BOOK REVIEWS

Virginia Hill & Gabriela Alboiu, *Verb movement and clause structure in Old Romanian*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (Oxford Studies in Diachronic and Historical Linguistics), 2015. 384 pp.

Reviewed by Giuliana Giusti (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

This book balances empirical and theoretical issues. The research questions and the corpus are constrained in time and space, yet relevant to broader theoretical and empirical issues. The data collection and interpretation are a convincing blend of theoretically informed qualitative analysis and philologically informed choice of the sources. The data are presented clearly, despite the intricacies of variation represented by a written corpus of a newly written language, such as Romanian in the 16th century. The argumentation is effective in setting the tests, applying them systematically and drawing interim conclusions, and yet it is never redundant or repetitive.

The volume is theory-oriented without relying on theory-internal argumentation, built on the cartographic approach to functional structure (cf. Cinque & Rizzi 2008 for an overview) in its recent developments, but the discussion is accessible to a wider public. Hill and Alboiu provide an interesting and updated proposal, relevant to general Balkan linguistics and cartographic minimalism. On the one hand, it identifies a Balkan clausal pattern, which is shown to be under development in the given period and to create instability in contact with the Latin-Romance clausal pattern. On the other hand, it establishes some clearly detectable phenomena such as head splitting and biclausal structuring. The proposal also connects with traditional historical linguistics in a respectful way, showing how formal linguistics can benefit from the historical tradition and can at the same time offer new perspectives towards advances in both. Finally, the results are valuable for general diachronic linguistics and for the theoretical advances in the tension between the minimalist and the cartographic approach to syntax. In what follows, I briefly present the major results of the volume and then focus on an aspect that I believe may prompt future developments in a comparative perspective.

The volume deals with the diachronic changes affecting the upper portion of the syntactic structure of main and subordinate clauses in Old Romanian, namely in texts dated between 1521 and 1780. The main changes involve fluctuations in the positions of the verb and variation in the surfacing of subordinating elements introducing different types of subordinate clauses. The relationship between verb positions in main and subordinate clauses and the nature of subordinators

(complementizers) in subordinate clauses has since been a popular topic in Balkan linguistics, as it relates to the regression of the infinitive in favor of the subjunctive mood in the whole area, with interesting differences between Romance-Balkan Romanian as compared to the other Balkan languages. Since Rizzi's (1997) seminal paper, it has also been a hotly debated issue in the research on the cartography of the fine structure of the upper portion of the clause, the left periphery.

The first chapter highlights five empirical areas affected by the change: namely, the fluctuation of verb movement in root clauses, the assumption of Focus and Assertion operators, the well-known replacement of the control infinitive with subjunctive clauses, the cyclic readjustment of truncated and fully fledged subordinate CPs and alternating with the cyclic splitting of the lower portion of the complementation layer. In this chapter the authors describe the corpus and argue convincingly for a qualitative approach. Thus the authors proceed to infer from the data the syntactic patterns attested in this period, but it is only by means of the general theoretical framework that they collocate the different patterns in a coherent cycle. In this respect, the volume effectively illustrates how formal syntax makes predictions that need to be empirically tested, and in so doing it leads the researcher to make novel empirical generalizations. It also shows how corpus data from an earlier stage of a language can give (counter)evidence to formal linguistic hypotheses, which are usually tested against speaker judgments in the generative tradition.

The second and third chapters set the framework for main clauses. Following previous studies on Modern Romanian, the VSO order in Old Romanian is shown to be an effect of V-movement out of the vP (a movement which is also present in Romance) with a concomitant low position of the subject in the merge position (a phenomenon present in other Balkan languages and which differentiates Romanian from the other Romance languages).

