

Finiteness*

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1 Introduction

The term “finite” has been used in grammatical literature for centuries, but its meaning is difficult to pin down. In this paper, an attempt is made, first, to determine what the term has been used for at various times in the history of grammatical investigations, and second, to come up with an explicit statement of what finiteness is. I begin by looking at what various authors have said about finiteness, and at the core cases of finite constructions, in the context of a feature-geometric analysis of INFL. I develop an initial hypothesis, namely that finiteness consists of the ability to license structural case in subject position and the possible presence of agreement marking on the verb. Finiteness is thus a purely syntactic property. However, it occupies a position in a dependency structure, some of whose components have semantic content. The implicational relations inherent in the dependency structure are what give rise to the illusion that finiteness itself has semantic content. Having established the core properties that characterize finite clauses, I then turn to constructions that exhibit these properties but which have traditionally been thought of as non-finite: personal and inflected infinitives in various (primarily Romance) languages, and agreeing nominalized clauses in Turkish. Personal and inflected infinitives are shown not to be truly finite, but rather what I call *pseudofinite*. In other words, they have acquired the superficial properties of finiteness (case licensing and in some cases agreement morphology) during the course of the syntactic computation, but they do not exhibit the same implicational properties that

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accompany true finiteness. Agreeing nominalized clauses are shown to be not pseudofinite but rather canonically nominal in their case and agreement properties.

2 Historical perspective

Traditional grammarians divided verb forms into two major classes: the so-called finite forms, including indicative, subjunctive, optative and imperative, and non-finite forms, including infinitives and participles. There were two main criteria underlying this distinction: the verb's ability to appear as the main verb of a full, independent clause, and the ability to take personal endings (Binnick 1991: 69). For Jespersen (1924), the first criterion is of paramount importance, although his discussion is undermined by the fact that he includes in the category of "independent sentence" elliptical utterances such as exclamations and answers to question. For Jespersen, then, there are any number of so-called sentences that lack finite verbs; a finite verb is thus not a necessary component of an independent sentence. Given that finite verb forms patently appear in subordinate clauses, it is also not the case that a finite verb is sufficient to make a clause an independent sentence. As for personal endings, though Jespersen does not directly state that they are criterial in determining that a verb is finite, he seems to regard the possibility of agreement marking as relevant to the finiteness of a verb form, as can be seen from his discussion of the English imperative (Jespersen 1924: 314). He rejects the idea that English imperatives might be analyzed as infinitival, on the grounds that imperative verbs in Danish, German, French, Latin and Greek have personal endings. He concludes from this that imperatives are finite, and that the imperative is thus properly characterized as a mood. While his logic regarding the English imperative is flawed, it

does show that he, like others, makes a strong connection between finiteness and subject-verb agreement.

Subirats-Rüggeberg (1990) notes that “for Thiébauld (1802), the only difference between sentential [i.e. finite: EC] and infinitival complements is the fact that sentential complements have explicit subjects, whereas the infinitival complements have either implicit or explicit subjects *without verb agreement* [emphasis added: EC].”

The second-century Greek grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus likewise groups the indicative, subjunctive, optative, and imperative together, and contrasts them with infinitives and participles. He notes that the former exhibit person and number marking to agree with the subject, while the latter do not.

In the early years of generative grammar, mood was not much discussed; however, a standard view of infinitival clauses (Perlmutter and Soames 1979) was that an underlyingly finite clause took on infinitival form if the subject was removed, either by subject raising or by Equi-NP deletion. Implicit in this treatment is the assumption that a finite verb requires an overt subject, and that an overt subject requires a finite verb.¹ Finite clauses are distinguished from tensed clauses by George and Kornfilt (1981), who show that in Turkish, both tensed and gerundive constructions exhibiting person agreement with their subjects constitute opaque domains. They argue that gerunds are nominal, and that the finiteness distinction is manifest both in nominals and in clauses.

¹ The various wh-movement rules were exceptions to this generalization; one explanation available at the time was that wh-movement did not specifically target the embedded subject, while the raising and deletion rules did.

They entertain the hypothesis that finiteness can be equated with the presence of person agreement, but reject it on the grounds that languages with no morphological agreement can also exhibit a finiteness distinction. More recent approaches connecting agreement with case permit a simpler definition of finiteness than the one ultimately proposed by George and Kornfilt. This connection between finiteness, case and agreement is made more explicitly in the theory of Government and Binding, where nominative case is assigned to subject position by a [+tense] INFL. Only in finite clauses is INFL [+tense], and such an INFL contains a nominal element, AGR, which carries person and number features corresponding to those of the subject. Hornstein (1990: 146) notes that “matrix clauses must be finite,” and in later work (Hornstein 1995: 68) states that “nominative case is solely a function of whether Tns is finite.” The connection also appears in the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995, 1998, 2001), where nominative case and subject-verb agreement are claimed to be two manifestations of the AGREE relation between INFL and the subject.

Kayne (1994: 95) suggests that finiteness may require incorporation of INFL to COMP in the overt syntax. In a similar vein, Rizzi (1997) proposes that finiteness is in the COMP system. For Rizzi, COMP actually includes four distinct projections, of which the highest is FORCE and the lowest FINITE. Interestingly, the only overt elements that Rizzi places in the head of FINP are prepositional complementizers like English *for* and Italian *di*. Complementizers that select finite clauses, such as English *that* and Italian *che*, can be shown to appear in the head of FORCEP. Pesetsky and Torrego (2001), looking primarily at English, argue that the complementizer *that* is actually a realization of T in C. In their approach, the connection between nominative case and finite INFL is no accident:

nominative case is a reflex of an uninterpretable T feature on a DP, *that* is the realization of a T head that has moved to C to delete an uninterpretable T feature on C, and matrix clauses lack *that* because the nominative subject has moved to spec/CP to delete the same uninterpretable T feature.

The use of the feature [+tense] has been less consistent over the years, and its connection to nominative case has not always been clear. Many authors, including Chomsky (1977, 1981, and many other works), use [+tense] to characterize finite clauses, which can then be subspecified as [\pm past]. Wurmbrand (1998), following Stowell (1995), divides infinitives into two subgroups, characterized by the features [+tense] and [-tense]. The difference, for Stowell, has nothing to do with finiteness or nominative case, but rather with whether the infinitive clause can be temporally distinct from its dominating clause. Thus the infinitive in (1)a is [+tense], while the one in (1)b is [-tense].

- 1) a. We decided on Tuesday to stay home on Wednesday.
 b. We tried (*on Tuesday) to stay home on Wednesday.

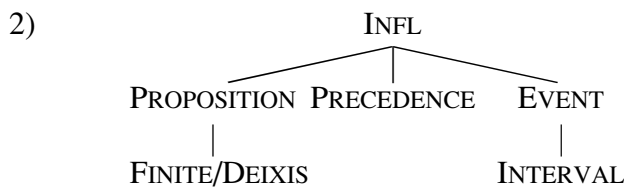
Wurmbrand brings the subject back into the picture, arguing that the [-tense] infinitives lack subjects altogether and consist simply of a VP, while [+tense] infinitives have a PRO subject and include IP and CP projections. However, the relation between this use of the feature [\pm tense] and its more familiar use to indicate finiteness is unclear.

