On gerund clauses of Portuguese dialects
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1. INTRODUCTION

As is well known, Galician and Portuguese, as well as some other contemporary and old Romance varieties, share the property of having infinitival forms with person/number inflections. In addition, in dialects of Galician and of European Portuguese, we can also find person/number inflections on the gerund (Cf. Baptista 1967, Braga 1971, Carreiro 1948, Cruz 1969, Delgado 1951, Delgado 1970, Guerreiro 1968, Martins 1954, Matias 1974, Mota 1997, Palma 1967, Paulino 1959, Ratinho 1959, Rezende 1961, Vilhena 1965, for Portuguese, and ALGa, Carballo Calero 1975, Longa 1993, 1994, for Galician). This phenomenon has also been reported for Old Neapolitan, which besides inflected infinitives and gerunds also had participial forms with person/number endings (Cf. Loporcaro 1986, Vincent 1996, 1998).

In this paper, after a few remarks on the dating of the emergence of inflected gerunds and on their morphological properties, I state the syntactic distribution of the inflected gerund (IG) in Portuguese dialects, comparing it to the distribution of gerunds in Standard European Portuguese. I try to propose a functional structure for gerund clauses which accounts for word order phenomena, subject interpretation and temporal constraints of gerund clauses.

The data I rely on in this study are taken from dialectal monographs mostly unpublished, and from speech samples of recorded material from the Dialectology Group of the Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa - CLUL (ALEPG, Cruz 1987), which constitute a small corpus of free speech of Portuguese dialects orthographically transcribed, morphologically tagged and syntactically annotated (funded project PRAXIS XXI P/PLP/113046/1998: Corpus of Portuguese Dialects syntactically annotated - Cordial-sin).

2. MORPHOLOGICAL PROPERTIES OF THE GERUND

Portuguese gerunds are traditionally classified as non finite verbal forms. The selectional properties of the verb remain unchanged when the gerund suffix *-ndo* is added, which shows gerunds are verbs. Like infinitives, Portuguese gerunds cannot co-occur with tense morphemes nor with the finite complementizer *que*, differing thus from finite forms (indicative and subjunctive). They cannot occur in normal independent declarative clauses either. Unlike infinitival clauses, however, gerund clauses are never complements to volitional or declarative verbs.

In Standard European Portuguese (SEP), the gerund suffix *-ndo* is attached to the verbal stem (root + thematic vowel). In several dialects of European Portuguese (and Galician) gerunds can also bear a person/number inflection just like inflected infinitives (IIs). This phenomenon, which can be found in any verbal class, does not affect the same range of grammatical persons everywhere. For Galician it has only been reported for 1st and 2nd plural. In Portuguese dialects it can show up in every grammatical person which normally inflects overtly for person/number (2nd singular, 1st, 2nd and 3rd plural) or only in some of these, depending on the dialect. The example given

below, from Póvoa de Atalaia, Beira Baixa (Martins 1954), shows the most complete paradigm of the inflected gerund:

(1)
(eu) víndo+Ø   (nós) víndo+mos
'(I) coming+ Ø'   '(we) coming+AGR-1PL'

(tu) vindo+s   (vós) vínd(o)+eis
'(you) coming+AGR-2SG   '   '(you) coming+AGR-2PL'

(ele) vindo+Ø   (eles) vind(o)+em
'(he) coming+ Ø'   '(they) coming+AGR-3PL'

The morphological similarities between IIs and IGs may seem to support a unified theory for the emergence of person/number endings on Romance non finite forms. Nevertheless, one cannot avoid to point out several properties of IGs of Portuguese dialects which seem to support Martins (1999) hypothesis that Portuguese IGs and IIs have two different origins. According to her (see also Mota 1997), IGs would be a recent spontaneous formation, while Portuguese IIs would derive from Latin imperfect subjunctive (see also Wireback 1994):

> "It should be noted however that the inflected gerund has not been attested in Old Portuguese and Old Galician. Thus the inflected gerund appears to be a modern development in the relevant dialects." (Martins 1999: note 2).

