

Two Kinds of Event Plurals: Evidence from Romanian Nominalizations

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1 Introduction

Beginning with the generalization in Grimshaw (1990), it has been known that Complex Event Nominals (CENs) disallow plural marking, a property which Grimshaw relates to the presence of the argument structure inherited from the verb. Thus, in (1) below Grimshaw opposes the CEN preserving the theme argument *of the problems* to the Result Nominal (RN) which has no arguments and can be pluralized:

- (1) a. The assignments were long. (RN)
 b. The assignment(*s) **of the problems** took a long time. (CEN)

More recently, this generalization has been challenged by Roodenburg (2006) who provides empirical evidence from French and Italian where plural CENs are not excluded. His claim is that the possibility to pluralize has to do with language-specific properties concerning the syntax-semantics of Number which predict Romance CENs to allow plural and Germanic CENs to disallow it, as illustrated by the contrast between the French and English data in (2).¹ Grimshaw's generalization would thus be restricted to Germanic languages:

- (2) a. les désamorçages **de bombes lourdes** par les recrues
 'the dismantlements of heavy bombs by the young soldiers'
 b. * the destructions **of the city** by the soldiers

While we do not deny the importance of language-specific properties, we would like to draw attention to the fact that this cannot be the only explanation for the contrast in (2), since both the Romance (2a) and the Germanic pattern (2b) can be instantiated within one and the same language, in our case, Romanian, a Romance language.

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¹The data in (2) are taken from Roodenburg (2006). Note that the two examples do not form a minimal pair, since the theme is a bare plural in (2a) and a singular definite in (2b). Although this may have implications for the grammaticality contrast, we do not attempt to address this matter here.

As indicated by the data in (3) where the genitive phrase *ale cartierelor vechi* ‘of the old quarters’ qualifies as a theme, infinitive CENs in Romanian easily accept plural marking, while supine CENs totally exclude it:

- (3) demolările / *demolaturile frecvente **ale cartierelor vechi**
 demolish-Inf-Pl / demolish-Sup-Pl frequent-Pl of quarters-Gen old
 de către comuniști
 by communists
 ‘the frequent demolitions of the old quarters by the communists’

On the basis of the aspectual differences between the two CEN patterns in Romanian, in part already observed by Cornilescu (2001), we reach the conclusion that they each realize one of two plurality patterns directly related to two patterns of internal functional structure available for CENs: nominal or verbal. The nominal pattern in a CEN indicates that the syntactic structure includes a Number projection which explains the availability of plural morphology. The verbal pattern corresponds to the projection of imperfective/unbounded Asp(ect) which blocks Num(ber) and thus plural morphology. In Romanian, infinitive CENs instantiate the nominal pattern and supine CENs, the verbal one.

In support of our generalization, we bring further evidence for the nominal properties of the infinitive and the verbal characteristics of the supine. We will show that unlike supine CENs, infinitive CENs display morphologically marked gender features and non-defective case declension, they develop RN readings, and are incompatible with aspectual adverbs. Besides the fact that it lacks these nominal properties, the supine will be argued to introduce aspect shift by turning bounded/perfective events into unbounded/imperfective ones. Thus, AspP hosts a [-bounded] feature which expresses (verbal) semantic plurality.

In Section 2, we present the morphological properties of infinitive and supine nominalizations in Romanian: derivational procedures, plural marking, determiner selection, gender marking, and case inflection. In Section 3, we discuss the aspectual differences between infinitive and supine CENs and we establish some correlations with the morphological differences from Section 2. In Section 4, we describe the special aspectual contribution of the supine, that of triggering aspect shift. On the basis of our empirical generalizations, we describe the functional structure of the nominal and the verbal CEN patterns in Section 5. In Section 6, we formulate our conclusion and consider a few cross-linguistic predictions that our analysis makes with respect to pluralization in CENs and Grimshaw’s generalization.

2 Morphological properties: infinitive vs. supine

In this section, we concentrate on the morphological properties of infinitive and supine nominalizations, with particular focus on the differences between the two.

2.1 Two nominalization patterns

Infinitive and supine nominals are the most productive deverbal nominalizations in Romanian and they derive from the stem of the long infinitive and that of the past

participle, respectively:

- (4) a. Infinitive:
- i. a cînta - cînta -**r** -**e** / cîntă -**r** -**i**
to sing - sing -Inf -FSg / sing -Inf -Pl
 - ii. a reproduce - reproduce -**r** -**e** / reproduce -**r** -**i**
to reproduce - reproduce -Inf -FSg / reproduce -Inf -Pl
- b. Supine:
- i. a cînta - cînta -**t** / # cînta -**t** -**uri**
to sing - sing -Sup / sing -Sup -Pl
 - ii. a reproduce - reprodu -**s** / # reprodu -**s** -**uri**
to reproduce - reproduce -Sup / reproduce -Sup -Pl

The infinitive suffix *-re* is an unambiguous derivative affix, since it exclusively appears within (infinitival) nominalizations. The restricted use of the verbal infinitive employs a short infinitive (5a) or a prepositional infinitive (5b):

- (5) a. Ion nu poate **citi** fără ochelari.
John not can read without glasses
'John cannot read without glasses.'
- b. Pentru **a citi**, Ion are nevoie de ochelari.
for to read, John has need of glasses
'In order to (be able to) read, John needs glasses.'

The suffix *-t/s* that appears in the supine nominal is two-way ambiguous: it generally participates in the formation of the Romanian past participle (6a), and it also appears in the traditionally called 'verbal' uses of the supine (6b,6c):

- (6) a. **Am citit** deja cartea.
have read-Part already book-the
'I have already read the book.'
- b. S-a apucat **de citit** o carte.
Cl-has started of read-Sup a book
'He started reading a book.'
- c. A plecat **la pescuit**.
has left at fish-Sup
'He went fishing.'

In view of the differences between the two suffixes, Soare (2007) argues that *-re* is a nominalizing affix, while *-t/s* is only the marking of a verbal stem and carries no particular nominalizing features. Thus, while the infinitival noun is a derivational nominalization marked for gender (see (4a) and Section 2.3 below), the supine nominal is mainly distinguished on the basis of its distributional properties. The distinction between the two corresponds to the classical differentiation between 'lexical' and 'syntactic' nominalizations originating in Chomsky (1970) and taken over in Picallo (1991).