It is thus fair to say that finiteness, clausal independence, subject-verb agreement and nominative case have, for at least the past couple of millennia, been understood to be related. What is, and has always been, unclear is whether the relation is syntactic, morphological or semantic; it seems to exhibit aspects of all three. In this paper, an attempt will be made to establish exactly what finiteness is and where it fits into the

grammar. I will argue that finiteness is a feature of INFL, and that it occupies a specific place in a dependency structure or feature geometry (Sagey 1986, Avery 1996, Béjar and Hall 1999 Harley and Ritter to appear). While the finiteness feature itself has purely syntactic content, other features in the structure, some of which are dependents of finiteness, have semantic content. Thus while no particular semantic properties are invariably correlated with finiteness, some semantic properties can appear only in finite clauses.

3 Assumptions and background

I take as a starting point the dependency structure in (2), proposed for English by Cowper (1998).²



The semantic content of each of these features was investigated by Cowper and Hall (1999); the informal descriptions from that paper are given in (3).

² For simplicity of exposition, the feature structure is shown as a single tree. There are several ways in which the structure could be mapped to syntactic structure: first, the Event node could project a syntactic category such as Event Phrase (cf. Travis (1993), among others). Second, the entire dependency structure could project a single syntactic category—the one traditionally called INFL. Another possibility is that the content of the Proposition node could occupy a position in an extended CP system such as the one proposed by Rizzi 1997 and adapted by many authors since then. As long as nothing hinges on the mapping, the dependency structure will be shown as a single tree dominated by INFL.

- 3) a. **EVENT**: When present, causes the clause to be interpreted as eventive. When **EVENT** is absent, the clause is interpreted as non-eventive.
- b. **INTERVAL**: As a dependent feature of **EVENT**, **INTERVAL** appears only when the clause is eventive. Modifies the event, giving it internal temporal structure. Corresponds essentially to imperfective viewpoint aspect. When **INTERVAL** is absent, the event is taken as a temporally unanalyzed whole, corresponding to perfective viewpoint aspect.³
- c. **PRECEDENCE**: Establishes a marked temporal relation (precedence) between the clause and its temporal anchor. When **PRECEDENCE** is absent, the clause bears the unmarked relation of coincidence.
- d. **PROPOSITION**: Causes the clause to be interpreted as a conceptual representation of either an event or a state. When **PROPOSITION** is absent the IP is interpreted as a bare event or state. Bare events or states can be experienced or perceived by the senses, but are not represented cognitively as propositions.
- e. **FINITE/DEIXIS**: This dependent feature of the **PROPOSITION** node is less fully articulated in English than in many other languages. It provides an English clause with the following two properties:
- i. Structural case and phi features are checked with the subject (**FINITE**)

³ In many languages (e.g. French, Italian, German, Spanish, Hungarian), the default interpretation of **EVENT** is **INTERVAL**, or imperfective, with **MOMENT**, or perfective, being the marked value. In addition, some languages have features that English makes no use of. The dependency structure in (2) should therefore not be taken in detail as a crosslinguistic account of tense and aspect.

- ii. The clause is linked to the temporal discourse anchor, normally the moment of speech (DEIXIS)

A question left open by Cowper and Hall (1999) was exactly how verb forms map to the dependency structure in a language in which FINITE and DEIXIS are not bundled together as they are in English. An initial hypothesis, which I adopt for the purposes of the present paper, is that FINITENESS without DEIXIS is what characterizes the subjunctive mood, in languages which have a more robust subjunctive than English has.

The dependency structure in (2), together with the assumption that subjunctive clauses are simply non-deictic finite constructions, predicts that it should be very difficult to give a consistent, positive semantic characterization of subjunctive mood. The following brief survey of comments, taken from various decades and from several theoretical frameworks, confirms the prediction.

Looking again at the *Syntax* of Apollonius Dyscolus, we find the following:

“...the subjunctive never occurs alone, without a conjunction, and so its inherent meaning is not clear, and therefore, since it has no meaning of its own, it has taken its name from the force of the accompanying conjunction.” (III, 125)

Apollonius goes on to note that the uses of the subjunctive have a variety of meanings, and concludes that “it is right to call this mood ‘subjunctive’ from its one consistent trait, that it does not occur except subordinate to the above-mentioned conjunctions.” (III, 126)

Jespersen (1924: 295) remarks that there are “marked divergencies” in the use of the subjunctive in the ancient Indo-European languages. A few pages later (p. 317), he

suggests that “the subjunctive was at first vaguely used in a variety of cases which it is impossible logically or notionally to delimitate as against the use of the indicative, and...each language took its own course in sometimes restricting and sometimes extending its sphere of employment, especially in dependent clauses.”

Mailhac (2000) notes that Lyons (1968), Martinet (1968) and Harris (1978) claim that in contexts where the subjunctive is obligatory, it carries no meaning. In the same vein, Judge and Healey (1985), also cited by Mailhac, distinguish the contrastive subjunctive, which is optional and alters the meaning of the sentence in which it appears, from the so-called harmonizing subjunctive, which is obligatory and carries no meaning. Poplack (1992) also characterizes the obligatory subjunctive as meaningless.

Farkas (1982) shows that in Romanian, when a verb permits both subjunctive and indicative complements, the indicative can have independent time reference, but the subjunctive cannot. She groups these subjunctive clauses with English infinitivals as “tenseless” complements. Regarding the obligatory subjunctive, she notes that while intensional verbs (including *e posibil*, ‘it is possible’) typically require their complements to be subjunctive, a semantically almost identical verb *poate*, ‘it may be’ requires an indicative complement. She concludes that while the class of contexts in which subjunctive complements appear is characterized by certain semantic properties, it is not possible to predict exactly where the subjunctive will occur purely on semantic grounds.

Some of the semantic properties that have been attributed to the subjunctive mood are given in (4)-(6) below:

4) Irrealis or future time reference with respect to the time reference of the governing clause. Examples from French:

a. Pierre est certain que Marie est partie

Pierre is certain that Marie is.indicleft

‘Pierre is sure that Marie has left.’

b. Pierre n’est pas certain que Marie soit partie.

Pierre neg=is not certain that Marie be.subj left

‘Pierre is not sure that Marie has left.’

5) Expression of a point of view other than that of the speaker, especially when the speaker “wants to guard himself from endorsing the truth or realization of the statement.” (Jespersen 1924: 319). Examples from Spanish:

a. José no dijo que había salido.

Jose not said that had.indicgone-out

‘Jose didn’t say that he had gone out.’ (but he did in fact go out)

b. José no dijo que hubiera salido.

Jose not said that had.subj gone-out

‘Jose didn’t say that he had gone out.’ (and we don’t know if he did go out)

c. José no cree que María está casada.

Jose not believes that Maria is.indicmarried.

‘Jose doesn’t believe (refuses to believe) that Maria is married.’

d. José no cree que María esté casada.

Jose not believes that Maria is.subj married

‘Jose doesn’t believe that Maria is married.’ (and we don’t know if she is)⁴

6) Dependent time reference (Farkas 1982). Examples from Romanian:

a. știu că am înotat bine în tinerețe

know-1SG that have-1SG-INDIC swam well in youth

‘I know that I swam well in my youth.’

b. *știnu să fi înotat bine în tinerețe

know-1SG subj past swim well in youth

‘I know to have swum well in my youth.’

c. știu să înot bine

know-1SG subj swim well

‘I know (how) to swim well.’