As the author says, IGs are not attested in Old Portuguese, while IIs are frequent in old texts.[1] Moreover, unlike IIs, which display a regular pattern of overt agreement inflection in every region for second person singular, first, second[2] and third person plural, the emergence of overt agreement on the gerund, as said above, is not attested everywhere for the same range of persons[3]. Interestingly, the only second plural form obtained clearly shows that IGs appeared much later than IIs. If they had been contemporaneous to IIs or even if they had emerged earlier than 15th century it is hard to explain how the form *víndodes, after the fall of -d-, would have resulted in víndeis [⚹❖⟨⟩⟨⟩⟨⟩⟨⟩⟨⟩⟨⟩⟨⟩]⁴. Therefore, IGs must be a recent development, formed by adding analogically the current morphemes to the gerund base. Furthermore, the

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[1] It can be argued, of course, that the absence of inflected gerunds from old sources is due to sociolinguistic factors. Inflected gerunds could have been considered 'popular' and therefore would not be attested in written texts. The problem is that it is not clear why there should be a social difference between inflected infinitives and inflected gerunds if both have the same underlying motivation. It can also be claimed that inflected gerunds came later and were restricted to rural areas, thus being absent from written texts. However, in Old Neapolitan where person agreement shows up in all non finite forms, there doesn't seem to be a significant chronological gap between the emergence of inflected infinitives and inflected gerunds.

[2] In southern dialects, as in standard Portuguese, morphology of 2nd person plural (e.g. *vós chegastes* 'you came-AGR-2PL') is rarely used, having been replaced with 3rd person plural morphology: (*vocês chegaram* 'you came-AGR-3PL').

[3] It should be noted, however, that these data have not always been systematically obtained. In many cases the absence of inflection in a particular person may be accidental. In fact, 2nd person singular forms are difficult to obtain in the context of an interview, since in Portuguese these forms are only used to address close persons.

[4] I maintain the phonetic transcription given by Martins 1954: 221.

geographic distribution of IGs, more represented in the dialects of the center and south of Portugal, seems to support this idea, since these dialects are known to be more innovative than the northern dialects. Finally, the widespread and homogeneous distribution of IIs in the Galician-Portuguese area contrasts with the sparse distribution of IGs. In fact, to my knowledge, there are no dialects of Portuguese which lack IIs. These are used everywhere productively in adjunct clauses and in subject clauses. IGs, however, display an irregular geographical distribution: there are very rare references to its existence in the northern dialects, while in the center (mainly near the border) and in the south they seem to be quite common among rural speakers.[5]

How can we explain the emergence of person/number morphology on the gerund?

The spontaneous emergence of person/number agreement on the gerund is not an odd phenomenon when we consider the range of possibilities offered by Universal Grammar. Considering a sentence structure with functional nodes such as Tense and Agreement (Agr), IGs can be viewed merely as forms where the Agr node has a morphological overt realization. This overt marking of Agr on the gerund must have been favoured by several factors: the previous existence of an inflected non finite form (the inflected infinitive); the presence of pronominal subjects marked with nominative case in gerund clauses; the possibility of disambiguating the reference of the null subject of the gerund clause.

However, one cannot avoid to ask if there is any real grammatical difference between null Agr and lexical Agr. What is the role of overt Agr on the gerund in these dialects? Does it play any role? Was there a change in Agr features in the relevant dialects? We will come back to these questions later.

3. THE SYNTACTIC DISTRIBUTION OF INFLECTED AND NON-INFLECTED GERUNDS IN PORTUGUESE DIALECTS

3.1. Towards a non-optionality account of the inflected gerund

Vincent (1998) states that IGs in Old Neapolitan were optional:

> "(10) li casali intravano adimandadono pane
> [the inhabitants of] the outlying villages came in [to the city] demanding-AGR bread
> (Cronaca di tumulti 1585; cited in Bruni (ed.) Vol II, pp. 650ff.)
> (11) Li Troyani ... abattevano non sparagnando a la vita loro
> The Trojans were cutting down [the Greeks] having no regard for their own lives (LDT, 71.33)
> This pair illustrates very clearly the fact that, even in contexts where it is possible, the actual occurrence of the personal inflection on gerunds is optional just as it is on infinitives [...].)" (Vincent 1998:140)

Is the IG optional in Portuguese dialects?