2.2 Plural marking and determiner selection

A first parameter that differentiates between the two nominalizations is the countable/uncountable distinction, manifested in the possibility/impossibility to realize morphological number marking. As already indicated in (4), only the infinitive nominals display morphologically marked plural (4a), as opposed to the supine nominals (4b) which get the ending *-uri* by default. This latter point will be addressed in Section 2.3.

Importantly, the plural form is available for the infinitive not only in its RN reading (7a), but also in its CEN reading (7b), thus contradicting Grimshaw's generalization. In turn, the supine is always plural-defective and also unambiguously a CEN, obeying Grimshaw's generalization. We will return to the tests identifying the CEN vs. RN readings of the infinitive in Section 3.1, in connection with its aspectual properties.

- (7) a. **Interpretările** acestui actor sînt memorabile.
interpret-Inf-Pl this-Gen actor are memorable
'The performances of this actor are memorable.'
- b. **Interpretările acestui rol** de către diverși actori i-au
interpret-Inf-Pl this role-Gen by various actors Cl-have
schimbat stilul.
changed style-the
'The performance of this role by various actors has changed its style.'

The contrasting behavior of the two CENs with respect to the countable/un-countable property is further confirmed by the selection of determiners. Thus, discrete quantifiers are compatible with the infinitive (8a), but not with the supine which accepts only mass quantifiers (8b):

- (8) a. **Prea multe** spălări / o spălare a(le) rufelor distrug(e)
too many wash-Inf-Pl / one wash-Inf of laundry-Gen destroy(e)
țesătura.
fabric-the
- b. **Prea mult** / ***un** spălat al rufelor distruge țesătura.
too much / one wash-Sup of laundry-Gen destroys fabric-the
'Too much washing of the laundry destroys the fabric.'

Note that the contrast clearly relies on the discrete vs. mass type of the determiner and not on number, since the quantifier *one* is out with the supine and grammatical with the infinitive.

Selection of discrete determiners is thus another property that infinitive CENs share with count nouns. Mass quantifiers are selected by both supine CENs and mass nouns. The count noun *pată* 'stain' accepts the discrete quantifier *multe* 'many' and rejects the mass quantifier *mult* 'much' (9a). The mass noun *vin* 'wine' is compatible with the mass *mult*, but incompatible - in its mass interpretation - with the discrete *multe* (9b):

- (9) a. **Prea multe** pete / ***prea multă** pată a(u) distrus rochia.
too many stains / too much stain have/has destroyed dress-the
'Too many stains/*too much stain destroyed the dress.'

- b. **Prea mult** vin / # **prea multe** vinuri dăunează sănătății.
 too much wine / too many wines endangers health
 ‘Too much wine/#too many wines endangers one’s health.’

However, there are differences between Romanian mass nouns and supine CENs. For instance, the ‘vague’ quantifier *niște* ‘some’ is allowed with concrete mass nouns and rejected by the supine. Most likely this is due to a lexical restriction holding for abstract mass nouns in general, since *frumusețe* ‘beauty’, an abstract mass noun, is incompatible with *niște*, too:

- (10) a. Caut **niște sare**.
 search some salt
 ‘I am looking for some salt.’
- b. ***Niște** cântat n-o să-ți faci niciun rău.
 some sing-Sup not-will Subj-Cl do no harm
 ‘A bit of singing will not do you any harm.’
- c. ***Niște** frumusețe nu strică nimănui.
 some beauty not harm nobody
 ‘A bit of beauty will not do any harm to anybody.’

Just like *some* in English, *niște* combines with singular mass nouns but also with plural count nouns and it denotes a vague quantity. As expected, the infinitive CEN admits *niște* only in the plural form:

- (11) a. Am **niște mere**.
 have some apples
 ‘I have some apples.’
- b. Au avut loc **niște premieri** ale participanților.
 have taken place some prize-award-Inf-Pl of participants-Gen
 ‘There have been some prize-awardings to the participants.’

In conclusion, infinitive CENs pattern with count nouns and supine CENs with mass nouns. The possibility of a noun to be counted has been related in the literature to the presence of a NumP projection in its internal structure (see for instance Borer 2005 for a recent approach). NumP appears in the syntax of count nouns, but not in that of mass nouns. Plural marking and the selection of determiners obviously point towards the generalization that number features are present in the infinitive CEN and that they are absent in the supine CEN. We will make this precise in our proposal in Section 5.

2.3 Gender and case

A further distinction that can be established between the infinitive and the supine CEN concerns the nominal declension, more precisely gender features and the case inflection. As we will show below, the infinitive CEN behaves like a typical noun with a complete nominal paradigm, while the supine CEN has a defective nature.

The infinitive nominalizer *-re* has gender features, being marked as [+fem](inine). Compare the infinitive form in (4a), repeated below as (12a) with the one of a prototypical feminine noun in Romanian (12b):

- (12) a. cîntar **-e** / cîntăr **-i**
sing-Inf -FSg / sing-Inf -Pl
- b. floar **-e** / flor **-i**
flower -FSg / flower -Pl

The supine is traditionally considered to have neuter gender (see Graur et al. 1966) with an unmarked ending in the singular and *-uri* in the plural. The supine itself is not used in the plural form as a CEN, the plural ending *-uri* is constructed by analogy with other nouns which are derived from the supine/past participle stem. For example, the nouns *venit* and *mers* in (13b) and (13c) originate from the past participle and the supine forms, respectively, but they are perceived as lexicalized items, since these derivations are not productive. Similar nouns like the ones in (14a) and (14b) are unattested or have a very restricted use:

- (13) a. cîntat $-\emptyset$ / # cîntat **-uri**
sing-Sup -N.Sg / sing-Sup -Pl
'singing(#s)'
- b. venit $-\emptyset$ / venit **-uri**
come-Past.Part -N.Sg / come-Past.Part -Pl
'income(s)'
- c. mers $-\emptyset$ / mers **-uri**
walk-Sup -N.Sg / walk-Sup -Pl
'way(s) of walking'
- (14) a. sosit $-\emptyset$ / * sosit **-uri**
arrive-Past.Part -N.Sg / arrive-Past.Part -Pl
'thing(s) that arrived'
- b. citit $-\emptyset$ / ?? citit **-uri**
read-Sup -N.Sg / read-Sup -Pl
'way(s) of reading'

Some supine forms can also be used as simple event nominals and thus have a plural realization. This is the case with the example in (15). However, note that the corresponding CEN cannot pluralize, as shown in (15b):

- (15) a. tuns $-\emptyset$ / tuns **-uri**
cut-Sup -N.Sg / cut-Sup -Pl
'(hair) cutting(s)'
- b. **tunsul** părului / * **tunsurile** părului
cut-Sup-the hair-Gen / cut-Sup-Pl hair-Gen
'the cutting(*s) of the hair'