(Farkas 1982:80-81)

It seems, then, that the semantics of the subjunctive has eluded coherent description, with most authors simply listing the various meanings that subjunctive clauses can have in various contexts. This is precisely what we would expect if the feature characterizing subjunctives, namely FINITE, had no particular semantic content of its own, but occupied a position in a dependency hierarchy relative to other features with semantic content. And since the details of the dependency structure can differ somewhat from language to language, it is not surprising that the meanings associated with the subjunctive also vary from language to language. As an initial approximation, since DEIXIS is a dependent of

⁴ I am grateful to Ana Teresa Pérez-Leroux for these examples.

FINITE, the simplest way to characterize the semantics of subjunctive clauses is to say that they lack temporo-personal deixis. A clause that lacks temporal deixis will have to take its temporal anchor from some other clause, giving the dependent time reference referred to by Farkas (1982), as well as the possibility of irrealis or future interpretation with respect to the temporal anchor. The lack of personal deixis places the proposition expressed by the clause in a consciousness not necessarily associated with the deictic centre of the utterance (Hall 2001), making possible the distancing described by Jespersen.

Having shown that the semantic content of the feature DEIXIS can at least plausibly provide the beginnings of an account of the differences between subjunctive and indicative clauses, I now turn to the question of what the feature FINITE adds to a clause. In other words, what sorts of clauses differ from subjunctives only in finiteness?

Cowper and Hall (1999) propose that the content of FINITE is purely syntactic. A clause with a finite INFL will license a nominative subject, and will exhibit, to varying degrees depending on the language, agreement marking on the verb. A clause with an INFL identical in all respects except for the feature FINITE will express a proposition, but will lack nominative case and subject-verb agreement. Semantically, however, it should express essentially the same range of meanings as are expressed by the subjunctive: dependent time reference, irrealis mood, non-speaker point of view, etc.

Consider the data in (7).

- 7) a. We asked that the house be sold.
- b. We asked for the house to be sold.

As predicted, these sentences are essentially synonymous. It is difficult to find true minimal pairs for finiteness, however, for several reasons. First, a finite INFL is one means by which an overt subject can be licensed. Languages that, unlike English, lack a robust Exceptional Case Marking (ECM) construction will typically not use infinitival constructions when an overt subject is required.⁵ Second, the well-known obviation effect (Avrutin and Babyonyshev 1997, Luján 1999, Bélanger 2002) requires in many cases that an infinitive be used rather than a finite clause when the subject of the clause is coreferential with the subject of the higher clause.

If the approach being taken here is on the right track, then the content of the feature FINITE is essentially what was once meant by the AGR element in INFL. In more recent minimalist terms, a finite INFL is characterized by the presence of uninterpretable ϕ -features and the ability to value case as nominative. This view of finiteness, together with the hypothesis that the subjunctive mood encodes finiteness without temporal deixis, leads immediately to the question of where inflected infinitives fit into the picture.

4 Finiteness, case and agreement: personal and inflected infinitives

Inflected infinitives occur in various languages, as discussed by Haegeman (1985), Raposo (1987, (1989), Pountain (1995), and Ledgeway (1998). Ledgeway, among others, makes a distinction between the personal infinitive, which has no morphological agreement inflection but takes an overt nominative subject, and the inflected infinitive, which both has morphological agreement and takes an overt nominative subject. For clarity, we will adopt his terms.

⁵ Unless the language has personal or inflected infinitives; see below.

Haegeman (1985) discusses personal infinitives in West Flemish. These constructions, like the one shown in (8) below, appear only in adjuncts with a preposition such as *mee* ‘with,’ *voor* ‘for,’ and *deur* ‘by.’

8) a. Mee ik da te zeggen hee-se dat hus gekocht

with I that to say has-shethat housebought

‘Because of my saying that she has bought that house.’

b. Voor gie da te krygen goa-je vele moeten veranderen

for you that to get go-you much must change

‘In order to get that you’ll have to change a lot.’ Haegeman (1985: 125)

Haegeman assumes that INFL is specified for the features [\pm Tense, \pm AGR]. Ordinary finite clauses are [+Tense, +AGR], and ordinary infinitives [–Tense, –AGR]. She assumes that Portuguese inflected infinitives, to be discussed below, are [–Tense, +AGR], and claims that the West Flemish personal infinitives are [+Tense, –AGR]. As expected from a clause with a [+Tense] INFL, these clauses can have independent temporal reference, as shown in (9).

9) a. Mee ik da gisteren te zeggen hee-se dat hus gekocht.

with I that yesterday to say has-shethat house bought

‘Because of my saying that yesterday she has bought that house.’

b. mee ik da gisteren te zeggen goa-se dat hus kopen.

with I that yesterday to say goes-shethat housebuy

‘Because of my saying that yesterday, she will buy that house.’

c. Mee ik tnoaste joar weg te goan heen-k dat hus verkocht.

with I next year away to go have-I that housesold

‘Because of my going away next year, I have sold that house.’

Haegeman (1985: 131-132)

For Haegeman, the ability of this [+Tense, –AGR] INFL to assign nominative case comes from the fact that it is a constituent of COMP, and a COMP containing such an INFL is “in some sense finite” (Haegeman 1985: 129). She proposes that the prepositions *mee*, *voor*, and *deur* select this type of COMP, and being case-assigners themselves, transmit their case-assigning property to INFL in COMP. She notes that it is INFL, and not the governing preposition, that assigns case to the subject of the infinitive; the prepositions in question normally govern accusative case, and these subjects are uniformly nominative.⁶ Essentially, her idea amounts to saying that the relation between the embedded INFL and the case-assigning preposition activates the case-assigning properties of INFL, despite the fact that INFL does not bear the feature [+AGR].

Personal infinitives are also found in Romanian, as shown in (10), from Alboiu and Motapanyane (2000). Like the personal infinitive in West Flemish, the Romanian personal infinitive appears in adjuncts governed by a preposition, and takes a nominative subject. The Romanian construction differs from the one found in West Flemish in that in

⁶ West Flemish also has an ECM construction, illustrated in (i). The subject of the embedded clause is accusative, and thus can be assumed to be receiving case directly from the matrix verb.

(i) Ik zien hem nog were te goan.

I see him still back to go-inf

I expect he may yet go back.

Haegeman (1985:125)

Romanian, the subject must follow the verb.

- 10) a. Am plecat [înainte de [(**pe*-Ion Maria) a-l săruta (Maria pe Ion)]
 have-1SG left before of PE-Ion Maria to-him kiss-inf Maria PE Ion
 ‘I left before Mary kissed John.’
- b. Îi ținea la ușă [pentru a avea tu/**tine* timp să strângi vasele]
 them kept-3sg at door for to have you-nom/**acc* time SA pick dishes-the
 ‘He was keeping them at the door [for you to have time to pick up the dishes]

Alboiu & Motapanyane (2000: 39)

Raposo’s (1987) analysis of the Portuguese inflected infinitive is very similar to Haegeman’s treatment of the West Flemish personal infinitive. Raposo assumes that the feature [+AGR] alone is insufficient for INFL to assign nominative case to its subject, and concludes, based on a detailed discussion of the various contexts in which the inflected infinitive appears, that “a tenseless INFL positively specified for Agr can assign nominative Case to a lexical subject only if it is itself specified for Case.” (Raposo 1987: 107). In addition, Raposo correlates the possibility of personal and inflected infinitives with the fact that Portuguese is a null-subject language. Following Chomsky (1982), he assumes that only in null-subject languages can INFL be specified for case.