Although our data are not very numerous yet, the analysis of the frequency of IGs vs. non inflected gerunds (NIGs) in the contexts in which the inflected form can occur seems to point to an almost obligatory use of the inflected form in adjunct clauses.

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[5] Although the geographic distribution of the inflected gerund in the Galician-Portuguese area has not been systematically investigated yet, there are reports of its existence in Begonte (Lugo), Rianxo (Coruña), Torneiros (Pontevedra) for Galician (ALGa, map 32), in several regions of Portugal (mainland and islands) - Beira Alta (Ervedosa do Douro, Quadrazais), Beira Baixa (Póvoa de Atalaia), Alto Alentejo (Nisa, Alpalhão, Castelo de Vide, Sapeira, Escusa, Arronches, Campo Maior, Elvas, Alandroal), Ribatejo (Santa Justa), Baixo Alentejo (Beja, Baleizão, Corte Cobres, Ervidel, Colos/Fornalhas), Algarve (Lagos, Porches, Alte, Olhão, Monte Gordo, Odeleite), Madeira (Canhas, Câmara de Lobos) -, and in the border dialects of Cedillo (Cáceres) and Olivença (Badajoz).

Hopefully further investigation and future enlargement of the corpus will prove useful to confirm this hypothesis. For the time being, we have to rely on the available data shown in the following tables:

Table 1: Frequency of inflected gerunds (IG) and non inflected gerunds (NIG) taken from the dialectal corpus Cordial-sin (Porches e Alte (Algarve) and Alto Alentejo):

	1 sg	3 sg	3 pl		Total
			NIG	IG	
Verbal clusters	6	41	14	0	61
Adjunct clauses	3	27	3/4[6]	10/11	44
Comparative clauses	0	0	0	1	1
			17/18	11/12	
Total	9	68	29		106

Table 2. Frequency of gerunds in adjunct clauses considering data from dialectal monographs as well as recorded data from the CLUL corpus:

	1sg	2sg		3sg	1pl		2pl		3pl		total			
		NIG	IG		NIG	IG	NIG	IG	NIG	IG	Ø	NIG	IG	total
		1	16		1	11	0	0	4.[7]	22	49	6	49	104
Total	10	17		39	12		0	*[8]	26		104			

As shown in the tables above, there seems to be a clear preference for the inflected forms in adjunct clauses, which contrasts with the complete lack of inflected forms in verbal clusters. Unfortunately the biggest number of gerund occurrences corresponds to third person singular forms, which do not bear an overt agreement morpheme.

3.2. Relevant syntactic differences between Standard European Portuguese (SEP) and Dialectal European Portuguese (DEP) gerund clauses

Vincent (1998) based on the evidence of Old Neapolitan states that the agreement on the gerund does not have any effect on its syntactic behaviour:

> "This leads to the at first sight rather paradoxical conclusion that in the case of the gerund at least, the availability of a system of person inflections does not affect the grammatical distribution of the construction at all. [...]. On this view we would expect that adding a

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[6] One of these occurrences corresponds to an unclear audition, and two to a lack of agreement between the predicative verb *ser* 'be' and the post-verbal noun phrase (3pl), phenomenon which can also be found in finite clauses. This is illustrated in the following examples taken from a dialectal monograph:

(i) Assim é qu'er'às nossas brincadêras todas (Baptista 1967: 145)
'Thus was-3sg all our games'
(ii) Mas ist'er'às côsas d'intrude! (Baptista 1967: 145).
'But this was-3sg the things from carnival'

[7] Two of these correspond to a lack of agreement between the predicative verb *ser* 'be' and the post-verbal noun phrase. See previous note.

