

## Gerunds in Early Modern Romanian

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**Issue:** Early Modern Romanian (EMR), as attested in the Moldavian chronicles (17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> c.) displayed a productive use of gerunds, in matrix (1) and adjunct clauses (2), (3). Matrix gerunds may occur irrespective of the context, as “out-of-the-blue” constructions. Modern Romanian (MR) lost the pattern in (1), but preserved (2), (3). This paper aims to account for the mechanism that allows gerund verbs to generate finite and non-finite clauses in EMR.

**Data:** The EMR gerund has an invariable (-ind(u)) form. It is purely verbal, being incompatible with determiners (e.g., \* *mâncând-ul* ‘the eating’) (Caragiu 1957, Edelstein 1972), on par with its Latin gerund ancestor (Miller 2000). Also, sentential complements are rare or missing, so gerunds are ruled out in A-positions and have an exclusively verbal function. EMR displays gerunds in: (i) root clauses, in simple (1a) and complex sentences (1b), the latter showing coordination with indicative (or subjunctive verbs); (ii) in conjunction with perception verbs; (iii) in relative clauses (2) - Rel(ative) OP underlined, subject in italics; (iv) in a variety of adverbial clauses, either as absolute constructions, with lexical or *pro* subjects (unexceptional in Romance), or as in (3), with the gerund subject co-referential to the matrix subject.

- (1) a. *Traian întîiu, împăratul, supuindu* pre dahii.  
Trajan first emperor.the conquering DOM Dacians  
'First, Trajan, the Emperor, conquered the Dacians.' (Costin/Panaitescu 1979: 11)
- b. Iar vădzîndu că cuprindu leșii Tara Moldovei, **au orînduit** pre Caazi Cherei-soltan, hanul and seeing that invade Poles Moldova has coopted DOM Caazi Cherei Sultan han Crîmului, și trimîndu-i și 2.000 de iniceri; cătră 70.000 de oaste ce avea tătărască. Crimeea and sending-him and 2.000 of soldiers towards 70.000 of army that had Tartar 'But seeing that the Poles are invading Moldavia, he co-opted the Sultan Caazi Cherei, the Han of Crimea, and sent him 2.000 infantry soldiers; that was added to the 70.000 Tartar army that he had.' (Costin/Panaitescu 1979: 14-15)
- (2) De care lucru cu norocu semetîndu-să Baiazitu, iară s-au vîrtejitu la Tarigrad.  
of which thing with luck swelling-REFL Baiazid again REFL-has stormed to Istanbul  
'For which reason being swollen of his luck, Baiazid stormed back to Istanbul' (Ureche/Panaitescu 1958: 129)
- (3) [...] ce l-au îmbărbătat numai să meargă la Poartă, ca apoi, **nemărgînd eli, proi**  
but him-have encouraged just to go to Porte so.that then not.going he  
va aduci perirea țărîi și boierimei.  
will bring death.the country.GEN and lordship.GEN  
'... but they strongly encouraged him to go to the Ottoman Porte, because if he didn't, he'd cause the destruction of the country and the boyars.' (Neculce/Iordan 1955: 227)

**Proposals:** We argue for the following points: (1) Assertion in EMR root clauses can surface with either gerund or indicative morphology (cf. Adger&Smith's 2005 Minimalist account of speaker intra-variation). Both are propositional, tensed domains that differ only w.r.t. whether [*uphi*], an uninterpretable feature with no effect on meaning, is present (indicatives) or not (gerunds). (2) The EMR gerund is underspecified for M(ood), T(ense), & A(spect) - hence, its plurifunctionality - yet projects to a full CP (see Alboiu 2009 for MR). (3) While the EMR gerund could have an absolute or relative tense specification, the MR gerund lost its deictic tense specification, which explains its absence in root clauses.

**Analysis.** (i): EMR gerunds can occur with aspectual and temporal adverbs, and their aspectual and tense interpretations are independent from those of matrix predicates: in (4a), the matrix aspect is perfective but

the gerund is imperfective; in (4b), matrix tense is past, but past perfect in the gerund. Consequently, they can project T heads with valued [+tense] features.