Raposo (1989) analyzes a different sort of inflected infinitive in Portuguese, which he calls the Prepositional Infinitive Construction. This construction differs from the one discussed in the earlier paper in several ways. First, it has a preposition between what looks like the subject and the verb, as shown in (11).

11) eu vi os meninos a lerem esse livro

I saw [the children to read-inf-3pl that book

‘I saw the children reading that book.’

(Raposo 1989: 277)

Second, the preposition in some cases makes a clearly aspectual contribution, as shown by the difference in meaning between (11) above and (12) below.

12) eu vi os meninos lerem o livro

I saw the children read-inf-agr the book

‘I saw the children read the book.’

Third, the subject cannot be nominative if the infinitival clause is governed by a case-assigner, as shown in (13).

13) *Eu vi [eles a trabalharem]

I saw they to work-inf-3pl

‘I saw they working.’

(Raposo 1989: 280)

In fact, it looks from (14) as though the subject is being casemarked by the matrix verb (14)a, or by the governing preposition (14)b.

14) a. Os actores_i viram-nos_{j/*i} [ec_j a representarem a cena]

The actors saw-them ec to represent-inf-3pl the scene

‘The actors saw them representing the scene.’

(Raposo 1989: 290)

b. Eu sonhei con [tigo a entrares na minha casa]

I dreamed with you-obl.to enter-inf-2sg in-the my house

‘I dreamed about you entering my house.’

(Raposo 1989: 289)

Fourth, the construction can appear on its own in sentences like (15). Under these circumstances the subject is, surprisingly, nominative.

15) Eles a fumarem marijuana! Que horror!

they to smoke-inf-3pl marijuana. What horror

‘They smoking marijuana! How awful!’ (Raposo 1989: 289)

Raposo notes, however, that there are matrix small clauses similar to (15), such as (16), in which the subject also bears nominative case, and suggests that in these instances nominative case is assigned by default.

16) [Ele um imbecil]? Não acho!

he an idiot? not think-pres-1sg

‘Him an idiot? I don’t think so!’ (Raposo 1989: 290)

Raposo argues that prepositional infinitives have a small clause structure, headed by the preposition, with the overt subject in the small clause subject position and an empty category in the infinitival subject position. The preposition is responsible for the agreement on the infinitival and for the case-licensing of the infinitival subject, while the overt nominal preceding *a* receives its case from an external case-licenser, or by default.

Ledgeway (1998) gives an overview of personal and inflected infinitives in various Romance languages, including several spoken in southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, as well as Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian. His main goal is to argue that a particular construction in Southern Calabrian, superficially almost identical to the present indicative, is actually an inflected infinitive. We will turn to this construction later, but for the moment simply note that all the other examples cited by Ledgeway are amenable to analysis in terms similar to those proposed by Raposo and Haegeman, namely that personal and inflected infinitives arise when INFL is specified for case, and that this can happen only in null-subject languages. Ledgeway claims that the subject of a personal

infinitive is always postverbal, whereas an inflected infinitive can normally have its subject either before or after the verb. While this is essentially true for the Romance cases, the West Flemish personal infinitive always takes a preverbal subject, as seen above. This difference in word order will be set aside; I assume that it can be derived from independent differences between Germanic and Romance clause structure.

5 A proposal: pseudofiniteness

Let us assume, then, that personal and inflected infinitives exhibit Case and Agreement properties by virtue of a) a relation they bear to a higher case-assigning element and b) some property that characterizes INFL only in null-subject languages. The higher case-assigning element can be a verb, as in (17)a, a preposition, as in (17)b, or a matrix INFL, as in (17)c.

17) a. Portuguese:

o João lamenta [eles terem gastado esse dinheiro para nada]

the John regret-pres-3sg they have-inf-3pl spend-pp that money for nothing

‘John regrets their having spent that money for nothing.’ (Ledgeway 1998:10)

b. Old Italian:

una giovane, senza vederla egli, passò

a youth-fem without see-inf-her he pass-past-3sg

‘A young lady went by without his seeing her.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 3)

c. Portuguese:

é difícil [os meninos trabalharem]

be-pres-3sg difficult the children work-inf-agr

‘It is difficult for the children to work.’ (Raposo 1989: 283)

Following Raposo, I assume that what makes INFL accessible to the higher case-marking element is that either it heads a projection in the search space of the case-marker, or it has moved to the head of such a projection.⁷

In (17)a, then, the embedded INFL heads an IP in direct object position. In (17)b, it has moved to the head of the CP complement of the preposition, and in (17)c it heads the associate of a null expletive in subject position. The question that arises, under minimalist assumptions, is how an AGREE relation can be established between the case-assigning head (henceforth the probe) and the constituent headed by INFL. On standard assumptions, the case-assigner bears uninterpretable ϕ -features, and will match a goal with uninterpretable Case and interpretable ϕ -features. Recall Raposo's observation that personal/inflected infinitives are restricted to null-subject languages, and his assumption that only in these languages can INFL be specified for case. Under the minimalist program, this amounts to saying that in null-subject languages, INFL can bear the sort of uninterpretable case feature normally borne by nominals. Suppose that this feature is optionally added to INFL in the numeration, independently of the feature FINITE. If the INFL is finite, then the feature will be valued and deleted by FINITE.⁸ If the INFL is non-finite, then the derivation will crash unless the case feature enters into an AGREE relation

⁷ Kornfilt (2001a) argues, on the basis of Turkish, that the case-assigning ability of AGR in non-finite constructions can be activated (her term is "unlocked") if AGR is indexed in one of several ways: by θ -marking, by γ -marking, or by being coindexed with an operator. See section 9.

⁸ This is similar in some respects to a proposal by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998, 1999), according to which the EPP can be satisfied within the head of INFL, eliminating the need for overt movement of a subject to [spec,IP].

with a probe. Once the AGREE relation is established, two things happen. First, the uninterpretable case feature is deleted, and second, INFL acquires the ability to check nominative case on a subject (always), and to spell out ϕ -feature agreement on the infinitival verb (in some languages only).⁹

What we have, then, is a non-finite INFL that acquires the properties associated with the FINITE node during the syntactic computation. I will refer to this situation as *Pseudofiniteness*.

Given the dependency structure in (2), we must now ask what it means for a non-finite INFL to acquire case-assigning and agreement properties. Is the FINITE node activated in such a way as to bring with it the node(s) that dominate it in the dependency structure, or are the case and agreement properties added in such a way as not to alter the feature structure of INFL?

The only feature whose presence is entailed by the presence of FINITE is PROPOSITION. Truly finite clauses always denote propositions, as opposed to bare events, as shown in (18) below. In (18)a, the verb *saw* refers to a direct, visual perception of an event, while in (18)b it refers to a cognitive realization of a proposition.

- 18) a. We saw [the children eat(ing) the cookies].
 b. We saw [(that) the children were eating the cookies].

⁹ In languages in which INFL cannot be specified for case, no AGREE relation can be established between the higher case-assigner and INFL. Presumably, this is the type of situation in which Exceptional Case Marking happens, possibly subject to other constraints.

The question, then, is whether personal/inflected infinitives can ever denote bare events. If they can, then the superficial properties of finiteness are present, but INFL has not become fully finite. If they cannot, then the matter is undecided.

The Portuguese examples in (19) contain inflected infinitives denoting bare events.

