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Dependent clauses in Albanian: A Balkan feature

Abstract

Balkan languages are known for the use of the finite verb in control contexts, unlike Romance and Germanic languages. However, both Albanian and Aromanian varieties (Southern Albania) also present non-finite verbal forms in dependent clauses, in alternance with finite structures. Thus, Tosk/ standard Albanian shows both finite clauses in control contexts, and, in some contexts, a participial construction introduced by the prepositions *për* ‘for’, *pa* ‘without’, *tu/ duke* for the gerund. In Gheg variety all dependent contexts include an invariant form of the verbal base preceded by the preposition *me* ‘with’. Aromanian, like Tosk Albanian and Romanian, selects finite constructions in alternation with infinitives introduced by the preposition *di* ‘of’ or *ti* ‘for’. The article analyzes these data in keeping with recent papers by Chomsky which develop a Strong Minimalist approach to syntax.

Keywords. Balkan languages, complement clauses, control, clause introducers, participle, infinitive

1. Introduction¹

1 The data discussed here were gathered through field research with native informants from different varieties. I thank my informants for their intelligent and generous collaboration, and, among others, Mimoza Rekaj for Gjirokaštër, Piro Mishtaku for Libofshë, Paola Napolitano for San Benedetto Ullano, Eliana Laçe for Shkodër. The speakers were informed of the type of questionnaires and interviews and participated willingly.

A broad IPA phonetic transcription is used for the examples: for the sake of simplicity, [ə] is transcribed as [ĕ], the back low vowel of Shkodër Gheg as [ɑ], the palatal stop [ɟ] as [gj], and the low mid stressed vowels are rendered as [o] and [e] respectively. Among others, we preserve the IPA symbols for the dental fricatives [θ] and [ð], in Albanian spelling *th* and *dh*, for the postalveolar fricative [ʃ] *sh*, for the palatal nasal [ɲ] *nj* and the palatal lateral [ɭ]. Abbreviations: Acc = accusative, Asp = progressive aspect particle, Def = definite, f = feminine, Impf = imperfect, Inf = infinitive, Lkr = Linker, the pre-posed article, Mood = mood, NM = negative marker, Obl = oblique, OCl = Object Clitic, Past = past, PP = past participle, pl = plural, P = preposition, Prt = particle, Q = quantifier, M/R = middle-reflexive clitic *u*, sg = singular, Subj = subjunctive, φ = nominal features, TV = thematic vowel.

As well known, Standard Albanian is based on Tosk. We prefer to keep speaking of Tosk

In some Balkan languages, complement clauses admit two types of syntax. Non-finite verbal forms are only partially similar to the infinitive of Romance or Germanic languages. Specifically, in Gheg this non-finite form occurs in all modal contexts, also including control contexts; in Tosk varieties the non-finite form is limited to prepositional contexts (cf. the examples in (7)). Tosk Albanian and Aromanian, the minority Romance language spoken in southern Albania, admit finite clauses in modal and control contexts, introduced by a specialized particle, ‘subjunctive particle’ such as *të* ‘të’ in Albanian, that combines with the inflected verb form. The question is addressed by a substantial literature (cf. the discussion in Manzini and Savoia 2007, 2018), within the cartographic framework, as we will briefly discuss.

As for the finite clauses, the problem is how the embedded subject is interpreted as co-referential with an argument of the matrix clause. In fact, as stressed by Manzini and Savoia (2007: 7) the syntactic properties postulated for the PRO subject of infinitives (Chomsky 1995) appear to be ‘irrelevant for control and similar interpretations, since these equally arise in finite contexts in Balkan languages’. According to Manzini and Savoia (2007, 2018), the so-called ‘subjunctive particle’ of Balkan languages introduces the relevant variable, like the infinitive morphology of Romance or Germanic. We assume that the particle introduces the EPP argument of the embedded finite verb as a variable. This property allows the embedded subject to enter into control and chain (raising) relations, implying the event unification between the matrix and dependent clause.

Albanian varieties provide the two main types of complement clauses, i.e. the finite form and the non-finite form; the most interesting aspect is that the use of such constructions is not coinciding with the distribution of German and Romance languages. More precisely we find both finite dependent clauses in control contexts and non-finite clauses overextended independently from the sentential contexts depending on the variety. We will study these typologies, focusing on two main issues, the i.e. the nature of the introducers and the role of the non-finite verbal forms within Phase model drawn by the recent works by Chomsky (Chomsky 2015, 2019, 2021, 2024).