The positions of negation above TP and below the lowest C-head, of auxiliaries in T and of clitics clustered in the head Kl of a projection KlP between Neg (when present) and TP provide the authors with tests to check the position of the verb in the rest of the volume. When clitics, auxiliaries and negation precede V, V is taken to be in T. When clitics follow V, V is taken to move to Fin (a 'grammatical' movement triggered by the IRREALIS feature of the imperative or the REALIS feature of the gerunds) or to further move to the Focus head, in Spec-Head relation with a covert focus operator in need of a head that can check [uFoc]. In all these cases, lack of phonological features of the operator is the trigger of V-movement. This is motivated with Miyagawa's (2010) 'Strong Uniformity Hypothesis', according to which "all languages share the same set of grammatical features, and every language overtly manifests these features". In other words, in order for the features

to be visible, the head of the projection hosting a null operator must be filled. And it is filled by the verb which has reached an immediately lower head.[1]

Old Romanian is claimed to have V-to-Fin in imperative structures, presented in the fourth chapter, and in most gerundives, presented in the fifth chapter. It is also shown to have V-to-Focus in main and subordinate clauses in which a null focus operator is assumed to explain the higher position of the Verb. Interestingly, V-to-Focus is not attested if the Focus operator is overt, or in other words when a contrastively focused constituent or a wh-constituent is present. V-to-Focus is instead obligatory in yes-no questions, where no constituent is fronted. This suggests that head-movement is a last-resort procedure to make the Focus projection visible and not to check focus features on the verb. V-to-Fin or V-to-Focus is blocked by the presence of negation, the verb remains in T and the order Neg > cl > V is found.[2] This makes Romanian no different from other Romance languages, as also shown for Italian by Zanuttini (1997). There are also other 'surrogate' forms such as *să*-subjunctives (more similar to iussive sentences in Italian) and *de*-imperatives.

The rest of the volume is devoted to analyzing the richness of the complementation system of Old Romanian, which is taken to be Romance morphology filling a Balkan structure. This creates an unstable scenario in which the subordinating elements *că*, *cum*, *de*, *a* and *să* can occur in different structural positions with respect to fronted topical constituents or can co-occur with one another, thereby grounding the hypothesis of split heads of the CP-layer.

Hill and Alboiu take Rizzi's (1997) split-CP hypothesis to its extreme consequences, claiming not only that the Romanian CP is split between upper Force and lower Fin, optionally sandwiching Topic and Focus projections, as usually assumed, but that the lower Fin can itself be split into Fin_1 [−finite] and Fin_2 [modal]. They ground this iterated split in the CP system on the tension between two coexisting and typologically different systems of subordination. On the one hand, the Balkan system divides clausal complements into fully fledged non-obligatory control (NOC) complements and truncated obligatory control (OC) and raising complements. On the other hand, the Romance system divides clausal complements into fully fledged NOC and OC complements and truncated raising

---

1. It could also be captured by the economy principle proposed by Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Giusti (1998) on the realization of functional heads. The and/or choice represents a parametric choice: "A functional projection must be visible at all levels of representation by (a) making the specifier visible and/or (b) making the head visible."

2. In my opinion, this shows that negation is not strong in Old Romanian. If this were the case, it would be expected to be merged as the specifier of NegP and would not be expected to block head movement.

complements. The tension makes *de*, *a* and *să*, represented as *x* in (1), cyclically develop through four stages of reanalysis, from complementizers that can check Force and Fin features in non-selected clauses, as in (1a) where *x* is moved from Fin to Force, into complementizers that only spell-out Fin features, as in (1d) where *x* in Fin coexists with *y* in Force. The two ends of the cycles have a single Fin-head and represent a stable situation, also following van Gelderen's (2011) hypothesis that changes are triggered by economy. The first intermediate stage consists in *x* being realized in Fin but still checking the features in Force by long distance Agreement, as represented in (1b) with a covert barred copy of *x*. In the second intermediate stage, *x* coexists with *y* and both are lower than the TopP or FocP in the left periphery, as in (1c). This situation is soon recycled with the upper complementizers being reanalyzed as filling Force (1d):

(1) a. $[_{\text{ForceP}}\, x\, [_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP}}\, x\, [\dots$
     b. $[_{\text{ForceP}}\, \bar{x}\, [_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP}}\, x\, [\dots$
     c. $[_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP1}}\, y\, [_{\text{FinP2}}\, x\, [\dots$
     d. $[_{\text{ForceP}}\, y\, [_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP}}\, x\, [\dots$