[8] Only mentioned in the gerund conjungation in Beira Baixa *em vós víndeis* (Martins 1954).

person/number inflection to a verb form would indeed change its syntactic distribution. While this may indeed be the case as far as the inflected infinitive is concerned, it seems from our evidence not to be so for the inflected gerund, a conclusion which is consistent with the traditional view that such endings are 'agreements'" (Vicent 1998: 146)

Has the agreement inflection on the gerund no syntactic consequences in DEP?

Most of the cases where IGs occur, just like in Old Neapolitan, are the same cases where the bare gerund occurs in SEP, i.e. adjunct clauses. The IG can be found both in peripheral and in predicate adjunct clauses:

(2) Não saíndomos de casa, morrâmos à fome. (Azevedo 1928-9)
'Not leaving-AGR-1PL home, [we] starve.'
(3) E, às vezes, anda aquele rebanho junto, (...) e, depois, às vezes, {fp} vão dormir pensandem (...) que são todas fêmeas e há (...) algum macho ali no meio! (Cordial, PAL 13)
'And sometimes goes that flock together, and then sometimes [they] go to sleep thinking-AGR-3PL that [they]'re all females and [there] is some male among them!'

IGs can also be found in independent exclamative gerund clauses:

(4) Deixa que o teu pai logo te diz! Molhandes aí a cabeça toda, moço dum raio! (Guerreiro 1968)
'Wait that your father will tell you later! Wetting-AGR-2SG there all your head, you damn boy!'

The occurrence of IGs in this specific syntactic context is not surprising. In fact the aspectual construction with <*a* + inflected infinitive>, which normally substitutes the gerund in SEP, does occur in this same context:

(5) A copiares no exame! Nunca pensei!
'To copy-AGR-2SG in the exam! [I] never thought!'

Just like in Old Neapolitan, in DEP IGs are never found in verbal clusters:

(6) Ah, mas eles, eles que se vão governando lá com a inteligência deles (Cordial, PAL5)
'Ah, but them, let them go governing with their intelligence'
(7) os paus é que (...) iam arrastando aquilo.(Cordial, AAL50)
'it was the sticks that went pushing that'

The complete absence of IGs in verbal clusters is predictable, since these are clauses with a single predication. The aspectual verb and the gerund form a complex verbal predicate. Therefore, there is a single clause and a single Agr node (cf. Gonçalves 1992). Note that IIs are also barred from this context.

However, as far as DEP is concerned, there seems to be several properties which distinguish dialectal gerund clauses from standard gerund clauses.

While in SEP gerund clauses usually lack a connective, in DEP gerund clauses with an introducing connective are very frequent. This connective is in most cases the preposition *em* 'in', but it can also be an adverbial conjunction such as conditional *se* 'if' or reason *como* 'since', or even the relative elements *quando* 'when' or *onde* 'where':

(8) Em sendem crescidos, levo-os a Lisboa. (Delgado 1951)
' In being-AGR-3PL grown-up, [I] take them to Lisbon'
(9) ...aquilo, se o homem não arrebentando... (Palma 1967)
'that, if the man not bursting...'
(10) E depois, nós éramos quatro irmãos e{fp} ficámos só com minha mãe e eu, como sendo o mais velho, (...) é que fui sempre o mais escravo. (Cordial, AAL35)
'And then, we were four brothers and [we] had only my mother and it was I, since being the oldest, that was always more slave.'

(11) <u>Quando sentindim outros animais</u>, espantam-se (Cruz 1969)
'When feeling-AGR-3PL other animals, [they] go away'
(12) <u>Onde estando a menina</u> está alegria (Carreiro 1948)
'Where being the little girl is joy'

In DEP but not in SEP, gerund clauses can be found in a comparative context, functioning as a noun phrase, just like an inflected infinitive clause:

(13) Isto os arrendamentos, já se sabe que não há como <u>as coisas estandem nas mãos dos donos</u>. Está a compreender? (Cordial, AAL29)
'This the rentings, one already knows that there is not as things being-AGR-3PL in the hands of their owners. Do you understand?'