2. Tosk, Arbëresh, and Gheg

In the Tosk varieties, including both standard Albanian and Arbëresh varieties, finite dependent clauses occur in modal contexts (volitional, aspectual, perception, motion, etc.). This also holds for control contexts, where the verb agrees with an argument of the matrix verb,

because our informants use a spoken non-standard local variety.

as in the examples in (1) and (2) for Gjirokaštër. The dependent clauses are introduced by the Particle *të* (Prt), in (1a-d), and the declarative introducers *tjë* or *se*, both *wh*-elements², can precede *të*. Unlike the negative marker (NM) of declarative clauses *nuk* ‘not’, in modal dependent contexts and in imperatives, the negation is expressed by the specialized negative marker *mos*, which precedes the particle *të*, as in (1b,c).

- (1) a. *filo-v-a* (tjë) *t* *a* *bëj*
begin-Past-1sg that Prt it do.1sg
‘I began to do it’
b. *të* *θa-tj* (tjë) *të* (mos) *e* *la-p-e*
to.you tell.Past-1sg that Prt NM it wash-Subj-2sg
‘I told you not to wash him/her’
c. *eft* *më* *mirë* (tjë) *ata* (mos) *të* *vi-jën* *këtu*
be.3sg more fine that they NM Prt come-3pl here
‘It is better that they (do not) come here’
d. *erð-a* *të* *t* *a* *jap*
come.Past-1sg Prt to.you it give.1sg
‘I came to give it to you’

Declarative clauses:

- (2) *ja-m* *e* *sigurt* *se/ tjë* *do* *vijë*
Be-1sg Lkr sure that want come.3sg
‘I am sure that he will come’ Gjirokaštër

In some Italo-Albanian dialects (Arbëresh), of Tosk descent, *të* is regularly preceded by a *wh*-introducer, namely the quantifier *sa* ‘how much/ many’, as in the dialect of S. Benedetto Ullano (northern Calabria), in (3a-c). The declarative introducer is *se*, in turn an original *wh*-element, in (3d).

- (3) a. *finir-t-a* *sa* *t* *lej-ijn-a* *libr-in*
stop-Past-1sg that Prt read-Imprf-1sg book-Acc.msg
‘I stopped reading the book’
b. *i* *θa-f* *sa* *t* (mos) *ha-r*
him/her tell-Past.1sg that Prt NM eat-Subj.3sg
‘I told him/her to (not) eat’
c. *erð-a* *sa* *t* *të* *fih-p-a*

² *tsi* in Aromanian, *tjë/ sa* in Albanian are *wh*-elements, as the interrogative contexts show, cf. *tsi fats?* ‘What do you do?’ (Aromanian), *tjë bën?* ‘What do you do?’ (Albanian). The same holds for *sa* ‘how much/ many’, cf. *sa diajëra?* ‘How many boys?’ (S. Benedetto Ullano), and the complementizer *se*, in turn a *wh*-element, as in *Me se udhetove?* ‘What did you travel with?’ (Demiraj 2002: 245, 399). Mann (1977: 122) identifies it as a *wh*-relative element, for instance *me se...* ‘with what...’.

came-1sg that Prt you see-Impf-1sg

'I came to see you'

- d. ai θo-t se diaʎ-i fië
He say-3sg that boy-Def.msg sleep
'He says that the boy sleeps'

San Benedetto Ullano

As the examples in (1)-(2) illustrate, the particle *të* is compatible with the declarative introducer, which precedes it. The lexical subject, for instance in volitional contexts, follows or precedes the dependent verb, in (4a) for the Arbëresh of S. Benedetto and in (4b) for Gjirokastër:

- (4) a. dëfiro-n (dial-i) sa t (dial-i) leji-n libr-in
wish-1sg boy-Def Prt Prt boy-Def read-Subj.3sg book-Def.Acc
'I wish that the boy reads the book' San Benedetto Ullano
b. unë dua ai të ha - i
I want.1sg he Prt eat -Subj. 3sg
'I want that he eats' Gjirokastër

Aromanian presents a similar type of dependent syntax. In the varieties of Myzeqeja exemplified here by the data from Libofshë, the wh-element *tsi* introduces the finite verb also in control contexts, as in (5a-c), where an introducer traditionally characterized as modal, namely *s*, comparable with Albanian *të*, occurs between *tsi* and the verb. The negative marker precedes *s*.