Given the fact that Romance languages in general have only two gender classes (masculine and feminine), it has been argued that Romanian neuter is not a proper

gender class either. Two arguments have been brought in support of this idea: the lack of semantic identity and the lack of a specific ending. With respect to the former issue, although one would expect neuter to be the gender for inanimate nouns, it does not completely cover this semantic area (see for instance the feminine inanimate *carte - cărți* ‘book - books’ and the masculine inanimate *trandafir - trandafiri* ‘rose - roses’). As for the latter argument, the neuter has no formal identity since it exhibits syncretism with the masculine singular and the feminine plural form. In (16) below, we exemplify the gender paradigm of three nouns in Romanian. The null ending in the singular characterizes both neuter and masculine nouns, while the plural endings *-e* and *-uri* appears both with neuter and feminine nouns:

	GENDER	SINGULAR	PLURAL
(16)	MASCULINE	băiat -∅ ‘boy’	băieți - i
	FEMININE	fat - ă ‘girl’	fete - e
		blan - ă ‘fur’	blăni - uri
	NEUTER	măr -∅ ‘apple’	mere - e
		chibrit -∅ ‘match’	chibrituri - uri

2.3.1 Gender marking in the supine?

While we do not attempt to address the issue of whether there is a neuter gender in Romanian or not,² we would like to argue that the so-called ‘neuter gender’ of the supine is merely a default specification. In order to do that, we will show that the only indicator of gender in the supine form – i.e. the plural ending *-uri* – does not always carry gender features.

We follow Picallo (2006) in regarding gender features as indicators of the class/declension to which a noun belongs. Under this view, gender features are hosted by a Class(ifier) projection to which the noun moves in order to check its class information. Moreover, Picallo argues that gender features and ClassP are obligatory for the projection of Number. Thus, the lack of gender triggers the lack of a NumP and implicitly the unavailability of the plural marking. Within this theory, saying that neuter does not exist as a gender class in Romanian would have the consequence that neuter nouns should not be able to form plural.³ This is too strong a generalization, since neuter count nouns like *scaun - scaune* ‘chair(s)’, *stilou - stilouri* ‘pen(s)’ clearly do pluralize.

Leaving aside the fact that the plural form does not show up with the supine CEN but only with the simple event supine (see (15)), the only ending that the supine takes is the plural *-uri*. Besides functioning as a plural ending for feminine and neuter nouns (see also (16) above), we assume that it can also be used as a default ending for words which behave like nouns, although they have not been integrated into a nominal class. This would be the case of the supine.

In support of our hypothesis, it should be observed that *-uri* is the default plural ending for newly formed nouns and for the most recent borrowings:

- (17) un **X** - două **X-uri**; un **8** - două **8-uri**
 one X - two X’s; one 8 - two 8’s

²But see Bateman and Polinsky (2006) for a recent approach against the existence of an individual gender class ‘neuter’ in Romanian.

³We would like to thank a CSSP anonymous reviewer for drawing our attention on this issue.

With respect to borrowings, Brâncuș (1978) argues that the plural *-uri* is a sign that the noun has not been completely adapted to the language. Once they are fully integrated, foreign nouns get the plural marking *-e*. See for instance the recent borrowing *weekend* as opposed to the older *verb* in (18):

- (18) a. un **weekend** - două **weekend-uri** / ***-e**
 one weekend - two weekends
- b. un **verb** - două **verburi** / * **verbe** (19th century)
 one verb - two verbs
- c. un **verb** - două **verbe** / * **verburi** (present-day)

We conclude from this discussion that *-uri* is associated with supine CENs as a default ending like in the case of ‘unestablished’ nouns. Since the singular form of the supine has no morphological indicator of gender, we may conclude that the supine CEN does not carry gender features. In Picallo’s theory, the lack of gender correlates with the lack of a ClassP and implicitly, with the absence of a NumP. This explains the unavailability of plural marking in supine CENs. If NumP is not projected, there is no way to accommodate the plural ending in the supine CEN.

2.3.2 Gender marking: infinitive vs. supine

In Section 2.2, we showed that the infinitive CEN behaves like a count noun and we suggested that it projects a NumP in the syntax. If we compare the supine with the infinitive CEN with respect to gender and Picallo’s claim that gender features ‘feed’ Number, we find a further confirmation for our initial hypothesis. In particular, the infinitive CEN has both a singular (*-e*) and a plural ending (*-i*) clearly indicating feminine gender, as shown in (12). In Picallo’s terms, this means that the infinitive projects a ClassP specified with feminine gender and a NumP can also be projected.⁴

The gender specification in the two Romanian CENs can thus be correlated with the availability of plural marking: the infinitive carries feminine gender, while supine carries a default ‘neuter’; the former accepts plural, the latter does not. To confirm our generalization with respect to gender, it should be noted that the infinitive successfully establishes anaphoric relations with the feminine demonstrative *aceasta*,⁵ while the supine rejects the masculine/neuter syncretic form *acesta* and can only be referred to by the genderless form *asta*, the common anaphor for CPs in Romanian:

- (19) a. **Că Ion a venit, asta/ *aceasta/*acesta știu.**
 ‘That John came, I know it/this-F/this-M.’
- b. Am vorbit despre **interpretarea rolului Hamlet** în general. Se pare ca **aceasta** / ??**asta** îi consacră indubitabil pe actorii tineri.
 ‘We spoke about the interpretation-Inf of Hamlet in general. It seems that this-F / ??it undoubtedly validates the young actors.’

⁴Note that both mass and count nouns carry gender features, but only the latter exhibit plural marking. In Picallo (2006), we also need a feature [\pm count] under ClassP to distinguish between the two noun classes, such that only count nouns are specified as [+count] and project NumP (see also Alexiadou et al. (to appear), Iordăchioaia and Soare (2007)).

⁵Note that the anaphor *asta* is not excluded in (19b). But in this case we are dealing with coercion since the noun *interpretarea* is understood as a fact.

- c. Am vorbit despre **interpretatul rolului Hamlet** în general. Se pare că ***acesta / asta** îi atrage pe toți actorii tineri.
 ‘We spoke about the interpretation-Sup of Hamlet in general. It seems that *this-M.N / it attracts all the young actors.’

