

Tough-Movement and Nominalized Infinitives in French

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It has, at times, been claimed in the literature on Romance causatives that *Faire-par* embeds not a verbal infinitive but rather, a gerundive, verbal noun (Guasti, 1990; Travis, 1992; Folli & Harley, 2007). In this paper, we aim to show that if similar assumptions are made concerning the "infinitive" embedded under predicates of the *Tough*-class in French, a number of unexpected restrictions on French *Tough*-movement constructions (TMs) discussed by Legendre (1986) follow naturally.

It has been known for some time that unlike English TMs, which license unbounded dependencies, Romance TMs appear to be clause bounded. This property is expected under an A-movement analysis of TMs in Romance, an analysis that is, in fact, supported by a substantial body of evidence. For example, as (1a) shows, A-movement in passives (but not wh-movement) has been observed to allow optional reconstruction in French (Deprez, 1990), a property that is exhibited by French TMs as well (1b) (Canac Marquis, 1996).

- (1) a. [Cette photo de lui-même_i/Jean_i] lui_i a été transmise.
this picture of himself/Jean to-him has been passed-on
b. [Cette photo de lui-même_i/Jean_i] sera difficile à lui_i transmettre.
this picture of himself/Jean will-be difficult to to-him to-pass-on

Legendre (1986) discusses a number of cases, however, in which verbs that can undergo passivization cannot appear as infinitives under a predicate of the *Tough*-class:

- (2) a. *Cette péniche sera difficile à charger de tomates.
'This barge will be difficult to load with (Lit. 'of') tomatoes.'
b. *Cette maison sera facile à construire avec des briques.
'This house will be easy to build with bricks.'

While such cases indicate that a straightforward NP-movement analysis of French TMs is problematic, we will show that it is not the infinitival verb *per se* that triggers ungrammaticality in (2) but rather, the fact that it has nominal properties. Thus, all of the "infinitives" in (2) are licit in TMs but only when they are not followed by those complements that are disallowed in their corresponding argument-taking event nominals. The relevant parallel is illustrated in (3b-c):

- (3) a. On chargera la péniche de tomates/avec des tomates.
'We'll load the barge Lit. 'of tomatoes'/with tomatoes.'
b. Cette péniche sera difficile à charger (*de tomates)/(avec des tomates).
'This barge will be difficult to load (Lit. 'of tomatoes')/(with tomatoes).'
c. Le chargement de cette péniche (*de tomates)/(avec des tomates) va commencer.
'The loading of this barge (Lit. 'of tomatoes')/(with tomatoes) is about to begin.'

If *charger* 'load' in (3b) is a gerundive that has nominal properties like *chargement* 'loading' in (3c), then the paradigm in (3) is expected.

We also predict that infinitives in TMs, being nominalized elements, should never be selected by auxiliaries (4a) and should have suppressed external arguments (cf. Grimshaw, 1990). The latter prediction seems correct as well, given that no modification of the implicit subject of TM infinitives by *tous* 'all' is allowed (4c), and that *by*-phrases are sometimes possible (4d).

- (4) a. *Ce record aurait été impossible à avoir battu sans tricher.
'This record would have been difficult to have broken without cheating.'
b. Il serait facile de tous battre Paul aux cartes. 'It would be easy to all beat Paul in a card game.'
c. Paul serait facile à (*tous) battre aux cartes. 'Paul would be easy to (all) beat in a card game.'
d. Bien que ce saut soit difficile à exécuter correctement par un débutant...
although this jump is difficult to execute correctly by a beginner...

As we will show, TM infinitives are, in fact, closely related to the type of English gerund Clark (1985) calls "retroactive nominals" (RNs) (5a). Like TMs, RNs contain a gap, are possible only with a restricted class of predicates (*bear*, *merit*, *use*, *need*), do not license unbounded dependencies, and do not allow subjects (5b), except when they are realized as a *by*-phrase (5c).

- (5) a. These ideas merit some working on ____ .
b. *These ideas merit Bill's working on ____ .
c. Pete could use a good talking to ____ by a competent psychiatrist.