The progressive in Romance, as compared with English

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1. Prolegomena [1]

This chapter collapses two apparently disparate entities: the Romance languages and a single language belonging to the Germanic group. This might be considered inappropriate from a strictly genetic point of view. But the typological perspective that we are assuming in this series of contributions justifies such a move. In fact, this solution should not even appear particularly surprising, given the fact that English is, among the Germanic languages, the one that has most dramatically departed from the other languages of the group as a result of the protracted contact with French in a crucial phase of its history. But what matters most is that, regarding the particular phenomenon we are going to discuss here (i.e. the progressive), the languages under consideration present deep affinities. It can easily be shown that Germanic languages other than English exhibit quite different features, as illustrated in the companion chapter by Karen Ebert (this volume). It has even been claimed that the English progressive was shaped by the Romance model. However, the alternative view, according to which this construction represents an autonomous development, is equally defendable (Scheffer 1975). This issue of course needs to be addressed in proper terms, namely through the comparative investigation of ancient texts (to the extent that they provide evidence for the crucial period). Here we shall disregard it, and merely concentrate on the observable synchronic situation, characterized by strong similarities between Romance and English, be it a matter of common origin or of mere convergence.

A clarification is in order at the outset. We have to distinguish between "progressive" as a semantic notion and as a formal manifestation (i.e. a morphosyntactic device). To convey the latter sense, I shall use the abbreviation PROG (except when I cite the traditional grammatical denomination of a given tense, such as e.g. the English "Present Progressive"). Although in many cases there is a reciprocal implication, this is not always so. Consider Romance languages, where the progressive aspect is not necessarily conveyed by specialized morphosyntactic devices (namely periphrases), for the mere usage of imperfective tenses is in most cases perfectly adequate. And this is not the only complication. In fact, on the one hand we find prototypical contexts where the notion "progressive" is necessarily present independent of the particular device employed, be it a general purpose imperfective tense (of the sort we can find in Romance) or a specific periphrasis (like in English, as well as in

Romance). On the other hand, specialized PROG devices may also appear in contexts which have little to do with the aspectual notion "progressive". To quote an obvious example, consider English PROG with future-time reference, as in: *I am leaving tomorrow.* Although the development of this meaning must originally have been licensed by some specific property possessed by what we might call the "prototypical" progressive aspect (as is shown by the fact that English is not the only language showing this particular development; cf. section 6.3.3), it is clear that this usage of PROG does not convey any progressive meaning, in the proper sense of this term. Thus, the correspondence of form and meaning is not always perfect. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that whenever a specialized device exists, it is quite likely that we find at least some contexts where this is considered by the speakers as a quite natural choice (or maybe as the only option available). In this chapter I shall mainly be concerned with the morphosyntactic device PROG, rather than with the progressive aspect in the strict sense, and its possible manifestations.

The data I shall discuss here are drawn in part from the questionnaire that was prepared and distributed by Eurotyp group 6 (henceforth **PRQ**; cf. the appendix **xxx**), but it will also be complemented by a survey of the available literature. The languages for which we collected data, among those relevant here, are the following: [2]

- Catalan: 1 subject (Standard Central Catalan)
- English: 1 European subject (no declared dialectal background)
- French: 2 subjects (no declared dialectal background)
- Italian: 4 subjects (1 from the North, 1 from the Center, 2 from Sardinia)
- Portuguese: 3 European subjects (no declared dialectal background)
- Romanian: 3 subjects (no declared dialectal background).
- Spanish: 2 European subjects (Standard Spanish).

As to the morphosyntactic devices employed, Table 1 below lists the most relevant ones:

Table 1. Survey of the morphological manifestations of PROG devices in Romance and English.

	State-PROG	**Motion-PROG**	**Marginal types**
English	*be* + V-ing	-	?
Catalan	*estar* + GER	*anar* + GER	?
French	-	(*aller* + GER)	*être en train de* + INF
Italian	*stare* + GER	*andare/venire* + GER	*essere dietro a* + INF
	stare a + INF		
Portuguese	*estar a* + INF	*ir/vir* + GER	?
	estar + GER		
Romanian	-	-	*a fi în curs de a* + INF
Spanish	*estar* + GER	*ir/andar/venir* + GER	?