- 19) a. eu vi os meninos lerem o livro
 I saw the children read-inf-3pl the book
 'I saw the children read the book.' (Raposo 1989: 279)
- b. Eu vi [eles trabalharem]
 I saw they-nom work-inf-3pl
 'I saw them work.' (Raposo 1989: 288)
- c. Os actores_i viram [eles_{*i/j} representarem a cena]
 The actors saw they (≠the actors) represent-inf-3pl the scene
 'The actors saw them represent the scene.' (Raposo 1989: 302)
- d. [os meninos a dormirem] é/*são um espectáculo lindíssimo
 the children to sleep-inf-3pl be-pres-3sg/*3pl a spectacle beautiful-superl
 'The children sleeping is/*are a beautiful sight.' (Raposo 1989: 282)

I therefore conclude that true finiteness and pseudofiniteness differ, not only in their provenance, but also in their representations.

6 Pseudofiniteness and syntactic operations

Quicoli (1996) discusses inflected infinitives in Portuguese, and shows that they differ systematically from non-inflected infinitives with respect to various types of movement from the embedded subject position. Whereas A-movement (including ECM)

is generally possible with plain infinitives and impossible with inflected infinitives and finite clauses, A'-movement is impossible with plain infinitives and possible with inflected infinitives and finite clauses. These phenomena are illustrated in (20) - (24).

A-movement from embedded subject position:

20) Subject raising:

a. Plain infinitive:

Os embaixadores parecem ter chegado a um acordo

the ambassadors seem-pres-3pl have-inf reach-pp to an agreement

'The ambassadors seem to have reached an agreement.' (Quicoli 1996: 57)

b. Inflected infinitive:

*Os embaixadores parecem terem chegado a um acordo

the ambassadors seem-pres-3pl have-inf-3pl reach-pp to an agreement

'The ambassadors seem to have reached an agreement.' (Quicoli 1996: 57)

c. Finite clause:

*Os embaixadores parecem que chegarem a um acordo

the ambassadors seem-pres-3pl that reach-past-3pl to an agreement

'The ambassadors seem that (they) reached an agreement.' (Quicoli 1996: 57)

21) ECM/object clitic placement:

a. Plain infinitive:

José nos viu sair da casa

José us see-past-3sg leave-inf of-the house

'José saw us leave the house.' (Quicoli 1996: 68)

b. Inflected infinitive:

*José nos viu sairmos da casa

José us see-past-3sg leave-inf-1pl of-the house

‘José saw us leave-agr the house.’

(Quicoli 1996: 68)

22) Passive:

a. Plain infinitive:

Os soldados foram vistos cair.

The soldiers be-past-3pl see-pp.plfall-inf.

‘the soldiers were seen to fall.’

(Quicoli 1996: 69)

b. Inflected infinitive:

*Os soldados foram vistos cairem.

The soldiers be-past-3pl see-pp.pl fall-inf-3pl.

‘The soldiers were seen to fall-agr.’

(Quicoli 1996:69)

A-bar movement from embedded subject position:

23) Wh-movement:

a. Plain infinitive:

*Que jogadores você lamenta ter abandonado a equipe?

Which players you regret have-inf abandon-pp the team

‘Which players do you regret to have abandoned the team?’ (Quicoli 1996: 56)

b. Inflected infinitive:

Que jogadores você lamenta terem abandonado a equipe?

Which players you regret have-inf-3pl abandon-pp the team

‘Which players do you regret to have-agr abandoned the team?’

(Quicoli 1996: 56)

c. Finite clause:

Que jogadores você lamenta que tenham abandonado a equipe?

which players you regret that have-pres-3pl abandon-pp the team

‘Which players do you regret that (they) have abandoned the team?’

(Quicoli 1996:56)

24) Topicalization:

a. Plain infinitive:

*As estrelas parecia sorrir.

the stars seem-past-3sg smile-inf

‘The stars, it seemed to smile.’

(Quicoli 1996: 62)

b. Inflected infinitive:

As estrelas parecia sorrirem

the stars seem-past-3sg smile-inf-3pl

‘The stars, it seemed to smile-agr.’

(Quicoli 1996: 62)

c. Finite clause:

As estrelas parecia que sorriam

the stars seem-past-3sg that smile-past-3pl

‘The stars, it seemed that (they) smiled.’

(Quicoli 1996: 61)

Quicoli's analysis of the phenomena exemplified above is based on the assumption that, in inflected infinitives, INFL contains AGR. Following Chomsky (1981), AGR is an accessible SUBJECT for the purposes of the Binding Theory. When the movement leaves an NP-trace, as in (20) - (22), the presence of AGR in INFL makes the lower clause the binding domain for the trace, and the sentence is ruled out by Condition A. When the movement is to an A'-position, as in (23) and (24), the inflected infinitive is well-formed due to the fact that the trace is case-marked. The plain infinitive in such cases is ruled out by the Case Filter.

These examples are straightforwardly accounted for under the current approach as well. Let us consider (23) and (24) first. In the (b) and (c) examples, the uninterpretable case feature on the embedded subject is valued and deleted by the embedded INFL. In the truly finite (c) examples this is routine; in the pseudofinite (b) examples the valuing/deletion happens as a consequence of the fact that the embedded INFL bears an uninterpretable case feature of its own. This case feature enters into an AGREE relation with a higher case-assigner and, on being checked, gives INFL the ability to value and delete the case feature on its subject. In (23)a and (24)a, however, the uninterpretable case feature on the embedded subject cannot be deleted, because the embedded INFL has no case feature and thus does not acquire the ability to check case on its subject. The uninterpretable case feature thus causes the derivation to crash.

Exactly the opposition situation holds in (20)-(22). Here, the higher clause contains a case-assigning probe that requires an active DP with which to AGREE. In the plain infinitive examples in (20)a, (21)a and (22)a, the embedded subject has an uninterpretable case feature and is thus visible to the probe from the higher clause. In the (b) and (c)

examples, however, the uninterpretable case feature is deleted and thus the embedded subject is not visible to the probe. When the embedded clause is finite, as in (20)c, the embedded subject has its case valued by the FINITE feature on the embedded INFL. When the embedded clause is pseudofinite, as in the (b) examples, the embedded INFL itself has an uninterpretable case feature that satisfies the probe. The embedded subject then has its case valued by the embedded INFL, and no AGREE relation can arise between the higher probe and the embedded subject. Thus the higher probe cannot exhibit π -feature agreement with the embedded subject, and the embedded subject can neither bear the case assigned by the higher probe, nor move to the specifier position associated with it. If, on the other hand, the probe were to bypass the embedded INFL and target the embedded subject, then the uninterpretable case feature on the embedded INFL would not be deleted and the derivation would crash.

7 Finiteness and independent tense

I now turn to the question of whether finiteness is related, in any systematic fashion, to temporal independence. First, however, it would be helpful to sharpen somewhat the notion of temporal independence. The most obvious case of temporal independence is found with finite indicative clauses in languages like English. Consider the sentences in (25).

- 25) a. Mary thinks that Sue was in Paris last year.
 b. Anna claimed that her mother is in London.
 c. The children thought that their teacher was mean.

English indicative clauses are indexed directly to the deictic centre of the utterance, which is normally the moment of speech. Thus in (25)b, the embedded clause is

understood to hold, not only at the time of Anna's making the claim, but also at the moment of speech. In (25)c, both matrix and embedded clause are interpreted as holding prior to the moment of speech. I shall refer to this sort of obligatory temporal independence as temporal *deixis*.

