

The grammar of Romanian from a diachronic and dialectal perspective

Adina Dragomirescu

ABSTRACT

This thesis summarises the main achievements of my research career after the defence of my PhD dissertation in 2009. It is structured in three sections. After the introduction, in section 2 I present the research domains and the specific topics I have worked on in the last years; sections 3 and 4 provide two samples of my current research: a discussion of the Slavonic influence on the syntax of Old Romanian, and a descriptive account of the syntax of Istro-Romanian.

I have spent an important part of my research career in the Institute of Linguistics of the Romanian Academy, where I contributed to important collective works dedicated to the grammar of Romanian, the historical syntax of Romanian and, currently, to the historical morphology of Romanian. In the last years, I wrote several chapters for Romance Linguistics handbooks, a fact which allowed me to extend my area of interest and knowledge to other Romance varieties. I have also worked on subjects like: ergativity and the syntax of unaccusative verbs in Romanian, the supine, the theory of grammaticalization and the grammaticalization of motion verbs, linguistic contact and its relevance for the syntax of Old Romanian, dialectal syntax (with a focus on the syntax of Istro-Romanian). My research interests are closely related to the disciplines I currently teach at the Faculty of Letters: the syntax of Romanian, Romance syntax and linguistic typology.

Starting from the general observation that many syntactic features of Old Romanian were explained as being the effect of (Church) Slavonic influence, in section 3, I defend the hypothesis that the main parametric changes described for Latin (in Ledgeway's 2012 seminal monograph) also took place (in the same period) in other European languages, precisely in Old Slavic. Therefore, the process that characterises the languages of the area (Romance and Slavonic) is *parametric convergence*. For example, the data presented in this section suggest that head-final structures, residually attested in old Romanian, are inherited from Latin, but are also

attested in Old Church Slavonic, the source-language for many translations from the 16th century.

Section 4 presents a summary of the main syntactic features of Istro-Romanian. This section represents the nutshell of a forthcoming descriptive syntax of Istro-Romanian, which I intend to write with Alexandru Nicolae and Ionuț Geană. This project is very important not only because the syntax of Istro-Romanian has not been investigated so far, but also because Istro-Romanian preserves archaic syntactic features, which can throw light on the syntax of (old) Romanian and even on Proto-Romanian, a stage in the development of Romanian for which there is no textual evidence. The syntax of Istro-Romanian is also interesting because it was influenced by the contact with Croatian. However, it seems that Croatian did not force the emergence of new syntactic features but it rather allowed certain common features to become more prominent. This is where *convergence* comes to play again. Last but not least, Istro-Romanian is also important from the perspective of *language documentation*: it is a severely endangered language, spoken by senior speakers in several villages of the Istrian Peninsula and in Queens, NYC.