In conclusion, the neuter form of the supine is not the effect of neuter gender features. Typical neuter nouns like *stilou* ‘pen’ are referred to by the anaphor *acesta* and not *asta*:

- (20) Ieri, Ion își pierduse **stiloul**. Se pare că **acesta / *asta** rămăsese pe masă în sala unde predase.
 ‘Yesterday, John lost his pen. Apparently, this-M.N / *it had remained on the desk in the room where he had taught.’

2.3.3 Nominal features and the Classifier projection

Following Picallo (2006), the presence of gender in infinitive CENs and the lack of it in supine CENs is expressed in the syntax by the presence/absence of a ClassP. The Classifier - as previously noted - hosts the nominal features of a noun, its class information. The projection of a NumP that hosts the plural marker is also a nominal property. The default gender in the supine suggests that this CEN lacks the ClassP in the syntax, so it carries no noun class information.

Besides gender, case is also an indicator of the noun declension. Romanian common nouns display two case paradigms with nominative-accusative and genitive-dative syncretism. The nominative-accusative form is the most unmarked one. Interestingly, the infinitive CEN exhibits both case inflections, while the supine cannot appear in the genitive-dative form (21):

- (21) a. **Tăierea / tăiatul** pădurilor a provocat
 cut-Inf-Nom / cut-Sup-Nom woods-Gen has brought about
 alunecări de teren.
 earth-flows
 ‘Cutting down the woods brings about earth flows.’
- b. Alunecările de teren au loc din cauza **tăierii / *tăiatului**
 earth flows-the occur because of cut-Inf-Gen / cut-Sup-Gen
 pădurilor.
 woods-Gen

2.4 Interim conclusion

To summarize our observations with respect to the morphological properties of the two CEN patterns in Romanian, we have shown that the infinitive CEN behaves like a typical count noun: it accepts plural marking and can combine with discrete determiners, it carries well-determined gender features, and it has a full case paradigm. The supine CEN exhibits a clear contrast with the infinitive in nominal properties: it does not accept plural marking or discrete determiners, it carries default gender, and it is

case-defective. By taking up Picallo's analysis of nominal features in relation with syntactic projections, the infinitive projects [+fem] ClassP and NumP. For the supine, there is no evidence for either of the two projections.

In what follows, we would like to suggest that the infinitive is a full nominal, while the supine exhibits a more verbal nature which blocks nominal properties. For this, we will investigate the aspectual properties of the two CENs.

3 Aspectual properties

The contrast between infinitive and supine CENs in Romanian is further confirmed by their aspectual properties, which correlate with the plural marking contrasts. In this section, we will show that infinitive CENs express telic/bounded events, unlike supine CENs which are atelic/unbounded.

3.1 Telicity

Cornilescu (2001) offers a detailed investigation of the aspectual properties of the two CENs and concludes that the infinitive is telic, while the supine is atelic. Cornilescu's argumentation is based on three issues: the projection of the theme argument, the possibility to develop R-readings, and the selection of the verbal bases.

First of all, Cornilescu follows Borer (1994) in assuming that if a transitive CEN obligatorily projects its theme argument, then it is telic, while a CEN which can project its external argument without having projected its theme is atelic. This generalization is based on the intuition that the theme identifies the culmination of an event. If the theme is obligatory, it means that the event must culminate so the CEN is telic; if the theme is not projected, the event does not need to culminate, so the CEN is atelic. In this respect, Cornilescu shows that the infinitive CEN qualifies as telic and the supine, as atelic. As the data in (22) indicate, the infinitive CEN cannot project the agent without having projected the theme, but the supine can:

- (22) a. * **citirea** lui Ion
 read-Inf-the John-Gen
 'John's reading'
- b. **cititul** lui Ion
 read-Sup-the John-Gen
 'John's reading'

The infinitive in (22a) can only be understood as a RN. This brings us to the second aspectual difference between infinitive and supine, the possibility to develop R-readings. Only telic events have a resulting state, and thus should be able to derive result readings. The infinitive and the supine CEN comply with this prediction: the former gives rise to RNs, the latter does not. In Romanian, R-readings are indicated by the presence of the preposition *de* 'of' which appears with locative modifiers. In (23), it can be noticed that the infinitive is compatible with *de*, while the supine is not:

- (23) a. * **cîntatul** lui Ion **de** la baie
 sing-Sup-the John-Gen of in bathroom

- b. interpretarea **de** la Paris (a operei Oedip)
 perform-Inf-the of in Paris (of opera-Gen Oedipus)
 ‘The Paris performance of the opera Oedipus’

A final piece of evidence that Cornilescu makes use of in order to indicate the telicity of the infinitive and the atelicity of the supine involves the selectional restrictions of the two CENs with respect to the verbal base. While they are both compatible with transitive verbs (see the discussion above), only the supine can be formed from unergative verbs, known to always express activities. The infinitive rejects them on the basis of their atelicity:⁶

	UNERGATIVE VERB		INFINITIVE	SUPINE
	a călători	‘to travel’	*călătorire	călătorit
(24)	a locui	‘to live’	*locuire	locuit
	a munci	‘to work’	*muncire	muncit
	a râde	‘to laugh’	*rîdere	rîs

The generalization in Cornilescu (2001) that the infinitive CEN is telic and the supine CEN is atelic correlates with the plural marking facts in Section 2. This confirms previous observations in the literature, according to which telic CENs do pluralize and only atelic ones do not, so only the former obey Grimshaw’s generalization (see for instance Mourelatos 1978, Borer 2005). As a telic CEN, the infinitive is expected to exhibit plural marking.

3.2 Boundedness

In order to facilitate a thorough investigation of the aspectual differences between infinitive and supine CENs, we propose to reformulate the telicity contrast above in terms of *boundedness*, a term borrowed from Jackendoff (1991). According to Jackendoff, the expression of plurality is ‘a feature of conceptualization that is orthogonal to the distinction between objects and events’. Thus, in his terms, nominal plural, mass nouns, atelic and imperfective aspect count as [-b](ounded), while nominal singular, count nouns, telic and perfective aspect are [+b].

As expected, given Cornilescu’s observations, the supine CEN cannot express a single (bounded) event located in space or/and time. This is however possible with the infinitive:

- (25) **Citirea** / # **cititul** cărții a avut loc **ieri** /
 read-Inf-the / read-Sup-the book-Gen has taken place yesterday /
în sala de lectură.
 in reading room-the
 ‘The reading of the book took place yesterday/in the reading room.’