The label 'St-PROG' indicates periphrases based on auxiliary verbs approximately meaning "be, stand". 'Mot-PROG' stands for periphrases based on auxiliary verbs meaning "go, come". The third type is a miscellaneous category comprising the residual devices. As can be seen, in French and Romanian the third type is virtually the only one existing (considering that "*aller* + GER" in Modern French is extremely rare). However, even with these languages it is correct to call this type "Marginal" because of its relatively infrequent usage, which is quite remarkable in Romanian. This appears also in PRQ, where PROG is very seldom employed by the Romanian informants. Consequently, in what follows I shall have very little to say about this language, except for some narrowly targeted observations (cf. section 6.1). [3]

St-PROG divides further into a gerundive and an infinitival type, as shown in Table 1. For clarity, I shall designate them St-PROG-GER and St-PROG-INF respectively. However, I shall avoid providing these additional qualifications when I refer to the general type, or whenever it is sufficiently clear which is the subtype I am referring to. St-PROG-INF is the standard device in European Portuguese, although the gerundive type is equally present, especially in the written language. Curiously, in Brazilian Portuguese the situation is reversed, with St-PROG-GER commonly used, at the expense of its competitor. As shown in Table 1, St-PROG-INF also exists in Italian. This device is now confined to the colloquial usage of the speakers of Central Italy (most typically in Rome, where the rival construction is much less frequent), but it is also occasionally to be found in literary texts, including early ones. This shows that, besides standard varieties, one should also consider the situation of the local varieties, which in some known cases seem to behave quite differently. However, very little information is available on this, and even less is known on the vernacular languages, which in some regions (like Italy

and Romania) often present remarkable differences, at all structural levels, relative to the national standards. [4] Thus, the picture I am going to present here is far from exhaustive.

2. On the evolution of PROG in Romance

In Romance languages, the copula of both types of St-PROG is a descendant of Latin STARE, rather than ESSE. However, this was not necessarily the case in the ancient stages of these languages, where both types of copulae could be encountered. As to the origin of these periphrases, cf. in particular Dietrich (1973), [5] who reports abundant evidence from Late Latin, particularly from Christian texts, i.e. from a type of literature relatively close to the spoken language (suggesting that these devices must have been fairly common in the actual usage of the speakers). In Latin, we find four types of construction, which are mirrored almost exactly by the early stages of Italian (Bertinetto 1986:134-136; the Latin examples are from New Testament versions (*Vetus Latina*, *Vulgata*) and late Latin authors; the Italian ones are authors of the 13th and 14th century):

<table>
<tr><td></td><td align="center">Late Latin</td><td align="center">Italian</td></tr>
<tr><td>a)</td><td>"*esse* + Imperfective Participle"</td><td>"*essere* + Imperfective Participle"</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[…] gemens et tremens eris […]
moaning and trembling be-2SG-FUT
'You will be moaning and trembling.'</td><td>La Misericordia è parlante […]
the Mercy   is speaking
'God's Mercy says […]'</td></tr>
<tr><td>b)</td><td>"*esse* + Ablative Gerundive"</td><td>"*essere* + Gerundive"</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[…] erat Darius   vociferando   et
was Darius-NOM shouting   and
congregando multitudinem […]
gathering   crowd-ACC
'Darius was shouting and gathering
the people.'</td><td>Le mani me   son lavando […]
the hands 1SG-REFL am   washing
'I am washing my hands.'</td></tr>
<tr><td>c)</td><td>"*stare* + Imperfective Participle"</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[…] stabant   autem […] scribae
were-3PL thus   scribes
constanter accusantes eum […]
constantly accusing   him
'Thus […] the scribes were constantly
accusing him.'</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>d)</td><td>"*stare* + Ablative Gerundive"</td><td>"*stare* + Gerundive"</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>[…] stetit dux diu   cunctando […]
was chief long time hesitating
'The chief hesitated for a long while.'</td><td>[…] stetti molt'anni libertà sognando
was-1SG many years freedom dreaming
'For many years I dreamed of freedom.'</td></tr>
</table>

Of these constructions, the first was the most frequently attested in Latin, whereas the last became the standard device in Modern Italian. Although this development is also basically

shared by Spanish and Catalan (and to some extent Portuguese) PROG, the evolution of Italian St-PROG is almost unique, in the sense that it underwent a radical reinterpretation. The Latin precursors, as well as the early Italian attestations, show that this device could easily be used to indicate a purely durative (static) situation, rather than a true progressive one. In fact, the verbal noun often fulfilled a purely adjectival function, and as such could combine with a habitual (1-2a) or an imperative (2b) meaning, as in the following examples (taken from Dietrich 1973 and Durante 1981, respectively), in which the event is not viewed with respect to a focalized point in time, but rather relative to an unrestricted interval:

(1)　　　Erat　　　autem docens in synagoga eorum　sabbatis.(*Vulgata*)
　　　　be-PAST-2SG thus　　teaching in synagogue they-GEN Saturdays
　　　　'Thus he taught in their synagogue on Saturdays.'