The proposal is very elegant in that it applies to the three complementizers in a remarkably clean way, if we consider the poverty of corpus data. It also nicely motivates the disappearance of *de,* which is only able to check one of the features of Fin1 and can therefore only exist if FinP is split, as in (1c), with the following variation of realization: *de* moves to Force (2a), *de* checks Force via long agreement (2b), *de* is in an embedded clause with no ForcP, as in (2c). The *x*-position in Fin2 can be filled by *a*+infinitive, *să*+subjunctive or V-to-Fin2, or it can be null, as in the case of imperatives:

(2) a. $[_{\text{ForceP}}\, de\, [_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP1}}\, de\, [_{\text{FinP2}}\, x\, [\dots$
     b. $[_{\text{ForceP}}\, \bar{de}\, [_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP1}}\, de\, [_{\text{FinP2}}\, x\, [\dots$
     c. $[_{\text{Top/FocP}}\, [_{\text{FinP1}}\, de\, [_{\text{FinP2}}\, x\, [\dots$

Analyses such as the ones represented in (1)–(2) have a general scientific impact even if they just reach descriptive adequacy. The fact that an analysis can neatly derive the intricacies of occurrence and co-occurrence of different complementizers as well as the different positions of the verb and the relative position of this with respect to negation, auxiliaries and clitics is already an achievement that can be appreciated independently of one's favorite theoretical framework. The empirical findings and the diachronic hypotheses put forward are made possible by empirical questions that only arise in a cartographic framework, which is designed to pin down systematically the relative linear order of functional elements in order to infer the structural hierarchy of functional structure. The exercise that cartography leads one to perform however risks producing a theory-internal result. This is not the case with this volume.

What gives added value to Hill and Alboiu's work is the fact that each choice is motivated. For example, the assumption of the null interrogative, imperative and focus operators that have scope over the sentence and trigger V-movement is independently motivated by previous literature. While the two former ones are generally assumed in syntactic analyses, the latter is inspired among others by Krifka's (2007) semantic analysis of different types of sentential focuses and by Devine & Stephens' (2006) empirical observation that in Latin these interpretative contexts favor verb-initial or verb-second orders. Another example is the assumption of split Fin, which could just be a trick to account for the fact that topic or focus phrases appear, contrary to what is expected in the canonical theory of Split CP, at the left of two co-occurring complementizers. The motivation for such an assumption is however convincingly rooted in a theory of the instability created by contact in a language with Romance complementizers which is completing a development of clausal structure more typical of Balkan languages with a [+Agr]-Force from a Romance system with [−Agr]-Force.

Hill and Alboiu propose that split Fin can only be present in a transition period, as it is non-economical. It is however not clear whether this lower degree of economy is to be valued against other properties of the language, or whether it is a general fact that there are features such as finiteness and mood that tend to cluster together. The latter hypothesis would give to the cartographic approach a much more restrictive setting than it has at present and would therefore make it much more compatible with minimalist requirements. It would also make stronger predictions as regards the cluster of features vs. their split realization across languages. Spelling out such predictions as well as checking them is beyond the scope of the volume, but it looks promising especially from the perspective of establishing what the unstable situations are in which more costly splits can occur. In this respect, the research and the theoretical framework developed become relevant to general issues in diachronic syntax and language change.

Another issue contingent with the competition between [−Agr] infinitive vs [+Agr] finite OC complements is the treatment of so-called pseudo-coordinations that are found with motion verbs and other restructuring verbs and are not limited to Romance languages (as shown by Cardinaletti & Giusti 2001, who draw a strict parallel between the dialect of Marsala (Sicily) with English and Swedish). In these constructions, the coordination has clearly been reanalyzed as a functional linker, therefore a sort of complementizer.

Three examples with motion verbs in the imperative, provided by Hill and Alboiu (pp. 100–101, exx. (12a–c)) are reminiscent of these constructions. Hill and Alboiu treat *de* in this case as a coordinator, as it alternates with coordinative *și*. From a crosslinguistic perspective, the opposite could be claimed: it is possible that *și* can be shown to be a pseudo-coordination. The parallel with *de* would

therefore keep *de* in Fin, as is claimed for all other instances of *de* in the volume. The parallel with the dialect of Marsala is striking, as the two languages also display a prepositional accusative:

(3) a. triimite   de   prinde   şi   pe   frate-sau
    send.IMP.2SG COMPL fetch.IMP.2SG also ACC brother-his
    "Send [somebody] to fetch his brother"   (Neculce 185)

   b. manna   a   pigghia   puro   a   so-frate
    send.IMP.2SG COMPL fetch.IMP.2SG also ACC his-brother
    "Send [somebody] to fetch his brother"   (Marsala, Trapani)