According to Jackendoff, plural is a function that maps a [+b] entity into a [-b] multiplicity of entities of the same type. The infinitive CEN is thus expected to undergo

⁶It seems that nominalizations of unergative verbs exclude plural also in other languages with rich morphology, like Georgian (Léa Nash, p.c).

pluralization, since it is [+b]. The [-b] supine is incompatible with the plural function. A further test is provided by the (in)compatibility with the function ‘until’ which is assumed to bind an unbounded event with a time producing a bounded event. As expected, ‘until’ can combine only with the plural of the infinitive CEN and not with the [+b] singular form (26a).⁷ But it felicitously modifies the supine CEN:

- (26) a. **arestările** / # **arestarea** lui Miron Cozma **pînă** la schimbarea
 arrest-Inf-Pl / arrest-Inf-the Miron Cozma-Gen until at changing
 guvernării
 government-Gen
 ‘Miron Comza’s arrestings until the government changes’
- b. **cititul** benzilor desenate **pînă** la vîrsta de 16 ani
 read-Sup-the comics-Gen until at age of 16 years
 ‘reading comics until the age of 16’

So far we can conclude that the infinitive CEN as a [+b] event is expected to pluralize, while the supine CEN as a [-b] event naturally rejects the plural marking since it already involves a form of plural. In what follows, we will show that the unbounded character of the supine best matches a verbal syntactic structure with an Aspect projection. In view of our conclusions in Section 2, the bounded character of the infinitive is compatible with its nominal syntax with Classifier and Number projections.

4 Aspect shift

In this section, we address another level of aspectuality as instantiated by the two Romanian CENs, that of aspect shift. The possibility to trigger aspect shift will be taken as evidence for the presence of an Asp(ect)P in the syntax. With ‘aspect shift’ we refer to the possibility of the nominalization to change the aspectual value that comes with the base verb. This means that the nominalization itself contributes an aspectual operator,⁸ independently of the lexical aspect of the root. In Verkuyl (1993)’s terms, who distinguishes between ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ aspect, aspect shift takes place at the level of the outer aspect. So it is the outer aspect information that we will correlate with a syntactic projection AspP.⁹ As we will see, only the supine CEN introduces aspect shift, so it has aspectual contribution, a fact which indicates its verbal nature and thus, explains its defective nominal properties. We first consider infinitive CENs and then, for comparison, supine CENs.

4.1 The infinitive

As already indicated in Section 3.1, the infinitival form in general is incompatible with unergative roots (24) known to express unbounded events. At the same time, the infini-

⁷The only reading available for (26a) with the singular *arestarea* is ‘the arresting of Miron Cozma **before** the government changes’, so *pînă* is interpreted as ‘before’ and not as ‘until’.

⁸See de Swart (1998), van Geenhoven (2004), Laca (2006) for various examples of such aspectual operators acting as ‘eventuality modifiers’.

⁹See also Alexiadou et al. (to appear) for more details on the distinction between inner and outer aspect and its relevance for nominalizations.

tival CEN obligatorily requires the projection of the theme which qualifies it as carrying telicity (Cornilescu 2001).

In order to understand if it is the lack of a theme that makes the infinitive CEN incompatible with unergatives or the unbounded character of the latter, we should test transitive verbs with a bare plural theme which are atelic/unbounded (Dowty 1979). However, this test cannot be applied to infinitive CENs, since their theme is realized in the genitive case which always involves a definite determiner and thus the construction becomes again telic/bounded. In (27) below, *pînă* can only be interpreted as ‘before’ and not as an endpoint bounding an unbounded event, and the CEN in (27c) is related only to (27b):

- (27) a. A citit **cărți pînă** la miezul nopții.
has read books until at midnight
‘He read books until midnight.’
- b. A citit **cărțile pînă** la miezul nopții.
has read books-the until at midnight
‘He had read the books by midnight.’
- c. **citirea cărților pînă** la miezul nopții
read-Inf-the books-Gen until at midnight
i. # = 27a: ‘the reading of books until midnight’
ii. = 27b: ‘the reading of the books by midnight’

In conclusion, infinitive CENs with the theme in genitive case always derive from bounded constructions. Considering this in relation with the conclusion in Section 3.1 according to which infinitive CENs express bounded events, it means that the infinitival CEN does not change the boundedness specification of the base verb. That is, it cannot trigger aspect shift,¹⁰ it merely inherits the aspectual specification of the verb.

4.2 Verb semantic classes and the supine

The situation is different with the supine. As noted in Section 3.1, supine CENs are unbounded. But this does not preclude them from applying to bounded roots like achievements (28):

- (28) a. **Sositul lui Ion** cu întârziere la toate întâlnirile importante
arrive-Inf-the John-Gen with delay at all meetings important
nu e un secret.
not is a secret
‘John’s arriving late at all important meetings is not a secret.’
- b. **Sositul lui Ion** cu întârziere la toate întâlnirile importante
arrive-Inf-the John-Gen with delay at all meetings important
pînă când a fost amenințat cu concedierea nu e un secret.
until when has been threatened with firing not is a secret

¹⁰Note that this conclusion holds of infinitival constructions in general, since even in unbounded constructions with a “*de* ‘of’ + bare plural” theme they maintain the unbounded character of the original construction: *citirea de cărți pînă miezul nopții* corresponds to (27a) above.

'John's (continuously) arriving late at all important meetings until he was threatened with getting fired is not a secret.'

Since the supine CEN in (28) is still unbounded (according to the possibility to combine with *pînă*: (28b)) despite the bounded character of the achievement root *a sosi* 'to arrive', it means that the supine actually introduces aspect shift on the root: it turns [+b] events into [-b] events. This is confirmed by the interaction between the supine and various semantic verb classes.