(2)　　　a. La notti e　la die　sta plorando.　(Elegia Giudeo-Cristiana, 12-13th cent.)
　　　　　　the nights and the day　is　crying
　　　　'He cries night and day.'
　　　　b. Però　lascia i　piaceri […] e　sta　　più tosto pregando.　(Bascapé, 16th cent.)
　　　　　　therefore　leave the pleasures　and be-2SG-IMP rather　　praying
　　　　'Therefore, abandon the amusements and rather spend your time in prayer.'

　　　Interestingly, something fairly similar occurred in Old English, where we find sentences uch as example (**xx**) of Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume. [6] As suggested in section **xx** of the quoted chapter, it is likely that this is the preliminary stage in the evolutionary path followed by PROG in most languages. And there is certainly little doubt that Italian St-PROG-GER could be used in the past (up until the beginning of the 19th century, as far as the literary language is concerned) to indicate a purely durative situation, as is proven by examples such as:

(3)　　　a. … e domani　vi starò attendendo amendue per continuare　i discorsi
　　　　　　and tomorrow you　be-1SG-FT waiting　　both　　　to begin　　　the speech
　　　　cominciati.　(G. Galilei, beginning of 17th cent.)
　　　　begun
　　　　'… and tomorrow I shall be here, waiting for you both to continue our conversation.'
　　　　b. Renzo lo stava guardando con un'attenzione estatica, come un materialone sta
　　　　　　Renzo him was　　lookint at with　an attention　　ecstatic like　a　　guy　　stands
　　　　sulla piazza guardando al　giocator di bussolotti.　(A. Manzoni, 19th cent.)
　　　　on the square looking　　at the　player of　dice
　　　　'Renzo was looking at him with ecstatic attention, like a guy standing on a square and staring a player of dice.'

　　　Example (3a) may be compared to English sentences such as: *While you stay here, I'll be going home*, which typically present a durative, non-focalized situation. In Modern Italian, these possibilities were lost (or at least severely restricted in the case of the habitual meaning;

cf. section 6.3.2). This is proven in particular by the fact that the combinability with perfective tenses, such as the Simple Past or any of the Compound tenses, has been entirely lost (Bertinetto 1986). It may be said that Italian St-PROG-GER has gone all the way along what could be called "PROG imperfective drift" (cf. Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume). Indeed, it is easy to show that Italian St-PROG-GER may now be employed (with very few exceptions) only in cases of strict focalization, as in the typical 'incidental scheme', where the speaker is only concerned with what is going on at a particular point in time. Italian St-PROG-GER is thus a typical instance of what in the just quoted chapter is called "focalized" PROG. Consider, as an illustration, the following examples taken from PRQ (cf. also PRQ:30,76,82):

(4)PRQ:3: /Last night at 8 o'clock/ When John came, Ann still WORK.
    Cat: … quan en Joan va venir [PRET], l'Anna encara *estava treballant.* [IMPF-PROG]
    Fr: … quand Jean est arrivé [COMP. PAST], Anne *travaillait.* [IMPF] encore
    It: … quando Gianni è arrivato [COMP. PAST], Anna *stava* ancora *lavorando.*
        [IMPF-PROG]
    Prt: … quando o João chegou [SIMPLE PAST], a Ana ainda *estava a trabalhar.*
        [IMPF-PROG]
    Rom: … cînd a venit [COMP. PAST] Jon, Ana înca *lucra.* [IMPF]
    Spn: … cuando Juan llegó [SIMPLE PAST] , Ana todavía *estaba trabajando.*
        [IMPF-PROG]
    Eng: … when John came, Ann *was* still *working.* [PAST PROG]
(5)PRQ:32: /The pardon arrived/ just when the captain GIVE the sign /to the firing
        squad/.
    Cat: … justament mentre el capità *estava fent* [IMPF-PROG] el senyal …
    Fr: … justement au moment où le capitain *donnait* [IMPF] le signal …
    It: … proprio mentre il capitano *stava dando* [IMPF-PROG] il segnale …
    Prt: … exactamente enquanto o capitão *estava a dar* [IMPF-PROG] o sinal …
    Rom:… exact în timp ce ca%pitanul *da%dea* [IMPF] semnalul …
    Spn: … justo cuando el capitan *estaba dando* [IMPF-PROG] la orden …
    Eng: … just while the captain *was giving* [PAST PROG] the sign …