- (4) a. Mărs-au...la un sat a lui, **avîndu** și curți acolo.  
           gone-has to a village of his having and courts there  
           ‘He went to one of his villages, where he had a house.’ (Neculce *apud* Iordan 1955: 69)
- b. S-au închinat de bună voie și **viindu-le** și poruncă de la leși.  
           REFL-have surrendered of good will and coming-them also order from the Poles  
           ‘They surrendered willingly, and they also got the order from the Poles.’  
           (Neculce *apud* Iordan 1955: 144)

(ii): EMR gerunds allow for speaker-oriented adverbs (e.g. *probably* = epistemic modality), so are high in the CP (Cinque 1999). Pre-verbal topicalized and focused constituents (2), (5), also show a fully articulated CP, following the mapping in Rizzi (1997): Force>Top>Focus>Fin>T.

- (5) iar leșii încet **pășind** sprejeniè năvala turcilor. (Neculce *apud* Iordan 1955: 137)  
           ‘and the Poles, walking in slowly, supported the Turks’ attack.’

(iii): EMR gerunds allow for Rel OP, see (2) - therefore they project up to ForceP (Rizzi 1997); but, similar to English gerunds (Pires 2007), they disallow wh-OP in Spec,FocusP. Since both root and adjunct clauses are necessarily phasal domains, the CP status of EMR gerunds is expected.

(iv): The gerund precedes clitics - bold, underlined in (1b), (2), (4b) -, which attach to the highest Infl head in Romance (Kayne 1991, Uriagereka 1995, Dobrovie-Sorin 1994 for MR). Word order indicates gerund V-to-**Fin**, Fin being the C-head required for licensing purposes.

(v) While finite verbs and infinitives in EMR take the free negative morpheme *nu*, EMR gerunds typically disallow *nu* and instead require the affixal *ne-*. This is predictable from the Neg>T hierarchy in Romance (Zanuttini 1997): *nu* blocks Head movement above T (i.e. V-to-Fin, Isac&Jakab 2004 for imperatives), interfering with gerund licensing in Fin.

(vi) Semantically, the mood marker *-ind*, merged in Fin, is underspecified for a particular value, but its environment assigns it specific interpretation: assertive/realis or irrealis.

Since gerunds in EMR have a fully articulated clause structure and the interpretation and distribution of finite clauses, following Adger&Smith (2005), similar interpretable features must be at stake. However, gerunds lack intrinsic values for TAM and have no phi-features (hence their underspecification resulting in plurifunctionality). While with finite verbs T is valued via the inflectional endings on V (Pesetsky&Torrego 1994), these are absent with gerunds, so T(AM) has to be recuperated contextually (syntactically or pragmatically). Guéron&Hoekstra (1995) argue that English verbal gerunds are headed by a Tense OP in Spec,CP resulting in a T-chain for INFL nodes. We similarly adopt the requirement of an OP in Spec,ForceP (e.g. Rel OP) but argue instead that in root clauses, which have truth values, this has to be an Illocutionary Force OP, such as Meinunger’s (2004) Assert(ion) OP. The presence of AssertOP binds all relevant TAM variables, thereby licensing feature values and deictic/absolute tense, resulting in main clause status of EMR gerunds. Accordingly, root gerunds disallow questions, since a wh-OP either interferes with the binding of TAM variables by the OP in Spec, ForceP, or semantically contradicts the AssertOP, so it will always be ruled out.

MR gerunds lack deictic tense, which rules out the use of gerunds in root clauses. Data comes from Avram (2003), who shows that MR gerunds disallow auxiliaries (marginally possible in EMR) and that temporal adverbs denote time of event and not time of reference.

**Conclusions.** Availability of an AssertOP in Spec,ForceP in EMR grants these gerunds propositional status and the semantics of indicatives, thereby allowing for free variation.