If this is on the right track, the question arises whether V*de*V is a monoclausal construction parallel to Marsalese V*a*V or is still a Balkan infinitive in the complement of the OC verb of motion. The position of the clitic clearly speaks in favor of the latter analysis, as the clitic precedes the lower verb in Romanian, arguing for a position in T of the verb, while it follows the lower imperative verb in Marsalese:

(4) a. pasă   de   te   pocăiaşte
    go.IMP.2SG COMPL yo.uCL repent.IMP.2SG
    "Go and repent!"

   b. va   a   pentete
    go.IMP.2SG COMPL repent.IMP.2SG + you.CL
    "Go and repent!"

Mutatis mutandis, the Old Romanian imperative construction of motion verbs with *de* is reminiscent of what Cardinaletti and Giusti (2001, forthcoming) call the 'Finite Construction', which is also present in Calabrian and southern Apulian dialects that have precisely the same characteristic as Old and Modern Romanian in displaying Romance complementizers in a Balkan structure with partial loss of infinitives. This is obviously something that must be further checked, but I hope that, in bringing up the unusual parallel between a multiple agreement construction in Old Romanian and in Marsalese, I have given a flavor of how Hill and Alboiu's hypothesis can be relevant for future crosslinguistic research.

   To conclude, reading Hill and Alboiu's book has been a great pleasure, and I recommend the book to linguists of any theoretical persuasion interested in Balkan linguistics, diachronic variation and the syntax of control structures. Furthermore, I equally recommend the volume for any syllabus in Balkan-Romance syntax or in historical linguistics.

References

Cardinaletti, Anna & Giuliana Giusti. 2001. "Semi-lexical" motion verbs in Romance and Germanic. In Norbert Corver & Henk C. van Riemsdijk (eds.), *Semi-lexical categories: The function of content words and the content of function words*, 371–414. Berlin: Mouton de Gr uyter. doi:10.1515/9783110874006.371

Cardinaletti, Anna & Giuliana Giusti. Manuscript. Multiple agreement constructions in Southern Italian dialects. Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

Cinque, Guglielmo & Luigi Rizzi. 2008. The cartography of syntactic structure. *Studies in Linguistics 2. CISCL Working Papers*. University of Siena. http://www.ciscl.unisi.it/doc/doc_pub/cinque-rizzi2008-The_cartography_of_Syntactic_Structures.pdf (accessed Nov 11, 2016).

Devine, Andrew M. & Laurence D. Stephens. 2006. *Latin word order: Structured meaning and information*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195181685.001.0001

Dimitrova-Vulchanova, Mila & Giuliana Giusti. 1998. Fragments of Balkan nominal structure. In Artemis Alexiadou & Chris Wilder (eds.), *Possessors, predicates and movement in the determiner phrase*, 333–360. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/la.22.12dim

Gelderen, Elly van. 2011. *The linguistic cycle: Language change and the language faculty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199756056.001.0001

Krifka, Manfred. 2007. Basic notions of information structure. In Caroline Féry, Gisbert Fanselow & Manfred Krifka (eds.), *Interdisciplinary Studies of Information Structure 6*. Working papers, University of Potsdam. http://amor.cms.hu-berlin.de/~h2816i3x/Publications/Krifka_InformationStructure.pdf (accessed Nov 11, 2016).

Miyagawa, Shigeru. 2010. *Why agree? Why move? Unifying agreement-based and discourse-configurational languages*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Rizzi, Luigi. 1997. The fine structure of the left periphery. In Liliane Haegeman (ed.), *Elements of grammar*, 281–339. Dordrecht: Kluwer. doi:10.1007/978-94-011-5420-8_7

Zanuttini, Raffaella. 1997. *Negation and clausal structure: A comparative study of Romance languages.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Reviewer's address

Giuliana Giusti
Ca' Foscari University of Venice
Dipartimento di Studi Linguistici e Culturali Comparati
Ca' Bembo, Dorsoduro 1075, Fondamenta Tofetti, 30123
VENEZIA
Italy

giusti@unive.it