As may be seen, PROG is readily used in all the languages considered, with the exception of French and Romanian. However, the situation of these two languages is not identical: in PRQ:76, i.e. in a context very similar to PRQ:3, one of our French informants provided an Imperfect Progressive as an alternative to the bare Imperfect, whereas PROG appeared only very marginally in the responses of our Romanian informants and, significantly enough, never in the instances that we might regard as prototypical. This shows that while PROG has a perfectly recognizable grammatical status in French, it barely exists in Romanian. What makes French different with respect to the other languages listed in (4-5) is the relatively low frequency of usage of this device, as compared with its cognates in English, Italian, and the Ibero-Romance languages. But, as I said, English differs from Italian and the Ibero-Romance

languages because PROG is the only device available to express a focalized aspectual view at any temporal location (Past, Present or Future), while all Romance languages, even those where PROG appears to be fairly frequently employed, may freely resort, in examples like (4-5), to the Present, the Imperfect or the Simple Future, depending on temporal location. In fact, our informants often provided these responses as a possible option. [7]

To the extent that PROG is employed in contexts like the ones above, this usage may rightly be considered prototypical, for this is precisely the type of context that is most often referred to in the literature. But in several Romance languages, as well as in English, St-PROG is not restricted to a purely focalized interpretation. This can be observed, most notably, in sentences containing durative adverbials, which necessarily rule out the focalized interpretation, for the event must be conceived of as developing over a stretch of time, rather than at a particular instant. Accordingly, in such cases it is appropriate to speak of "durative" PROG, as is done in Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume. Consider the following example (cf. also PRQ:48-50):

(6) PRQ:51: /Moment by moment/ the policeman TAKE NOTES of what the speaker said.

Cat:	… el policía *estava prenent nota* [IMPF-PROG] del que deia l'orador.
Fr:	… le policier *notait* [IMPF] ce que l'orateur disait.
It:	… il poliziotto *prendeva nota* [IMPF] di ciò che diceva l'oratore.
Prt:	… o polícia *estava a tomar notas* [IMPF-PROG] do que o falante disse.
Rom:	… polit$istul *nota* [IMPF] ce spunea vorbitorul.
Spn:	… el policía *anotaba* [IMPF] lo que decía el que hablaba.
Eng:	… the policeman *was taking notes* [PAST PROG] of what the speaker said.

In Catalan, English and Portuguese our informants overwhelmingly yielded, at least as an alternative, a PROG response. This could in principle have happened also in Spanish, but the behaviour of our informants suggests that Spanish speakers are more cautious with using PROG in these contexts. [8] As to the remaining languages, our informants behaved just as expected, given the presence of the particular adverbial employed (*moment by moment*), which clearly prevents focalization. Considering that Romanian makes very limited use of PROG devices, the really interesting cases here are Italian and French.

Let us consider the situation of Italian (as to French, cf. section 4 below). We saw in (2) above that in the early stages of the language St-PROG could also appear in contexts that presuppose a purely durative situation (and even, in the most extreme cases, a purely stative situation). Yet in Modern Italian, this possibility is completely lost with St-PROG-GER (as to St-PROG-INF, cf. below). Although it is not possible to state when exactly this evolution took place, there is now good evidence concerning the recent development of St-PROG-GER and