States and activities are known as classes of atelic verbs, so they express unbounded events. The supine nominals derived from these verbs do not simply inherit the original unboundedness, but they seem to be possible only if the original event is bounded. Thus, supine CENs derived from states and activities are very questionable if not completely excluded, unless we can understand them as pluralities of bounded events:

- (29) a. * **statul** lui Ion / * **dormitul** lui Ion
 stay-Sup-the John-Gen / sleep-Sup-the John-Gen
- b. **statul** lui Ion la Maria / **dormitul** lui Ion **pînă**
 stay-Sup-the John-Gen at Mary / sleep-Sup-the John-Gen until
 după-amiaza târziu
 afternoon late
 'John's habit of staying at Mary's/sleeping until late in the afternoon'
- (30) a. * **muncitul** lui Ion / * **învățatul** lui Ion
 work-Sup-the John-Gen / learn-Sup-the John-Gen
- b. **muncitul** lui Ion / **învățatul** lui Ion **pînă** la
 work-Sup-the John-Gen / learn-Sup-the John-Gen until at
 miezul nopții
 midnight
 'John's (habit of) working/studying until midnight'

Once they are circumscribed in space and/or time, the atelic events can be understood as bounded and thus the supine form becomes available. Both the states in (29b) and the activities in (30b) become bounded due to *pînă* 'until'. But note that *pînă* does not bound the unbounded event expressed by the supine, since the overall interpretation of the two constructions is habitual and thus still unbounded. In order to test this, we can see that another 'until'-phrase semantically compatible with the unbounded event expressed by the supine is easily available:

- (31) a. **dormitul** lui Ion **pînă** după-amiaza târziu **pînă** la vârsta
 sleep-Sup-the John-Gen until afternoon late until at age-the
 adolescenței
 teen
 'John's (habit of) sleeping until late afternoon (which lasted) until he was a teenager'
- b. **învățatul** lui Ion **pînă** la miezul nopții **pînă** la absolvirea
 learn-Sup-the John-Gen until at midnight until at graduating
 facultății
 university

'John's (habit of) studying until midnight (which lasted) until he graduated university'

In conclusion, the supine introduces unboundedness as a form of pluralization over individual/bounded events. It cannot combine with unbounded events (in (29a) and (30a)) for the same reason for which plural is not available for mass nouns. If this happens, then the unbounded event has to be interpreted as bounded (in (29b) and (30b)), just like mass nouns have to be interpreted as countable. In (32b), the plural makes *water* be understood as 'river' or 'kind of water' (e.g. sweet and salty; clean and dirty):

- (32) a. I saw **water**(#s) on the floor.
b. There are two **waters** flowing into the Danube.

As a further confirmation of this generalization, the supine is grammatical with accomplishments (33a) and punctual events (33b) which are bounded, but ungrammatical with i-level predicates (33c) which cannot be located in space and time (Kratzer 1995), so they cannot become bounded and then multiplied:

- (33) a. **Mîncatul** micului dejun pe terasă este obiceiul lui de o viață.
eat-Sup-the breakfast-Gen on terrace is habit his of a life
'Having breakfast on the terrace has been his lifetime habit.'
- b. **Clipitul** Mariei în acest moment important este enervant.
blink-Sup Mary-Gen in this moment important is annoying
'Mary's blinking at this important moment is annoying.'
- c. * **cunoscutul** limbilor străine / * **descinsul** omului
know-Sup-the languages-Gen foreign / descend-Sup-the man-Gen
din maimuță
from monkey
'knowledge of foreign languages/the man's descent from the monkey'

As shown by (33b), the unboundedness of a punctual event in the supine form correlates with iterativity at a given moment. In all the other examples, we noticed that unboundedness usually correlated with habituality. These two patterns can also be identified in the two interpretations possible with semelfactive verbs. A semelfactive verb has both a punctual event (34a) and an accomplishment reading (34b). The supine CEN corresponding to the former has an iterative reading, while the one corresponding to the latter receives a habitual reading. Compare the interpretation of (35a) with (34a) and that of (35b) with (34b):

- (34) a. În acest moment important, Ion sare într-un picior.
in this moment important John jumps on one foot
'At this important moment, John is jumping on one foot.'
- b. Ion a sărit peste gard.
John has jumped over fence
'John jumped over the fence.'

- (35) a. **Săritul** lui Ion într-un picior în acest moment important
 jump-Sup-the John-Gen on one foot in this moment important
 este enervant.
 is annoying
 'John's jumping on one foot at this important moment is annoying.'
- b. **Săritul** lui Ion peste garduri nu este tocmai o calitate.
 jump-Sup-the John-Gen over fences not is exactly a quality
 'John's (habit of) jumping over fences is not really a quality.'

4.3 The pluractional operator in the supine

The behavior described above indicates that the supine contains an operator that triggers aspect shift, so it turns bounded events into unbounded. We support the idea that this is a pluractional operator in the sense of Lasersohn (1995), van Geenhoven (2004) and Laca (2006), and as argued in Iordăchioaia and Soare (2007).

Pluractional operators (POs) are known from Cusic (1981) and Lasersohn (1995) to introduce verbal plurality/atelicity. POs with a morphological character have often been identified in polysynthetic languages, as for instance the PO *qattaar* in West Greenlandic (van Geenhoven 2004, p. 147) which expresses verbal plurality in general:

- (36) a. ?? Qaartartoq sivisuumik qaarpoq.
 'A/the bomb exploded for a long time.'
- b. ? Qaartartoq sivisuumik qaa**qattaar**poq. (a magic bomb)
 'A/The bomb exploded again and again for a long time.'
- c. Qaartartut sivisuumik qaa**qattaar**put.
 'Bombs exploded again and again for a long time.'

Given that a 'for'-PP requires an atelic event, and *explode* is a punctual telic event, the incompatibility in (36a) is expected. The combination improves once the PO *qattaar* is introduced, since it turns the telic event into an atelic one (36b). The oddity of the sentence is due to the fact that the same bomb cannot explode again and again, unless it is a magic bomb. The oddity disappears if the theme of *explode* is plural, which allows the interpretation that different bombs were involved in the multiple explosion events that spread over a long time.

Among the usual semantic effects associated with POs we can enumerate distributivity (reduplicative POs in Klamath), frequentativity/iterativity (*tar* in West Greenlandic, *andar* in Spanish), repetition (West Greenlandic *urar*), and habituality (*tar* in West Greenlandic). In the literature (see Lasersohn (1995), van Geenhoven (2004), Laca (2006)), these terms often overlap, but this is also due to the ambiguity of POs which usually carry several of these semantic properties at the same time. As pointed out especially in Section 4, iterativity and habituality are often associated with supine CENs in Romanian,¹¹ which is already an indicator that they carry pluractionality.

Several other characteristics associated with POs in general (see Laca (2006) for an overview) were discussed in Iordăchioaia and Soare (2007) with respect to the Romanian supine. Here, we address two main properties that give POs unquestionable the-

¹¹The habitual interpretation of the supine is discussed in details in Soare (2006).

oretical status: 1) *the lack of multiplicity effects with indefinites* and 2) *the distribution effects with plurals*. The first property refers to the fact that unlike a frequency adverb like *occasionally* in (37), a PO like *qattaar* in (36) does not provide an interpretation in which the indefinite *a bomb* would refer to several different bombs. If this were possible, the sentence in (36b) would not sound odd:

- (37) A bomb **occasionally** exploded.
 a. The same bomb exploded. (magic bomb)
 b. A different bomb exploded every time.