- (5) a. tsë dze-f tsi (nu) s u fats
to.you tell.Past-1sg that (NM) Prt it do.2sg
'I told you (not) to do it'
b. ji ne-si minta tsi nu s u fak
to.me come.Past-1sg the.mind that NM Prt it do.1sg
'I remembered not to do it'
c. mini mëndue-sk tsi s u ved
I think-1sg that Prt it see.1sg
'I think I see it' Libofshë

Gheg Albanian (Shkodër) generalizes an invariable form of the verb preceded by the prepositions *me* 'with', as in (6a), *tui* 'at (Gerund)' or *pa* 'without' in (6b,b'), in all modal contexts. This form, called *paskajore* 'infinitive' (Manzini and Savoia 2018) it coincides with the stem of the verb and also occurs as a reduced participle in auxiliary constructions (Savoia and Baldi 2022). The phrase introduced by *me* can be preceded by the introducer *t/i*, i.e. the relative element also introducing declarative complement sentences, in (6d,e), or by the preposition *për*, in (6c).

- (6) a. ka fiʔ-u me hãjër
have.3sg begin-PP with eat
'(S)he started eating'
- b. dol-a pa u la:
go.out.Past-1sg without M/R wash
'I went out without washing'
- b'. ja-m tu e la
be-1sg Prt him-her wash
'I am washing him/her'
- c. ka-m arð (për) me t pa:
have-1sg come.PP for with you see
'I came to see you'
- d. ka-m i:k (tʃi) mas me e pa:
have-1sg go.PP that NM with it see
'I left not to see it'
- e. du (tʃi) me arð ai / ai me arð
want.1sg that with come he / he with come
'I want him to come'
- Shkodër

A participial construction is also admitted in Tosk, where it realizes purpose contexts introduced by the preposition *për* ‘for’ in (7a,a’), implicit relatives in (8b), contexts with *pa* ‘without’ and *dukë* the gerundive introducer in (7c, c’), and some aspectual verb, in (7d)³.

- (7) a. arð-tʃ për t a la-rë
 come.Past-1s for Prt it wash-PP
 ‘I came to wash it’
- a'. ik-u për të mos / mos t i zgjuar
 leave.Past-3sg for Prt NM / NM Prt them wake.up-PP
 ‘(S)he left not to wake him/them up’
- b. një kë'mif për t (u) la-rë
 a shirt for Prt (M/R) wash-PP
 ‘A shirt to wash/be washed’
- c. dol-a pa e pa-rë
 come.out.Past-1sg without him see-PP

³ Residual structures with the participle introduced by an aspectual verb are also documented in Arbëresh varieties. For instance, in the dialect of Barile (Basilicata) we find structures such as that in (i), where the aspectual verb is followed by the oblique form of the participle:

(i) fërno-ŋ	së	ʎa-r-i	makn-ën
finish-1sg	Link.Obl	wash-PP-Obl	carr-Acc
'I finish washing the car'			

'I came out without seeing him / her'		
c'. erða	duke	vrap-uar
come.Past-1sg	Prep	run-PP
'I came running'		
d. mbaro-v-a	së	fjet-ur-i
finish-Past-1sg	Link.Obl	sleep-PP-Obl
'I finished sleeping'		Gjirokastër

In Aromanian, the non-finite clauses occur in control contexts, in (8a,b), also including implicit relatives (cf. Capidan 1932: 549), as in (8c). The finite structure is however possible in control contexts, as in (8b'), where the particle *s* occurs, possibly preceded by the complementizer *tsi*. The full form of the infinitive is preserved, in which the infinitive inflection *-ri* is combined with the Thematic Vowel *-TV-*, and is embedded under the prepositions *di* 'of' or *ti* 'for'; the object clitics are preferably excluded.⁴

