf. 2SG *nu costi*).<sup>5</sup> This development is paralleled in part by the analogical extension observed in various dialects of southern Calabria (Loporcaro 1995; Ledgeway, Schifano and Silvestri 2021), where the suppletive use of the infinitive in the negative 2SG imperative (e.g., Gallicianò *non gridari!* ‘NEG shout.INF’) is extended to the plural through optional adjunction of the infinitival suffix *-ri* to the 2PL form (syncretic with the present): *non gridati!* ‘NEG shout.2PL’ > *non gridatiri!* ‘NEG shout.2PL.INF’. In other dialects such as those spoken in Cardeto and Mossorofa, by contrast, the infinitival suffix is also optionally extended to the 1PL negative imperative such that, alongside 2SG *non parrari!* ‘NEG speak.INF’ and 2PL *non parrari(ri)!* ‘NEG speak.2PL(INF)’, we also find 1PL *non parramu(ri)!* ‘NEG speak.1PL(INF)’. Assuming that all these analogical suppletive forms of the negative imperative constitute genuine examples of the infinitive, albeit augmented by (optional) marking for person and number, a species of inflected infinitive (Vincent 1996, 1998; Ledgeway 2012: 271–73), then the distribution of the infinitive in these examples and those in (25)–(27) fall under the same licensing requirements, to which we now turn.

In order to understand the otherwise exceptional distribution of the infinitive in the negative imperative, I propose on the strength of what we have already seen for restructuring predicates (§2) and infinitival relatives (§3) that the use of the infinitive in the negative imperative is not a genuine case of suppletion but, rather, represents once again a core case of reduced infinitival complementation selected by a functional predicate in a restructuring context. In particular, I propose the following underlying structures for positive (28b) and negative (28c) imperatival clauses.

- (28) a. [CP [TP (NEG) (V<sub>FUNCTIONAL</sub>) ... [v-VP V ]]] (declarative)  
 b. [CP V<sub>IMP</sub> [v-VP V<sub>IMP</sub> ]]] (positive imperative)  
 c. [CP [TP NEG (AUX) ... [v-VP V<sub>INF</sub> ]]] (negative imperative)

I adopt the idea widespread in the literature (Rivero 1994a, b; Graffi 1996; Zanuttini 1997; Manzini and Savoia 2005: 388) that imperatival clauses display a reduced functional structure (cf. also the assumption in traditional grammar that they do not count as complete sentences). In particular, while declaratives are standardly argued to project a full array of functional projections associated with the T-domain such as negation and modal, temporal and aspectual auxiliaries (28a), positive imperatival clauses (28b) are assumed to lack this same series of functional projections. Not by chance, the absence of T-related functional projections in (2SG) imperatival clauses is correlated with the frequent traditional observation that one of the most notable characteristics of the imperative is its absence of any inflexional marking or, at the very least, very minimal inflexional marking in accordance with a widespread crosslinguistic tendency (Bybee 1985: 173; Floricic 2008: 10; Ledgeway 2014). Theoretically, we can interpret the observed inflexional impoverishment of the

<sup>5</sup> I thank Martin Maiden for kindly providing me with these data.

imperative in terms of the mechanisms of feature transmission and inheritance (Chomsky 2007, 2008): whereas phi-features that originate on the phase head, viz.  $C^\circ$ , are usually ‘transferred’ down to  $T^\circ$  in root declaratives, in the absence of  $T^\circ$  and related functional structure in imperatives these same features fail to be passed down – or, to borrow Ouali’s (2008) terminology are ‘kept’ – such that the imperatival verb is forced to raise to  $C^\circ$  to license its inflexional features (Rivero 1994a, b; Rivero and Terzi 1995; Manzini and Savoia 2005, III: 388). As a consequence, any object clitics are stranded *in situ* within the  $v$ -VP complex from where they subsequently encliticize, not syntactically, but phonologically at PF to the imperatival verb now raised to  $C^\circ$ .

In negative imperatives (28c), by contrast, the presence of the sentential negator instantiates a functional head whose presence in the clause necessarily forces the projection of the T-domain, otherwise absent in positive imperatives (cf. 28b). As a consequence, negative imperatival clauses are therefore predicted to be inflexionally richer than affirmative imperatival clauses since they automatically come with T-related functional positions to host the inflected verb and any accompanying clitics under proclisis (cf. Ledgeway 2020: 391–93). Indeed, direct proof of this analysis can be seen in numerous Italian dialects where, in contrast to the positive imperative, the  $T^\circ$  head is exceptionally lexicalized in the negative imperative through an overt auxiliary (presumably with modal force) selecting an infinitival complement (Zanuttini 1994, 1997: 150–54; Manzini and Savoia 2005, III: §7.2; Parry 2013: 102, 105; Ledgeway 2020).<sup>6</sup> As illustrated in the following representative examples taken from Manzini and Savoia’s (2005, III: 453–61) wide-ranging survey, this auxiliary may in accordance with dialect variation surface as a reflex of STARE ‘stand’ (29) or, in the dialects of southern Italy, also as a reflex of IRE ‘go’ (30) or ESSE(\*RE) ‘be’ (31) which, in contrast to reflexes of STAND, select for a gerund rather than an infinitival complement.