While in SEP the gerund clause almost obligatorily shows subject-verb inversion, in DEP the subject-verb order is quite frequent:

(14) <u>Um caminho sendo ruim</u> diz: "Tal é os barrancos que estão aqui nesse caminho". (Cordial, AAL94)
'A path being bad [you] say: "So are the ruts that are here in that path".'
(15) Enfim, os homens lá vão ainda porque não têm tractores e, então, hoje a coisa, estarem a pagar, <u>eles tendem as coisas em casa</u>, fazem a toda a hora, quando querem, vão fazendo o serviço com um macho, com mais pausa. (Cordial, AAL36)
'Well, men still go there because [they] don't have tractors and, then, things today, be paying, they having-AGR-3PL things at home, [they] do it whenever they want...'

Prepositional gerund clauses can also be found in Galician and in this case the subject can precede the verb:

(16) A miña filla quedará só <u>en eu morrendo</u>. (Carré 1967: 162)
'My daughter will be alone in I dying'
(17) Andivécheste alabando/ pol-os moíños moendo,/ que m'eu casaba contigo;/ eso será <u>en eu querendo</u>. (C. Pop. in Carré 1967: 162)
' (...) that I would marry you; that will be in I wanting'

Besides the presence or absence of a connective, the subject-verb word order in DEP seems to be related also to the grammatical class to which the verb belongs and to the discourse informational structure of the sentence. Thus, unsurprisingly, with unaccusative and predicative verbs the post-verbal position is frequent. A subject which bears contrastive focus also appears normally in post-verbal position.

4. ON THE FUNCTIONAL STRUCTURE OF GERUND CLAUSES

4.1. Null subjects of DEP gerund clauses
Null subjects of DEP gerund clauses clearly correspond to the null pronominal *pro*. Null subjects of gerund clauses are not controlled. Their reference is contextually determined, just like the empty pronominal of a finite sentence in a null subject language. As shown in the examples below, the antecedent of the gerund clause null subject can be the matrix subject, the matrix object, a topic, a previously introduced referent, or it can be pragmatically identified. The null subject can also be an expletive or have arbitrary reference.

(18) <u>Não saíndomos de casa</u>, morrâmos à fome. (Azevedo 1928-9)
'Not leaving-AGR-1PL home, [we] starve'
(19) <u>Em sendem crescidos</u>, levo-os a Lisboa. (Delgado 1951)
'In being-AGR-3PL grown-up, [I] take them to Lisbon'
(20) O pão, <u>quando estando lêvedo</u>, (...) a massa é mais leve. (Cordial, PAL30)

'The bread, when being fermented, the dough is lighter'
(21) Eles têm duas instalações. (...) Agora, <u>em fazendem o resto das outras</u> é que fica tudo ali junto, já. Fica já ali a garagem, fica casa para tudo, não é. (Cordial, AAL24)
'They have two buildings. Now, in doing-AGR-3PL the rest of the others, everything will be close...'
(22) <u>Em querendos ir</u>, vamos. (Vilhena 1965)
'In wanting-AGR-2SG to go, [we] go'
(23) Porque (...) a azeitona é uma das coisas que, chove agora, e, <u>em estando bom</u>, (...) já se trabalha. (Cordial, AAL30)
'Because the olive is one of the things that, [it] rains now, and, in [the weather] being good, one already works.'
(24) <u>Mesmo pagando o dinheiro</u>, {pp} não há quem queira ir fazer. (Cordial, PAL11)
'Even paying the money, [there] is nobody who wants to do it.'

4.2. On the role of functional categories

Turning now to the functional structure of gerund clauses, I'd like to begin by saying that I assume the hypothesis that the functional structure of the sentence is not universal and in particular that different constructions can have different functional structures. I assume that the range of functional categories available is universal but that they do not project in every language and in every construction in exactly the same way. In particular for adjunct gerund clauses, there seems to be evidence that predicate adjunct clauses are functionally more defficient than peripheral adjunct clauses: temporal restrictions, subject interpretation, absence of auxiliaries, absence of connectives, and so forth.