A more limited type of temporal independence is found with what Haegeman (1985) and Wurmbrand (1998) call [+tense] infinitivals. Here, the embedded clause is not temporally deictic, in that it does not have to be directly linked to the moment of speech. Its time reference is determined, either with reference to that of the matrix clause, or by a temporal adverbial.¹⁰ The lexical semantics of the matrix verb generally constrains the temporal relation between the two clauses. Examples are given in (26). Clauses of this sort will be characterized as temporally *relative*.

- 26) a. We decided to cut the grass. (Matrix prior to moment of speech, infinitive after matrix, unspecified w.r.t. moment of speech)
- b. We decided on Tuesday to cut the grass the following/*previous day.
- c. We claimed to have cut the grass. (Matrix prior to moment of speech, infinitive prior to matrix.)

¹⁰ McCawley (1974) shows that constituents that, on the surface, seem to be considerably less than a full clause can nonetheless be modified by temporal adverbs, as shown in (i).

(i) Now Mary wants your bicycle until Tuesday; tomorrow she'll doubtless want it all winter.

McCawley uses such data to argue for the presence of an abstract underlying verb such as *have* in an embedded clause in (i). These data bear on the nature of small (i.e. verbless) clauses and what, if any, inflectional features they carry, but have no direct bearing on the use to which temporal adverbs are put in the present paper.

- d. We claimed on Tuesday to have cut the grass the preceding/*following Sunday.

Bare events, such as the ones in (27), and restructuring infinitives, like those in (28), have no temporal index, and are thus completely dependent on their governing clauses for temporal reference. Not only is the embedded clause interpreted with reference to the main clause, it must have the same temporal reference as the main clause. These clauses will be termed temporally *transparent*.

- 27) a. On Tuesday, we watched the children build a sandcastle (*on Monday).
 b. The children building the sandcastle on Tuesday was a delightful spectacle (*on Wednesday)
 c. On Tuesday, the children were made to redo their homework (*on Wednesday).
- 28) a. The children tried (*on Tuesday) to build a sandcastle on Wednesday.
 b. The kitten managed (*in the afternoon) to tangle the ball of yarn in the morning.

Temporal deixis is correlated with finiteness, in that all temporally deictic clauses are finite. This follows from the fact that DEIXIS is a dependent of FINITE in the dependency structure in (2). Not all finite clauses are temporally deictic, however. Frequently, subjunctive clauses are temporally relative, in that their time reference is determined relative to that of their governing context. They are not transparent, however, in that they can be modified with their own temporal adverbs and can thus refer to a time different from that referred to by the matrix clause.

The subjunctive in Spanish seems, at least in some cases, to be temporally deictic, as shown in (29). In these examples, present subjunctives cannot be used to denote situations whose time reference is the same as that of a past-tense matrix verb; in these cases a past subjunctive must be used. The example in (29)b is especially interesting; like

the English sentence in (30), it improves to the extent that a dual-access interpretation is available.

- 29) a. Me temía que *este/estuviera hacienda algo incorrecto
 me fear-past that be-*subj.pres/subj.past doing something wrong
 ‘I feared that I *am/was doing something wrong.’
- b. Desconocía que ?*sea/fuera casada
 not-know-past that be?*subj.pres/subj.past married
 ‘I didn’t know that she ?*is/was married.’

30) ?I didn’t know that she is married.

In contrast, the French subjunctive is temporally relative, as shown in (31)a. Here, the matrix clause is in the past tense, and the complement in the present subjunctive. The clauses are interpreted as having the same time reference. If the complement clause is also in the past, as in (31)b, the complement clause is interpreted as holding at a time prior to that of the matrix clause.

- 31) a. Carole a eu peur que sa mère soit fâchée.
 Carole has had fear that her mother be.subj.pres angry
 ‘Carole was afraid that her mother was angry.’
- b. Carole a eu peur que sa mère ait été fâchée.
 Carole has had fear that her mother has.subj been angry
 ‘Carole was afraid that her mother had been angry.’

This variation in the temporal rigidity of subjunctive clauses lends support to the hypothesis that the subjunctive realizes simply the feature FINITE, and is thus compatible

with feature structures either containing or lacking DEIXIS. Presumably, languages can vary as to what other properties are associated with the subjunctive.¹¹

Let us now consider non-finite and pseudofinite constructions. As we can see from the data in (26) - (28), ordinary infinitival clauses in English can be either temporally relative or temporally transparent. The same is true for Portuguese, as seen in (17)a and (19). The pseudofinite personal infinitives in West Flemish are temporally relative, as shown by Haegeman (1985) and exemplified in (9). These results are consistent with the hypothesis that temporal deixis is due to the presence of the feature DEIXIS, a dependent of FINITE, and that pseudofiniteness is independent of the inherent feature content of INFL. We expect that pseudofinite clauses should exhibit the same range of temporal referentiality found in non-finite constructions, and that expectation is confirmed.

8 Pseudofiniteness in Southern Calabrian

Let us finally turn to the intriguing case of the Southern Calabrian *modo* construction. Ledgeway (1998) argues, at length and in considerable detail, that the distribution of this construction is identical to that of the personal/inflected infinitives in other Italian dialects, most particularly Old Neapolitan.

What makes this construction unusual, for an inflected infinitive, is that the verb forms are identical to those of the present indicative. The differences between the *modo*

¹¹ Whereas in English, the feature DEIXIS seems to be sufficient to specify finite indicative clauses, the fact that subjunctive clauses in Spanish seem to be temporally deictic suggests that the dependency structure in (2) may need to be enriched by the addition of a feature such as REALIS. The investigation of this question lies outside the scope of the present paper, however.

Second, the present indicative proper is temporally deictic, and alternates with other tenses like past and future. The *modo* construction is temporally transparent, with its time reference entirely determined by that of the matrix clause. No tense forms other than the present can appear in a *modo* clause, regardless of the time reference of that clause, as seen in (34).

34) a. conditional > present

vollarìa ['u cangiu misterì]

want- cond-1SG MODO change-pres-1SG job

'I should like to change trade.'

(Ledgeway 1998: 34)

b. preterite > present

vozza [ma sapa sulu cui ci fà 'a sfumatura a li
parmari]

want-pst-3SG MODO know-pr-3SG only who there do-pr-3SG the trimming to the-PL
palm.tree-PL

'He wanted to know who trimmed the palm trees.'

(Ledgeway 1998: 34)

c. imperfect > present

m'havia scordatu c'havia ['u viu a unu]

refl-1SG=have-imperf-1SG forget-pp that=have-imperf-1SG MODO see-pres-1SG to one

'I had forgotten that I had to see someone.'

(Ledgeway 1998: 34)

Also, the *modo construction* appears with complementizers that in other Romance languages take only infinitival clauses, such as *instead of* (35), and it cannot appear with complementizers that typically take only finite clauses, such as *until*, *while*, and *although*, as in (36).