- (8) a. mbë'ri di / ti mëk-a-ri / durm-e-ri
finish.Past.1sg of/ for eat-TV-Inf / sleep-TV-Inf
'I finished eating / sleeping'
- b. tsë dze-f di (nu) fëts-e-ri / di y-a-ri aist
to.you tell.Past-1sg of NM do-TV-Inf / of wash-TV-Inf that
'I told you (not) to do it'
- b'. tsë dze-f tsi (nu) s u fats
to.you tell.Past-1sg that (NM) Prt it do.2sg
'I told you (not) to do it'
- c. esti unë këmif-ë di y-a-ri
is a shirt-fsg of/for wash-TV-Inf
'It is a shirt to be washed' Libofshë

3. The complement clauses

In the proposal of Rivero (1994), the dependent inflected clauses of Tosk Albanian presented in (1)-(2) for Gjirokastër and Arbëresh, imply a M(ood) node between I and C, which hosts the particle *të*. This analysis is applied to standard Albanian and Arbëresh dialects by Turano (1993), which assumes that in Arbëresh *të+verb* moves to C, excluding

⁴ Another non-finite construction, presumably formed on the Albanian non-finite construct *pa* 'without' + *past participle*, is the participle preceded by the pre-posed negative marker *ni*, different from the sentential negation *nu*, (Capidan 1932: 552) in (i).

(i) nif-a-i ni ti vidzu-t
come.out.Past-1sg NM you see-PP 'I came out without seeing you'

a preceding subject. In the cartographic model, the particle *të* is generally excluded from Infl/T, insofar as the dependent verb autonomously realizes the subjunctive in INFL, and the particle always precedes object clitics, as suggested in (9).

(9) [_{CP} C *t/ë* [TOPIC [FOCUS [M/C *të* [... OCI TP

In (9), the complementizer *t/ë* *se* is associated with a high C position, while the particle *të* is in a lower position in C-field. The prepositions preceding *të* are treated as instantiations of C (Turano 1993, Ledgeway 1998, Hill and Tomic 2009). Roussou (2000) and Roberts and Roussou (2003) propose an analysis of Modern Greek in which the particle *na* - comparable to Albanian *të* - appears in an Op(erator) position, in the C field, where it is preceded by the declarative complementizer *pou*, exactly as in Albanian, and precedes the negation *min* associated with M(ood). In the cartographic analysis of Daco-Romanian non-finite clauses, Hill (2013), applying the proposal of Rizzi (1979), associates the introducer *de* with the position Fin, in (10); in contexts where it precedes the introducer of infinitives *a* (Pană Dindelegan and Maiden 2013), the Fin position is split into two, with *de* in the higher Fin and *a* in the lower.

(10) ForceP > TopP > FocusPcontrast > FinP₁ (*de*) (> FinP₂ *a*) > TP
(Hill 2013, p. 235)

In relatives, Hill (2013) associates *de* with a position in the domain of C, in (11):

(11) Implicit relatives (Hill 2013: 237)

[_{ForceP} Null Op [_{Force} *de* [_{Fin} *de* [TP infinitive/ vP supine

In our vision, the assumption that Albanian *për* and *me* and Aromanian *ti/di* correspond to two different categories, P (before nouns) or C/Fin, appears descriptive, and ad hoc. Moreover, the multiplication of C-types positions is clearly unsatisfactory for simplicity and explicative reasons.

Manzini and Savoia (2018) note that the finite complementation needs to be introduced by an element endowed with nominal properties, such as a wh- pronominal element, for instance in many Romance varieties as well as in Albanian (Manzini and Savoia 2005). In other words, the complement clauses cannot be directly embedded under

a VP and are in fact embedded under a noun. The problem is that the sentential complement cannot receive the case and CPs cannot enter into Agree relations with *v*, thus lacking Visibility (Stowell 1981). It is not an accident that Romance and Balkan languages use introducers such as *che, que, tfi, tsi*, etc. giving rise to a free relative. These pronominal elements saturate the argument of the main verb and introduce an event variable, providing an interpretation of the type *there is an event such as e, t_y*; the verb of the dependent clause is finite, and the subject realized. In modal or control contexts, the dependent clause can include a nominal variable or a quantifier, such as Albanian *të* (+subjunctive) and Aromanian *s*.