We can now ask what the role of the Agr node is.
I would like to adopt here an idea from Guéron & Hoekstra 1995. These authors argue that Agr is, in some sense, a marker of a predication relation:

> "A particular hypothesis we would like to endorse here is that each predication involves a node AGR. If a lexical projection is to be construed as a predicate, its head is checked by AGR, which itself is checked by the subject of predication." (Guéron & Hoekstra 1995: 78)

But are overt Agr and null Agr grammatically different? My hypothesis is that they are indeed. The main difference between null and overt Agr resides in the identification of null subjects. Overt Agr has strong phi-features and can license null subjects which are not identified otherwise. Null Agr has weak phi-features, in the sense that as an unmarked option it is always dependent on the matrix Agr for null subjects identification:

(25) Em $pro_{i/*j}$ chegando a casa, pro_i dou-te$_j$ a notícia.
'In arriving home, [I] tell you the news.'
(26) Quando pro_j chegares a casa, pro_i dou-te$_j$ a notícia.
'When arrive-AGR-2SG home, [I] tell you the news'
(27) Em pro_j chegandos a casa, pro_i dou-te$_j$ a notícia.
'In arriving-AGR-2SG home, [I] tell you the news'

At a certain point, there must have been a change in the grammatical features of gerund clauses in DEP. Null Agr (with weak features) acquired overt morphemes, which have strong features and allow for the identification of null subjects.
But why can't lexical subjects surface in predicate gerund clauses where Agr can show up?
Assuming that subjects can only be lexical when their Case is properly checked, in predicate adjunct clauses something must block Case checking by Agr. Adapting an idea of Raposo 1987 revised in Martins 1999, we can say that even strong Agr seems to be dependent on an external Case assigner to be able to check the Case of its subject. In

the case of adjunct clauses, it has to be either a preposition external to the clause or an element located in the Complementizer (C) domain. I take this element to be a Tense Operator (T Op). Predicate adjunct gerund clauses are plausibly deffective in the sense that they lack a C domain: they are never introduced by a connective, they don't allow independent temporal readings nor Auxiliaries. If there is no C domain, there is no T Op and overt subjects are not licensed.

In peripheral adjunct clauses, the C domain is always projected: they can be introduced by conjunctions; they can be coordinated with finite clauses; they can be temporally independent from the matrix clause; and short Wh-movement is possible in some cases. When C is not lexically filled by a T Op, Agr will have to check T Op features by moving to C, resulting in subject-verb inversion. When there is a lexical T Op in C, such as the particle *em*, no checking is needed, and therefore subject-verb inversion won't have to take place. In DEP, however, subject-verb inversion is not always required even when there is no lexical T Op. I believe that this difference between SEP and DEP is attributable to the stronger features of the null T Op in DEP. Subject-verb word order in these varieties will derive then from several factors such as discourse constraints and other grammatical principles.

In exclamative independent gerund clauses, I assume that there is a discourse/temporal Op which is strong enough to license the predication relation.

We still have not given a satisfactory explanation as to the reason why the syntactic distribution of the gerund has been enlarged in DEP. A plausible hypothesis is that the functional categories in the left periphery of the clause are all connected, forming a chain (i.e. there is a relation between C and the verbal form inside AgrP). A change in the morphological features of Agr necessarily leads to a change in the syntactic behaviour of the clause. Overt Agr being a typical property of a finite clause, inflected gerund clauses will become closer to finite sentences, and allow more easily for an enlargement of their syntactic distribution. Conversely, the fact that in DEP gerund clauses were frequently introduced by *em*, which I assume is a T Op in C, may have led to a reanalysis of adjunct gerund clauses as clauses which are closer to finite clauses and favoured the subject-verb word order and the emergence of strong phi-features on Agr. As a consequence, the range of elements allowed to occupy the C domain was enlarged and gerund clauses have now a wider syntactic distribution.

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