- 35) a. e di notti vai facendu ‘u spirdu casa casa, mbeci **mu** ti curchi
 and of night go-pr-2S do-GER the spirit house house instead MODO you lie-pres-2S
 e **mu** ti levi prestu a matina
 and MODO refl-2 get.up-pr-2S early the morning
 ‘And at night time you go around haunting the houses, instead of going to bed
 and getting up early in the morning.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 37)
 cf. *e di notti vai facendu ‘u spirdu casa casa, mbeci **chi** ti curchi e **chi** ti levi
 prestu a matina
- b. imbeci **ma** jamu avanti, jamu arretu
 instead MODO go-pres-1PL forwards, go-pres-1PL backwards
 ‘Instead of going forwards, we’re going backwards.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 37)
 cf. *imbecia **chi** jamu avanti, jamu arretu
- 36) a. girdàvamu nzina **chi** non venìa a maschera
 shout-imperf-1PL until that not come-imperf-3SG the usherette
 ‘We shouted until the usherette came.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 36)
 cf. *girdàvamu nzina non **ma** vena a maschera
- b. ntramentri **chi** jeu travaggiava, iddhu si ripusava
 in=while that I work-imperf-1SG, he refl-3 rest-pres-3SG
 ‘While I was working, he was resting.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 36)
 cf. *ntramenti jeu **mi** travvaghgiu, iddhu si ripusava

- c. cu tuttu **chi** chiuvià, niscù mi zzappa l'ortu
 with all that rain-imperf-3SG, go.out-past-3SG MODO dig-pres-3SG the=garden
 'Although it was raining, he went out to dig the garden.' (Ledgeway 1998: 36)
 cf. *cu tuttu **mi** chiuvi, niscù mi zzappa l'ortu

Ledgeway proposes that the *modo* construction is, in fact, an inflected infinitive, and that the present indicative paradigm encodes only agreement, not tense. It is of interest that Southern Calabrian makes very little use of the ordinary infinitive, reserving it for complements of modals. In fact, in contexts that normally trigger obviation — complements to volitional verbs — these dialects use the *modo* construction even when the subjects are coreferential, as shown in (37).

- 37) a. vollarìa ['u cangiu misterì]
 want-cond-SG MODO change-pres-1SG job
 'I should like to change trade.' (Ledgeway 1998: 34)
- b. vozza [ma sapa sulu cui ci fà 'a sfumatura a li parmari]
 want-pst-3S MODO know-prs-3S only who there do-prs-3S the trimming to the palm-PL
 'He wanted to know who trims the palm trees' (Ledgeway 1998: 34)
- c. eu vogghiu [mi ti pagu]
 I want-pres-1SG MODO you pay-pres-1SG
 I want to pay you (Ledgeway 1998: 44)

One difference between the *modo* construction and the Old Neapolitan inflected infinitive construction is that in Old Neapolitan, the inflected infinitive always appears with a case-assigning element immediately governing it, just like the personal/inflected infinitives in Portuguese and West Flemish discussed above. In contrast, the *modo*

construction does not invariably have a case-assigning element governing it. However, it is entirely possible that the *modo* element itself provides a case specification for the INFL in the *modo* clause. Suppose that is the case. Then the *modo* construction is, like personal and inflected infinitives in other languages, not finite but rather pseudofinite. We thus expect that we might find *modo* clauses denoting bare events rather than propositions, and indeed we do, as shown in (38).

- 38) a. ‘ncumincia ma vi sàgghia ‘u sangu a ‘lu cerbeddhu
 begin-pres-3SGMODO you-PL(DAT) rise-pres-3SG the blood to the brain
 ‘Your blood begins to flow to your brain.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 25)
- b. tu fai mi ndi mangia tri parti iddu
 you make-pres-3SG MODO part. eat-pres-3SG three parts he
 ‘You make him eat three parts of it.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 39)
- c. li fazzu mu stannu tranquilli
 them-M.PL make-pres-1SG MODO stay-pres-3PL calm-M.PL
 I’ll make them relax (Ledgeway 1998: 40)
- d. ti faci mu ti passa ‘u malucori
 you make-pres-3SG MODO you(DAT) go.away-pres-3SG the sorrow
 ‘It will make your pain go away.’ (Ledgeway 1998: 40)

I thus conclude that the South Calabrian *modo* construction is pseudofinite, and that the fact that it has nominative subjects and ϕ -feature agreement is due to the fact that its INFL is specified for case, just like personal and inflected infinitives in West Flemish and Portuguese. The question, then, is why the South Calabrian pseudofinite forms are morphophonologically indistinguishable from finite forms, while in the other languages,

there is a special inflected infinitival form. More generally, how is the derivationally-created pseudo-finite INFL morphologically realized? One promising line of investigation, left for another paper, is the idea that, in languages like South Calabrian that have only vestigial infinitives, infinitival forms simply lack the inflectional weight required to support case and agreement. The next best form available, at the point of vocabulary insertion, would then be the present indicative, assuming, as Ledgeway and many other authors do, that present is a default interpretation of an unmarked tense.

9 Finiteness in Turkish

Let us now return to the Turkish constructions discussed by George and Kornfilt (1981). They divide Turkish complement clauses into two types: direct complements, as in (39), and gerunds, as in (40). The (a) examples have overt, internally case-marked subjects and exhibit ϕ -feature agreement, while the (b) examples have neither of these properties.

39) a. Ahmet [biz viski-yi iç-ti-k] san-ıyor

Ahmet we whiskey-acc drink-past-1plbelieve-pres

‘Ahmet believes (that) we drank the whiskey.’

b. Ahmet [biz-i viski-yi iç-ti] san-ıyor

Ahmet we-acc whiskey-acc drink-past believe-pres

‘Ahmet believes us to have drunk the whiskey.’

40) a. (ben)[kız-ım-in viski-yi iç-me-sin]-e razı ol-du-m

I daughter-my-gen whiskey-acc drink-ger-3sg-dat consent-past-1sg

‘I consented to my daughter’s drinking the whiskey.’

b. (ben)[viski-yi iç-meğ-]e razı ol-du-m

I whiskey-acc drink-ger-dat consent-past-1sg

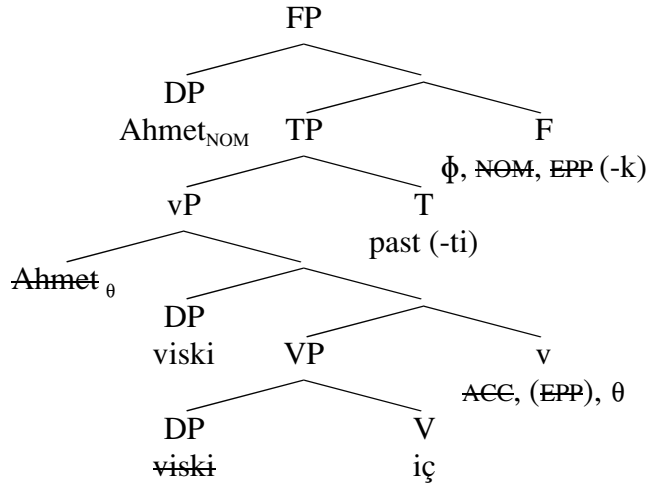
‘I consented to drink the whiskey.’

George and Kornfilt (1981) characterize the (a) examples as finite, and the (b) examples as non-finite. However, they also argue at length that gerunds are nominal, rather than purely clausal. Gerunds can themselves bear overt case, such as the dative marking on the gerunds in (40). They can appear in all positions in which ordinary nominals appear, and they are inflected with nominal morphology. Thus, the subject of a gerund is genitive, like the possessor in a nominal, and the agreement affixes are the same as those found in the possessive construction. We have provisionally defined finiteness as the ability to check nominative case; let us now consider where constructions like (40)a fit in.