3.1. Merge and amalgamation in phases

In what follows, we assume that morphology is part of the syntactic computation (Manzini et al. 2020, Savoia and Baldi 2023, 2024; see also Collins and Kayne 2020). Lexical elements (morphemes) are endowed with interpretive content, with the result that Late Insertion and the other adjustments used by Distributed Morphology are excluded. Therefore, the agreement is not the product of movement and the probe-goal mechanism, but the manifestation of the identity between referential feature sets corresponding to the same arguments of the sentence. This implies that morphology works in the Spell-Out domains of the Phases, creating by Merge the units subject to Transfer. Chomsky (2020, 2021) excludes the head movement, the traditional mechanism of verb agreement, as a genuine syntactic rule, and proposes ‘simply to drop the condition that Internal Merge (Movement) has to be triggered, so it’s free, like External Merge’. Chomsky (2020, 2021) relates verb inflection to the amalgamation operation which underlies Spelling-out and externalization:

Externalization, however, requires an operation that amalgamates the inflectional elements INFL and *v* along with the roots, presumably cyclically. The operation Amalgamate forms a complex [INFL, [*v*, root]]. There are further effects with some variation, as is characteristic of morphology [...] The first step in a derivation must select two items from the lexicon, presumably a root *R* and a categorizer *CT*, forming {*CT*, *R*}, which undergoes amalgamation under externalization, [...] (Chomsky 2021 pp. 36)

Thus, Merge creates complex words that amalgamation makes avail-

able to externalization, and inflected finite verbs realize the properties of the CP Phase.

Based on this framework, we connect the Albanian and Romance finite and non-finite complementation to the way in which Phasal domains are realized and Spelled-out to Externalization. As noted, elements such as *tfi*, *tfe* are nominal heads introducing a variable. The main verb takes as complement a nominal element associated with a propositional variable, so that the dependent clause is turned into a sort of free relative. In this line, we can deem that wh- elements such as Albanian *tfi* and Aromanian *tsi*, etc. do not realize C but a nominal head, while the features of C are inherited, and expressed, by INFL and the other referential lexical units in its Phase.

In the case of control structures an argument of the dependent verb is not saturated and is introduced as a variable, implying a mechanism of lambda extraction which changes the dependent into a predicate. In syntactic terms, we apply the idea that in control *të* / *s* sentences a boxed empty operator is involved that is IM-ed to the phase edge,

As we know, the bracketed phrase has the properties of long-distance A'- movement, now revised with a boxed empty element E interpreted at SPEC-C (that is, at []). E is interpreted as an empty operator leaving an open sentence, which functions as a predicate, theta-marking the EM-inserted subject [...] (Chomsky 2024: 11)

The IM-ed element is associated with an informational reading (Chomsky 2024: 7 ff)⁵, and it is accessible for interpretation at the Conceptual-Intentional system, but it is segregated with respect to the derivation. This analysis naturally depicts Albanian and Aromanian inflected subordinates, where the *të* / *s* introduce the variable that connects an argument of the matrix and the non-saturated argument of the dependent. In Albanian, the particle *të* is identified by Manzini and Savoia (2007) with the form of the article/ linker *të*, i.e. the D element which in Albanian precedes the adjective or the possessor in possessive constructions (Manzini and Savoia 2018). This element agrees with the head noun, as in (12a) for the singular nominative and in (12b) for the oblique:

(12) a. erð-i dial-i i mað / vaiz-a e mað-e

⁵ “[...] the element E is IM-ed to the phase edge as being put in a box, separate from the ongoing derivation D. E must however be accessible to D at later phase levels for interpretation at the interfaces [...] it is immune to theta-marking (Chomsky 2024a: 8)”. Thus, *Clausal* categories such as ‘force- and information-related (interrogative, topic, focus)’ are associated with IM (Chomsky 2024: 5).

come.Past-3sg boy-Def Lkr.m big / girl-Def Lkr.f big-f
 ‘The big boy / the big girl came’

- b. i-a ða-tf dial-it / vaiz-ës të mað/mað-e
 him/her-it give.Past-1sg boy-Obl-Def / girl-obl.f.def Lkr big/big-f
 ‘I gave it to the big boy/girl’ Gjirokastër

Our hypothesis is that the particle *të* occurring in sentential contexts is the same syntactic object, which lexicalizes the argument variable associated with the subordinate verb. Thus, the dependent verb is introduced by a sort of article that allows the non-saturated argument of the dependent to be bound by an argument of the matrix.

$$(13) \quad \text{të} = Q_{\phi} (\subseteq)$$

të precedes the OCl, can be preceded by a *wh*- introducer, *tjë* or *se/ sa*, (14a,b), and in turn precedes or follows the modal negation *mos*, (14a,b,c).

