Tense and restructuring: control predicates in the diachrony of Portuguese
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The purpose of this work is to discuss the implications of tense properties of infinitives for an analysis of restructuring with obligatory control predicates. The main issue at stake is why some control verbs admit restructuring whereas others do not, both diachronically and synchronically.

Evidence from texts from 13th-15th centuries (Computerized Corpus of Medieval Portuguese) show that the verbs querer ‘want’, ousar ‘dare’ and prometer ‘promise’ exhibit different behaviours in Old Portuguese (OP). While querer ‘want’ and ousar ‘dare’ predominantly display Clitic Climbing (CC) (the most common diagnostic for restructuring), with prometer ‘promise’ the clitic tends to remain in the infinitival domain. In standard Contemporary European Portuguese (CEP) querer displays optional CC and CC is disallowed with both ousar and prometer.

Under Cinque’s (2004) analysis, restructuring is explained by the functional status of restructuring verbs (which Cinque analyses as raising verbs); hence, the syntactic structure in these configurations is always the same, regardless of restructuring effects. However, in OP and CEP, these verbs clearly show control properties, e.g. they all select an external argument, not allowing for expletive and inanimate subjects. According to Wurmbrand (2001), obligatory control predicates may allow lexical restructuring, which is conditional on the presence of certain semantic and morphosyntactic properties. Semantically, restructuring predicates are characterised as selecting a tenseless infinitive, which corresponds to a reduced structure, a VP-predicate, as there is no evidence for the presence of T and C in the infinitival domain.

Apparently, this analysis explains our data as far as querer and prometer are concerned, both in OP and CEP, as well as ousar in OP. However, in CEP, ousar, which, like querer, seems to select a tenseless infinitive, behaves like prometer in not allowing restructuring (cf. (1) and (2)). Conversely, certain verbs in CEP, such as combinar ‘arrange’, which appear to select tensed infinitives, also allow restructuring (cf. (3)).

In a nutshell, we propose to show that the correlation between temporal properties and restructuring does not seem to hold in all cases. We would therefore like to argue that whether a given control verb allows restructuring or not depends on its selectional properties (e.g. Rizzi 1982), which determine how much functional structure needs to be projected and which features are assigned to each functional category. Diachronically, what we see in Portuguese is a change in the selectional properties of some of these verbs (e.g. querer and ousar). Furthermore, restructuring infinitives may differ as to the number and type of functional categories associated with the infinitival domain. Hence, for example, the infinitival complement of combinar would be richer than the one selected by querer, including a T projection in the former, for which there does not appear to be any evidence in the latter.

To sum up, our data seem to corroborate Wurmbrand’s claim that, although restructuring infinitives are always ‘reduced’ structures, different restructuring constructions may correspond to configurations with different levels of complexity. Nonetheless, we depart from her in suggesting that a tenseless infinitive may not be a necessary condition for restructuring.

Examples: (1) Ontem, o João *quis / prometeu / *ousou ir ao cinema amanhã. yesterday the John wanted / promised /dared.to.go to.the cinema tomorrow
(2) a. O João não *lhe quis / *prometeu / *ousou mostrar o livro.
the John not him-CL wanted / promised /dared.to.show the book
b. E porque o ousou fazer peyte al rey XX maravedis. (13th c. OP)
and because it-CL dared.to.do pay to.the king 20 maravedis
(3) a. Ontem, eles combinaram fazer o trabalho amanhã.
yesterday they arranged to do the work tomorrow
b. Eles também o combinaram fazer.
they also it-CL arranged to do

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