With respect to the second property, by comparing the West Greenlandic (36c) to (36b), it is obvious that the grammaticality of the former is directly connected to the fact that different bombs explode.

The two properties are accounted for by van Geenhoven (2004) and Laca (2006). The analysis relies on the idea that unlike a frequency adverb a PO can only take scope at the V level and not over the whole VP, so this is why it cannot multiply the indefinite within the VP: it does not have scope over it. The distribution effects with plurals are accounted for on the basis of the assumption that a PO can only combine with a VP whose object has ‘cumulative reference’ (see van Geenhoven 2004, p. 154), a property which characterizes plurals in general.¹²

Coming back to the Romanian supine CEN, we can see that it clearly displays the two properties described above. Thus, (38a) is ungrammatical because a journalist cannot be killed several times. This means that the PO in the supine cannot multiply the singular indefinite theme *un jurnalist*, so it takes narrow scope with respect to it. The construction becomes grammatical once the theme is a plural (38b). That is, similarly to *qattaar*, the PO in the Romanian supine CEN creates distribution effects with a plural argument:

- (38) a. * **Ucisu** **unui jurnalist** de către mafia politică este un subiect
 kill-Sup-the a journalist-Gen by mafia political is a topic
 foarte actual în presă.
 very actual in media
- b. **Ucisu** **jurnaliștilor** de către mafia politică este un subiect
 kill-Sup-the journalists-Gen by mafia political is a topic
 foarte comun.
 very common
 ‘Th killing of journalists by the political mafia is a very common topic.’

The same properties have been identified by Laca with respect to the PO “*andar + gerund*” in Spanish. Compare (39a) below with the West Greenlandic (36b) and the Romanian (38a) above, and (39b) with (36c) and (38b):

- (39) a. ?? El zorro **anduvo matando una gallina**.
 the fox walk-Pres.Pf killing a hen
 ‘The fox has been killing a hen.’

¹²While it is not within the aim of our paper to give a semantic account of POs, we refer the reader to van Geenhoven (2004), and Laca (2006), pp. 198-201, for one which we consider to apply for the Romanian supine CEN, too.

- b. El zorro **anduvo matando gallinas.**
 the fox walk-Pres.Pf killing hens
 ‘The fox has been killing hens.’

In order to keep an eye on the comparison between infinitive and supine CENs, note that the infinitive structure corresponding to (39a) above is grammatical:

- (40) **Uciderea unui jurnalist** de către mafia politică este un subiect foarte
 kill-Inf-the a journalist-Gen by mafia political is a topic very
 actual în presă.
 actual in media
 ‘The killing of a journalist by the political mafia is a very up to date topic in the media.’

This contrast is due to the difference between the two CENs with respect to boundedness and pluractionality. Since unlike supine, infinitive does not involve pluractionality, the interpretation of (40) is that of a singular bounded event. Thus, the singular indefinite theme of the infinitive does not raise the problem that is raised by the conflict between the pluralized killing event expressed by the supine and the singular theme which cannot undergo the same event more than once. As a consequence, the structure with the infinitive is fine.

As a further piece of evidence for the presence of the PO, we observe that it exhibits scope interaction with aspectual modifiers. In (41) below a ‘for’-adverbial can either specify the time interval for the single event and thus get narrow scope with respect to the PO (41a), or modify the plurality of events and thus outscope the PO (41b):

- (41) plantatul de copaci **timp de 3 ore / timp de 3 ani**
 plant-Sup-the of trees for 3 hours / for 3 years
 a. PO - *plant* > 3 hours: ‘a plurality of tree-planting events, each of them taking 3 hours’
 b. 3 years > PO - *plant*: ‘3 years covered with (a plurality of) tree-planting events’

This kind of scope interaction does not occur with the infinitive, where only a ‘for’-adverbial that specifies the time interval for the basic event is plausible (42). This is expected, if we consider our observation in Section 4.1, according to which the infinitive simply inherits the lexical aspectual¹³ properties of the root. No further aspectual information above this is available that would give rise to scope interaction with aspectual modifiers specifying different time intervals:

- (42) plantarea de copaci **timp de 3 ore / # timp de 3 ani**
 plant-Inf-the of trees for 3 hours / for 3 years
 a. *plant* > 3 hours: ‘the event of planting trees which took 3 hours’
 b. # *plant* > 3 years: ‘the event of planting trees which took 3 years’
 c. * 3 years > *plant*

¹³Lexical aspect is understood here as corresponding to the notion of Aktionsart, or ‘inner’ aspect of Verkuyl (1993). See also Iordăchioaia and Soare (2007) for a comparison between the Romanian infinitive and the Spanish infinitive as both inheriting the lexical aspect of the root.

We conclude from this section that the infinitive CEN selects bounded eventualities as verbal bases and since it eventually still expresses bounded events, it does not introduce any aspectual information of its own. On the contrary, we have observed that the supine CEN expresses unbounded events, but that this does not correspond to a selection of correspondingly unbounded roots. The supine takes a bounded root, it multiplies it and thus turns it into an unbounded plurality. It carries a pluractional operator which introduces aspect shift by mapping bounded events into unbounded ones. We take this information to be hosted by an Aspect projection in the syntax of the supine. This projection - we will show below - is independently motivated by the presence of Aspect modifiers

5 The functional structure of Romanian CENs

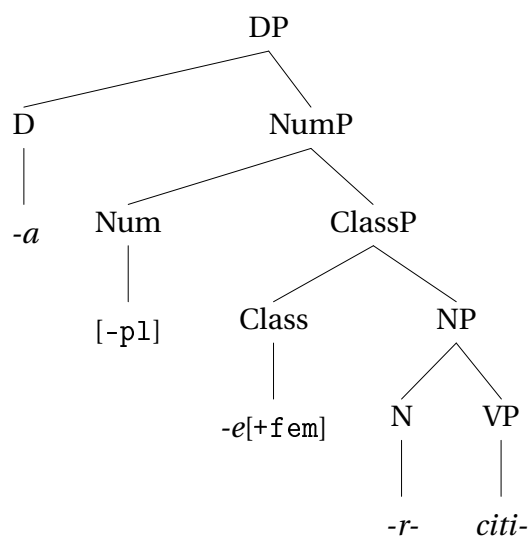
The contrasting properties of the two CEN patterns in Romanian lead to the generalization that we are dealing with two types of event plurality: one by means of (nominal) Number – in the infinitive CEN and the other by means of Aspect (triggered by the PO) – in the supine CEN. We showed that these properties can be accounted for by corresponding functional projections in the syntax, in agreement with general principles assumed in the linguistic literature.