- (14) a. ik-a tjë mos të të fih-j-a
 Leave.Past-1sg wh.N NM D.Obl you see-Impf-1sg
 ‘I left to not see you’
 b. i_φ θa-tf tjë të mos e bën-te
 him/her tell.Past-1sg wh.N D.Obl NM it do-Impf-3sg
 ‘I told him/her not to do it’
 c. më θa-n mos t a bëj-a / të mos e bëj-a
 me tell.Past-3pl NM Obl it do-Impf-1sg/ Obl NM it do-Impf-1sg
 ‘They told me not to do it’ Gjirokastër

The negative marker *mos* is restricted to modal (control) subordinates and imperatives. Both Albanian negative markers, i.e. *nuk* for declarative contexts, and *mos* can be traced back to the analysis of negation proposed by Manzini and Savoia (2011: 130, 152 ff.) and Savoia (2025). In keeping with Acquaviva (1994), negative words are indefinites introducing a variable ‘x’ and its lexical restriction, closed by the existential quantifier in the scope of the negative operator [¬]. The latter, therefore, is not realized by a lexical constituent, but is postulated by the presence of the negative marker or the negative items. The element *mos*, like the other negators, is associated with an argument or event variable, in the scope of a negated existential, as in (15a,b).⁶ In (15a,b)

⁶ Interestingly, the etymology of *mos* identifies two parts, the negation **mo*- and a second element connected with an old indefinite, *-*kwi*, of which -*s* is the phonetic outcome (Mann

the *wh*- introducer closes the phase vP of the matrix where it introduces the event variable in the scope of negation. The element *të* boxed at the phase edge, introduces the variable coindexed with an argument of the matrix and the subject of the embedded clause. The specialized negative marker *mos* can occur in preverbal position, as in (15a) or combine with *të* in an informational/ focused position as in (15b).

- (15) a. $\neg \exists x \dots [_{\text{INFL}} \langle i_{\phi}, \theta a\text{-}tj \rangle \dots [_{\text{wh}} \boxed{tj\ddot{e}}_x [\boxed{t\ddot{e}}_{\phi} [_{\text{C}} \text{mos}_x [_{\text{INFL}} \langle e, b\ddot{e}nt\ddot{e}_{x\phi} \rangle [_{\text{vP}}$
 ‘I told him/her not to do it’
 b. $\neg \exists x \dots [_{\text{INFL}} \langle ik, -a_{\phi} \rangle \dots [_{\text{wh}} \boxed{tj\ddot{e}}_x [\text{mos}_x [\boxed{t\ddot{e}}_{\phi} [_{\text{C}} [_{\text{INFL}} \langle t\ddot{e}, j\ddot{i}hja_{x\phi} \rangle [_{\text{vP}}$
 ‘I left to not see you’ Gjirokastër

As for the lexical nature of the negative marker *mos*, we conclude that it is subcategorized for predicates, that is non denotational VPs (properties, cf. Cierchia 1984) such as modal dependents and imperatives, and nouns. Indeed, it can combine with nouns to give negative items such as *mosperi* ‘nobody’, *mosgjë* ‘nothing’ (cf. Savoia 2025).

- (16) $\text{mos} \leftrightarrow _ / \text{property}$

In the Aromanian constructions the particle *s* may be preceded by the *wh*- element *tsi*. We conclude that *s* is like *të* in Albanian, namely a sort of relator that interprets the complement clause as a predicate, as in (17). The control reading depends on the lexical properties of the matrix verb⁷.

- (17) $[_{\text{INFL}} \langle ts\ddot{e}_{\phi}, dzej \rangle \dots [_{\text{wh}} \boxed{tsi}_x [\boxed{s}_{\phi} [_{\text{C}} [_{\text{INFL}} \langle u, fats_{\phi} \rangle$
 ‘I told you to make it’ Libofshë

Non-finite forms involve obliquization through a prepositional introducer, of which the non-finite verb is the complement, a nominalized form (participle or stem) interpreted as a property (Chierchia 1984). In Albanian we find *për* ‘for’ followed by the past participle with motion verbs or implicit relative reading, as in (18a), in Tosk, and *me* ‘with’ followed by the bare stem in all complement contexts in Gheg, as in (18b). Again, the control interpretation is determined by the lexical proper-

1977: 239).