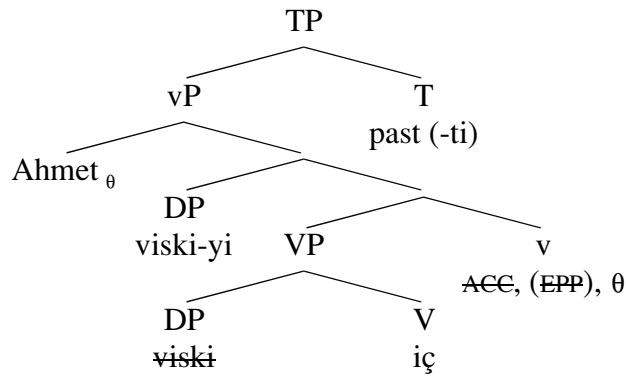
Following George and Kornfilt, and updating their analysis to conform to the essentials of the minimalist program, the embedded clauses/gerunds in (39) and (40) have the structures in (41) and (42).¹² I have provisionally used the generic term FP for the projection headed by case and agreement features in finite clauses.

¹² For the most part I will ignore linear order; the projections are given as right-headed for clarity.

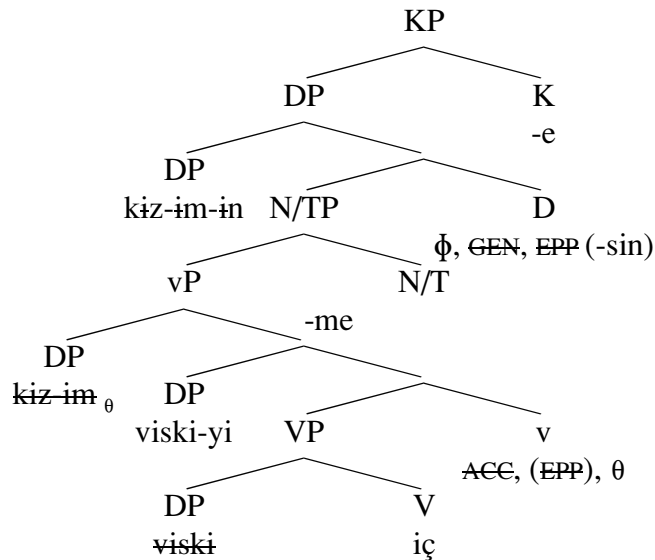
41) a. Ahmet [biz viski-yi iç-ti-k] san-ıyor



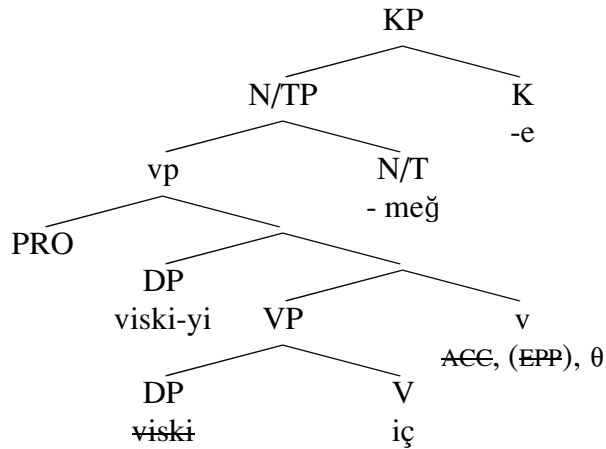
b. Ahmet [biz-i viski-yi iç-ti] san-ıyor



42) a. (ben) [kız-ım-ın viski-yi iç-me-sin]-e razı ol-du-m



b. (ben) [viski-yi iç-meğ-]e razı ol-du-m



In Turkish, there are clear parallels to be drawn between the clausal projection, labelled FP above, and the nominal projection, labelled DP above. Both of these functional heads license ϕ -feature agreement on the head and structural case on the specifier. These are the properties labelled ‘finiteness’ by George and Kornfilt (1981), and as AGR by people working on Turkish syntax since then (see also Kornfilt 2001a, 2001b). I have labelled the gerundive projection N/T, to reflect its hybrid role as an element encoding both nominal category and, in some cases, something like tense ([\pm Future], according to George and Kornfilt. Its parallel in the clausal system is T, which would host the feature [PRECEDENCE] from the dependency structure in (2).

Let us assume, uncontroversially, that clauses such as the complement clause in (39)a are finite, and that the complements in (39)b and (40)b are non-finite.¹³ The question then is whether (40)a should be treated as nonfinite, finite, or possibly pseudofinite. As before, we assume that if a clause denotes a bare event, it cannot be truly

¹³ Zidani-Eroğlu (1997) argues that the accusative-marked embedded subject in (39)b moves overtly into the matrix clause to check case.

finite. The sentences in (43) contain gerundive clauses with casemarked subjects and ϕ -feature agreement, but which denote bare events.

- 43) a. Çocuk-lar-ın viski-yi iç-me-sin gör-ül-ecek bir manzara değil.
 child-pl-gen whiskey-acc drink-ger-3pl see-psv-ger one sight is-not
 ‘The children drinking the whiskey is not a sight to be seen.’
- b. Çocuk-lar-ın bahçe-de oyna-ma-sın-ı duy-du-k
 child-pl-gen garden-loc play-ger-3pl-acc hear-pst-1pl
 ‘We heard the children playing in the garden.’

The fact that so-called finite gerunds can refer to bare events eliminates the possibility that they are truly finite. Given our characterization of pseudofiniteness, and the idea that finiteness might cut across the nominal/sentential distinction, we might be led to look for an external case-assigner that would perhaps be activating the case-assigning ability of the D-head in (40) and in (43). However, it is important to note that the DP dominating the construction itself bears case—the case assigned by whatever governs it. It is thus unlikely that an analysis along the lines proposed for pseudofinite clauses in Romance can be pursued here. In addition, as Kornfilt (2001a) notes, these clauses are not, in fact, restricted to case-marked contexts. I therefore conclude that the Turkish agreeing gerunds are not, in fact, either finite or pseudo-finite. Rather, they simply exhibit ordinary possessive nominal behaviour: genitive case on their subjects and possessive agreement on their heads.

10 Conclusion

I have shown that the traditional understanding of finiteness, namely that it consists of the ability to assign structural (nominative) case to a subject, and the possibility of

having ϕ -feature agreement encoded on the verb, is essentially correct. Finiteness is thus a purely syntactic property, but one which forms part of a dependency structure that encodes the syntactic and semantic properties of INFL. It thus exhibits certain partial correlations with semantic properties such as temporo-personal deixis, and the proposition/event distinction. All truly finite clauses are propositional, though not all propositions are finite, and all temporally deictic clauses are finite, though not all finite clauses are temporally deictic.

We have also seen a set of constructions that have the superficial properties normally associated with finiteness, but which differ systematically from finite clauses. INFL in these clauses, which we call pseudofinite, acquires the ability to value nominative case and bear ϕ -feature agreement during the course of the syntactic computation. Pseudofiniteness is triggered by the presence of an uninterpretable case feature on a nonfinite INFL, an option available only in null-subject languages.

In addition, we looked briefly at the Turkish nominalized clauses that led George and Kornfilt (1981) to propose that finiteness and tense are independent properties. While the conclusion drawn in this paper is essentially in agreement with theirs as regards the independence of tense and finiteness, we also concluded that Turkish nominalized clauses, though they exhibit both internally-assigned (genitive) case and (possessive) agreement on the nominalized verbal head, are neither finite nor pseudofinite. Rather, their behaviour is that normally expected of nominals with possessors. It remains to be seen whether there is a property analogous to pseudofiniteness in the nominal system.

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