We thus propose that infinitive CENs project a mainly nominal structure with NumP, whereas supine ASNs project a mainly verbal structure with AspP. This corresponds to two patterns of nominalization, both of them starting from a VP and taking the overall shape of a DP: the functional projections in between account for the differences.

5.1 The nominal pattern

The nominal pattern for the realization of plural, instantiated by the infinitive CEN receives the functional structure in (43):

(43)

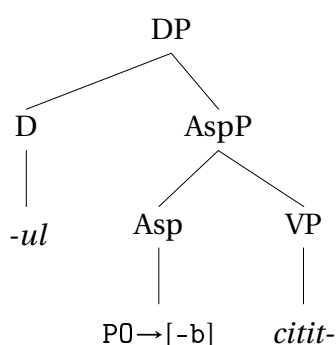


The nominalizer *-r-* selects the VP *citi*, turning it into a noun. Following Picallo's proposal, we argue that the N head moves to Class in order to check its class features gender and case carried by the ending *-e*. Under the Number projection on top of ClassP, plural can be realized, as we argued before. The whole structure is a DP.

5.2 The verbal pattern

The verbal pattern expressing plurality is given in (44) and characterizes the Romanian supine CEN:

(44)



Since the suffix *-t/s* is not morphologically specific to the supine (see the discussion in Section 2.1), we assume that it comes together with the VP in the structure. Alternatively, one could argue that it appears under AspP, so it carries the PO and contributes the [-b] feature, in a similar fashion to the claim that is made of the verbal gerund suffix *-ing* as contributing imperfective aspect (see Alexiadou 2001, 2005). Note however that in English the suffix *-ing* in the verbal gerund contributes the same imperfective value that it contributes when it plays the role of the present participle. In contrast to this, if we assumed the same kind of analysis for the Romanian suffix *-t/s*, we would make the prediction that it contributes perfective/bounded aspect in the past perfect form, and imperfective/unbounded aspect in the supine CEN. Since so far we have no evidence that this should be the case, we assume that the aspectual value of unboundedness in the supine CEN is contributed by the PO which appears in the course of the nominalization process.¹⁴

As argued in Section 2, the supine CEN does not display evidence for the nominal projections ClassP and NumP, so the next projection above the VP is AspP, hosting the PO which triggers unboundedness. The nominal behavior of the supine CEN – mainly relying on its distributional properties – is accounted for via the DP projection which embeds the rest of the structure (see also Soare 2007).

A final confirmation for the presence of an AspP in the functional structure of the supine is provided by the test of aspectual adverbs like *constantly*, which are argued by Cinque (1999) to modify an Asp head:

- (45) *cititul* (**constant**) *al ziarelor* (**constant**)
 read-Sup-the constantly newspapers-Gen constantly

¹⁴We are not sure for now if the PO can be posited of the supine form in general. In order to establish this, further investigation is needed on the behavior of the so-called 'verbal supine'. For the moment, we keep our generalization with respect to the CEN.

‘constantly reading newspapers’

As correctly predicted by our analysis, the infinitive CEN cannot be modified by such adverbs, it only accepts the corresponding adjective *constant*:

- (46) a. omiterea (***constant**) a unor informații (??**constant**)
omit-Inf-the constantly some information-Gen constantly
- b. omiterea **constantă** a unor informații
omit-Inf-the constant-F.Sg some information-Gen
‘the constant omission of information’

It should also be pointed out that although the adverb *constant* is homonymous with the masculine-neuter adjective *constant*, in (45) we are dealing with the adverb, and not with the adjective. As a test, adjectives in Romanian can appear prenominally. Notice the contrast between the supine and the infinitive CENs modified by the adjective *constant* in (47). It clearly shows that in (45) it cannot be the adjective modifying the supine.

- (47) a. ***constantul** **citit** al ziarelor
constant-M.N.the read-Sup newspapers-Gen
- b. **constanta** **omitere** a unor informații
constant-F.the omit-Inf some information-Gen

As a further confirmation, note also that in the case of suppletive adverb-adjective pairs,¹⁵ the supine only accepts the adverb, so the supine in general is incompatible with adjectives:

- (48) Învățatul **bine** / ***bun** nu îl caracterizează.
learn-Sup-the well / good not him characterizes
‘Learning well is not really like him.’

6 Conclusions and cross-linguistic implications

Throughout this paper, we have focused on the morphological and aspectual differences between the infinitive and the supine CENs in Romanian which have led us to an explanation of their contrasting behavior with respect to plural marking.

We have shown in the spirit of the observation in Roodenburg (2006) that Grimshaw’s generalization does not hold entirely, since the infinitive CEN in Romanian does accept plural, contrary to predictions. However, we argued that this deviation is not directly related to a language parameter Romance vs. Germanic as Roodenburg claimed, since Romanian instantiates both varieties of CENs: with and without plural. The Romanian supine conforms to Grimshaw’s generalization, while the infinitive does not.

The sharp differences between the two Romanian CENs allowed us to explain the (un)availability of plural marking via the structural architecture of the CEN. We related

¹⁵We thank Patricia Cabredo Hofherr for suggesting this test to us.

the possibility to realize morphological number to the presence of a Number projection in the functional structure and we explained the unavailability of plural as a blocking effect of a semantic plural encoded in aspectual features as unboundedness. At the syntactic level, the unbounded feature is hosted by an Aspect projection which as a verbal projection blocks the realization of NumP, a nominal projection. We eventually reduced the contrast to an opposition between a nominal and a verbal pattern of realizing plural as Number and Aspect, respectively.

The generalizations we presented for Romanian seem to be also confirmed in other languages, as already predicted by Mourelatos (1978) and Borer (2005) who observe that telic/bounded CENs can pluralize, and only the atelic/unbounded ones cannot. The contrast is supported in English by the distinction between the nominal and the verbal gerund (see Alexiadou (2005) and Alexiadou et al. (to appear)). At the same time, the atelic/unbounded aspect of the base verb blocks plural also in Spanish infinitival nominals (Iordăchioaia and Soare 2007). The study of the Romanian CENs is particularly enlightening since the differences between the two plural patterns are very systematic and thus provide a reliable background to test further cross-linguistic generalizations with respect to the functional structure and the behavior of deverbal nominalizations.

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