- (29) [TP ni **stɛ/stum/stɛ** [<sub>v-VP</sub> l(e) ʔa'mɛ]] (Sassello, province of Savona)  
 NEG STAND.2SG/1PL/2PL him=call.INF
- (30) [TP nɔ lu **ʃi/ʃəmɔ/ʃətɔ** [<sub>v-VP</sub> ca'mannɔ]] (Acerenza, Potenza)  
 NEG him=GO.2SG/1PL/2PL call.GER
- (31) [TP nɔ ɔ **si/simmɔ/sɛitɔ** [<sub>v-VP</sub> ca'mannɔ]] (Minervino Murge, Barletta)  
 NEG him=BE.2SG/1PL/2PL call.GER
- ‘Don’t call him /Let’s not call him/Don’t call him!’

These examples are reminiscent of the cases of overt auxiliary realization seen in (24a-b) for infinitival relatives and indirect interrogatives which alternate with a null variant of the same modal auxiliary in (23). It is logical therefore to assume that so-called suppletive cases of the simple infinitive employed in the negative imperative such as (25)–(27), as well as the cases of the inflected infinitive reviewed above for old and

<sup>6</sup> Cf. also the use of the negative (prohibitive) auxiliary NOLO ‘wish not’ followed by the infinitive in Latin (Pinkster 1990: 201, 2015: 352–53, 683; Parry 2013: 100–01). For a general overview of such auxiliary structures in negative imperatives in the languages of Europe and the Mediterranean, see Willis, Lucas and Breitbarth (2013: 44–47).

regional Romanian and southern Calabrian, instantiate covert examples of the structures in (29)–(31) hosting a silent modal auxiliary (cf. Kayne 1992; Zanuttini 1994, 1997: 118–26) along the lines of the structural representations in (32).

- (32) a. [TP NEG AUX<sub>STAND/(GO/BE)</sub> ... [v-VP V<sub>INF/(GER)</sub>]]  
 b. [TP NEG STAND/(GO/BE) ... [v-VP V<sub>INF/(GER)</sub>]]

This analysis consequently provides an elegant solution to the otherwise exceptional distribution of the infinitive in the negative imperative, reducing it to another case of infinitival complementation embedded under a restructuring predicate in line with the other cases examined in §2–3 (cf. 16, 23).

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that Romanian and the Romance and Greek varieties of the extreme south of Italy show various degrees of diachronic and diatopic microvariation in the loss and retreat of the infinitive, but at the same time display a high degree of overall structural uniformity in their parallel preservation of the (bare) infinitive in restructuring contexts (cf. 1), infinitival relatives (and, albeit with some internal variation, indirect interrogatives; cf. 2) and the negative imperative (cf. 3). On the surface, there is nothing *a priori* to suggest that these three contexts should be connected in any way. Yet the discussion above has demonstrated how these three uses can be reduced to a single structural explanation which views the infinitive as a reduced clausal constituent (viz. v-VP) generated in a monoclausal structure selected in all cases by a modal, temporal or aspectual auxiliary which is phonologically overt in the first case (33a), but oscillates between overt and covert phonological realizations in the second (33b) and third (33c) cases in accordance with crosslinguistic variation. The result is a unified analysis which allows us to capture the distribution of (bare) infinitival complementation in all the relevant varieties quite simply in terms of a so-called restructuring configuration in line with Hill's (2013a,b, 2017) intuition that the Romanian (and more generally Balkan) bare infinitive instantiates a monoclausal structure selected by a T-related auxiliary. We conclude with the observation that evidence from infinitival distribution provides further support for the view that UG provides for the possibility that functional categories can be silent, a view I have developed elsewhere in relation to Latin functional projections (Ledgeway 2012) and Romance complementizers (Ledgeway 2012 [2013], 2015), but which does not seem readily extendable to lexical categories as argued in much recent work by Richard Kayne.

- (33) a. [TP CAN (HEAR/MUST/KNOW/MAKE/START) ... [v-VP V<sub>INF</sub>]] (restructuring)  
 b. [TP CAN/MUST / AUX<sub>CAN/MUST</sub> ... [v-VP V<sub>INF</sub>]] (infinitival relative)  
 c. [TP STAND/(GO/BE) / AUX<sub>STAND/(GO/BE)</sub> ... [v-VP V<sub>INF/(GER)</sub>]] (negative imperative)

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