⁷ A plausible origin of *s(ë)*, *să* in Romanian, is Latin **sic* ‘with this, by which’ (cf. Zafiu 2016), i.e. a referential connective which contributes to connecting the complement clause with the matrix verb.

ties of the matrix verb, so that ambiguity is possible.

- (18) a. arð-tf_φ [për [t a la-rë_φ Tosk
 come.Past-1sg for Prt it wash-PP 'I came to wash up'
 b. ka_φ 't-u [me hãñër_φ Gheg
 have-3sg begin-PP with eat 'He started eating'

Following the analysis proposed in Manzini and Savoia (2011), and Franco and Manzini (2017), *of*, *to* and the corresponding case represent an elementary relator, as in (19), which introduces the predicate (the participle/ stem) as the “(zonal) inclusion” (in the sense proposed by Belvin, den Dikken 1997) of the main sentence. Both *për* ‘for’ and *me* ‘with’ may be traced to an inclusion reading. *për* selects the accusative of the noun, as in (18b).

- (19) a. **për** = $\subseteq$, (beneficiary) — [DP/vP]
 b. e bër-i këtë për dial-in
 it make.Past-3sg this for boy-Def.Acc
 ‘(s)he made it for the boy’

me in Gheg can be thought as the implementation of the reverse inclusion relation [$\supseteq$], where the DP/vP embedded by the preposition is ‘included by’ the governing DP (or the event) (cf. Franco et al. 2021), as in (20a). On the noun the accusative is selected, as shown by (19b).

- (20) a. **me** = $\supseteq$
 b. e ka-m bẽ **me** θik-en
 it have-1sg make.PP with knife-Def.Acc
 ‘I have made it with the knife’ Shkodër

In Aromanian the prepositions *di* ‘of’ (and *ti* ‘for’) select infinitives. A natural assumption is that these elements are nothing but the basic prepositions characterizing the possession contexts, as in (21a) and in (21b). A possible conclusion is that the dependent structures are constructed in terms of a part-whole logic relation, with the main clause, as suggested in (20c).

- (21) a. **di**: $\subseteq$
 b.. mën-a **di** mujër-ë
 hand-fsg of woman-fsg ‘The hand of the woman’
 c. tsë_φ dzek [_P $\subseteq$ **di** ... [_{VP} fëtseri_φ]]

The participle can be identified with an adjectival predicate associated with *v*, as in (22a). The Root is merged to the Thematic Vowel by amalgamation, assuming that TV is a nominal variable (Savoia and Baldi 2023, Manzini and Savoia 2005), as in (22c,d). The element *të* again inserts a variable in a boxed. E-Merge and Labelling yield the predicative structure in (22b).

(22) a. *ik-u për të mos / mos t i zgjuar* '(S)he left not to wake them'

b. $\exists x \dots [_{\text{INFL}} \text{iku} \dots [_{\text{P}} \text{për}_{\subseteq} [\text{mos}_x [\text{të}_{\phi} [_{\text{C}} \dots [_{\text{VP}} \langle i, \text{zgjuar}_{x,\phi} \rangle [\text{R}_{\phi/y}$

c. $\langle \text{zgj}_{\text{R}'} \text{ua}_{\text{TV}} \rangle [\text{zgj-ua}_{\text{TV}}]$

d. $\langle \text{zgj-ua}_{\text{TV}} \text{r}_{\text{PP}} \rangle [\text{zgj-ua-r}_{\text{PP}}]$

This analysis also accounts for the case-marked form of the participle that emerges in Tosk varieties, as in (23a), where the dependent clause is realized as an oblique participle with the inflection *-i* and preceded by *së*, the oblique form of the particle (cf. Demiraj 1986), in turn selecting the oblique, as in (23b). The dependent clause is realized as a predicate devoid of the inflectional properties of the CP phase. We can think that it realizes *v* in the vP Spell-out domain, as in (23c).

(23) a. *mbaro-v-a së ngrën-i atë*
 stop-Past-1sg Obl eat.PP.Obl that
 'I stopped eating it'

b. $\text{së}_{\text{Art}} \leftrightarrow __ [_{\subseteq} \text{a}.$

c. $[_{\text{INFL}} \langle \text{mbaro-v, -a}_{\phi} \rangle \dots [\text{së}_{\phi} [_{\text{C}} [_{\text{VP}} \langle \text{ngrën}_{\phi} i_x \rangle [_{\text{DP}} \text{atë}$

Gjirokastrë

Gheg stems coincide with the root, including the TV in vocalic verbal classes, and can be analyzed as a nominalized form endowed with an indefinite reading. The relator *me* (cf. (20)) may be preceded by the introducer *tfi* and by the negative marker *mas*, as in (24a) and (24b). The embedded verb is realized as an elementary predicate available to be associated with an argument depending on the nature of the matrix verb.

(24) a. $[_{\text{INFL}} \text{du} \dots [_{\text{wh-}} (\text{t} \mathbf{f} \mathbf{i}) [\text{ai}_{\phi} [_{\text{P}} \text{me}_{\supseteq} [_{\text{C}} \dots [_{\text{VP}} \text{ar} \check{\text{d}}_{x,\phi} [\text{VP}$
 du (tfi) ai me arđ 'I want him to come'

b. $\exists x \dots [_{\text{INFL}} \text{ka-m}_{\phi} \dots [_{\text{vP}} \text{i:k}_{\phi} \dots [_{\text{wh-}} (\text{t}\mathbf{j}\mathbf{i})_x [\text{mas}_x [_{\text{P}} \text{me}_{\geq} [_{\text{C}} [_{\text{vP}} < \text{e}, \text{pa:}_{x'\phi} > [_{\text{VP}}$

kam i:k (tji) mas me e pa: 'I left not to see it' Shkodër

By hypothesis, in (24) the stem is associated with the Spell-Out domain in vP, where it realizes the root. As in the case of participles and infinitives, the clause is read as a predicate implying an argumental variable, which, depending on the lexical properties of the matrix verb, is bound by an argument of the main clause or is anaphorically bound by a DP of the discourse. In (24) the embedded subject is IM-ed at the edge of CP phase, and boxed, in the sense of Chomsky (2024); it is accessible to interpretation at the level of clausal semantics.

Aromanian infinitives may be assimilated to participles and stem forms. As noted, the non-finite morphology creates a predicate that introduces a variable bound by an argument of the matrix clause, as in (25). The infinitive is, however, associated with INFL, where its indefiniteness properties, contribute to introducing an argumental variable, as in (25b).

(25) $[_{\text{INFL}} < \text{ts}\mathbf{\ddot{e}}_{\phi}, \text{dzej} > [_{\text{P}} \mathbf{di}_{\subseteq} [_{\text{C}} [_{\text{vP}} < \mathbf{\gamma}\text{-a}, \text{-ri}_{\phi} > [_{\text{VP}} \text{aist}$

tsë dzej di γari aist 'I told you to wash this' Libofshë

We are concluding that participial forms in Albanian and infinitives in Aromanian lead to a comparable interpretive effect, changing the dependent clause to a predicate and implying an argumental variable.

6. Final comments: agreement in CP and vP

In the preceding discussion we relied on the phasal model, i.e. a representation of the clause organization in which the structures are the result of Merge and depend on some type of agreement in the phase (Chomsky 2021). The notion of phase, as defined by the Phase Impenetrability Condition PIC, delimits the Spell-Out domain for externalization, so that the syntactic object constructed is sent to SM and C-I by the operation Transfer. Manzini et al. (2020a) note that the externalization of the features can be (i) uniform or (ii) uniform in the Spell-Out domain. Hence CP and vP can implement (partially) different subsets of relevant features. As regards our data, Spell-Out operation leads to different ways of realizing the agreement depending on its domain, as

suggested in (26).

(26) Spell-Out of the ϕ -features of the subject

- a. ϕ -features are licensed in CP Phase by a lexical DP or the agreement inflection of the verb
- b. The verb is unable to satisfy the ϕ -features of INFL: the subject is licensed by a variable introduced by the verb.

The type of agreement on the subject in (26a) is associated with the Spell-Out domain of the CP Phase. This obviously also applies to finite clauses introduced by *të* in Albanian or *s* in Aromanian, as in (15a.b), where *të* (exactly as *s* in Aromanian) forces the inflection of the dependent verb to realize the nominal variable (bound by an argument of the matrix clause).

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