Mot-PROG in Italian (Bertinetto, in press *a*). The literary prose of the last two centuries shows that the use of St-PROG-GER with perfective tenses, which is only compatible with a durative view, was still possible at the beginning of the 19th century. However, at that time it was already restricted to a very limited set of verbs, such as *guardare* 'look' or *aspettare* 'wait' (cf. *stette guardando/aspettando* 'was-S.PAST looking/waiting'). Obviously, severe lexical specializations normally indicate that the device considered is not yet fully grammaticalized, or is undergoing a process of degrammaticalization (or, possibly, a functional recategorization). There is thus reason to hypothesize that St-PROG-GER completed its metamorphosis into a purely focalized device right around that period, and probably somewhat before in the spoken language, considering that the literary language of that time was fairly conservative. Another interesting observation emerging from the same piece of research is that, although the frequency of St-PROG-GER and Mot-PROG was never very high (at least in comparison with what we observe in Ibero-Romance texts), it was nevertheless much higher in the first half of the 19th century than in the period immediately following, where the frequency of both periphrases dropped dramatically. However, in recent times (especially after World War II), St-PROG-GER gained ground again, both in written and spoken language. It has been claimed (Durante 1981) that this is due to English influence, although no real evidence has been gathered. As to Mot-PROG, it also recovered a good deal of lost ground, but is still mostly confined to the written language, being seen as a hallmark of formal style. Finally, there is evidence that the recent recovery of St-PROG-GER was accompanied by a considerable growth in the use of achievement verbs, which tended to be avoided with this device in the previous stages, where a striking prevalence of activities was observed. [9]

We can thus conclude that, due to the profound transformation that occurred in the semantic interpretation of St-PROG-GER, Italian has radically restructured this subdomain of the grammar, as compared with the Ibero-Romance languages. When durativity, rather than focalized progressivity, is imposed by the context, Modern Italian must revert to Mot-PROG (cf. section 5 for further comments). Thus, Italian St-PROG-GER is by and large in complementary distribution with Mot-PROG regarding the features 'focalized' vs. 'durative'. Another device available in Italian to express durative progressivity is St-PROG-INF, at least for the varieties having access to it (cf. above). However, although its usage is fairly common in some spoken varieties, its presence in modern literature is negligible, as witnessed by Bertinetto (in press *a*). At any rate, this is a much more flexible tool compared to Mot-PROG, for it is also available for focalized contexts, whereas Mot-PROG is restricted to durative contexts. But despite this contrast, it is a legitimate claim that this device is also somehow

complementary to St-PROG-GER, although in a slightly different sense compared to what I said concerning Mot-PROG. The complementarity may be observed with respect to at least the following features (Bertinetto 1991; Squartini, in preparation): (a) only St-PROG-GER, to the exclusion of St-PROG-INF, is compatible with achievements; (b) only the latter device, and not the former, is compatible with perfective tenses (thus admitting a durative interpretation in the relevant contexts). [10]

3. Durative (non-focalized) PROG

3.1. Durativity in Spanish State-PROG

As suggested in the preceding section, Spanish St-PROG has preserved a number of possibilities that are now precluded in its Italian cognate, and this is generally true of St-PROG in Ibero-Romance languages. As a matter of fact, Portuguese would provide an even better illustration of this issue. However, for convenience the following examples will be taken from Spanish, which may be said to occupy an intermediate position between Portuguese and Catalan with respect to the use of PROG.

To start with, note that Spanish St-PROG admits perfective tenses. As observed above, this is a clear indication that it is not restricted to focalized contexts. This fact may typically be seen in sentences where St-PROG is used in conjunction with durative adverbials, such as *durante dos horas* or *desde las tres hasta las cinco* :

(7) Pedro *estuvo leyendo* en la cama durante dos horas / desde las tres hasta las cinco.
    Pedro   was   reading   in the bed   for   two hours   / from 3 to 5
    'Pedro read in bed for two hours / from 3 to 5.'

In these cases, the event is presented as ongoing during a stretch of time of definite duration. Other types of evidence for durativity in Spanish St-PROG are provided by Squartini (in preparation), in research based on an extensive survey of the specialized literature and of recent corpora of actual linguistic usage. For instance, St-PROG is allowed in conjunction with modal verbs, a possibility that is only marginally observed in Italian, and almost invariably with an epistemic interpretation, while the Spanish equivalents may retain the deontic value:

(8) PRQ:80: Ann should TEACH now (I guess).
    It: Anna   *deve stare facendo lezione* adesso   (suppongo).
       Ann must   be   making   lesson   now   (I guess)
       'Ann should be teaching now.'
(9) Spn: (from a corpus of Caracas colloquial Spanish):
    …entonces   todo individuo   está forzado,   *debe estar*
       thus   each individual is   forced, must   be
    constantemente   produciendo.
    constantly   producing

'Thus, each individual is forced to produce, must constantly produce.'

Sentence (8) was produced, as one of two alternatives, by only one of the Italian informants, and is certainly considered marginal by many speakers, who tend to reject PROG in these contexts. Besides, it is clear that this sentence must be taken in the epistemic meaning, according to which the speaker suggests a supposition about the situation developing at the speech time. Consequently, the situation is conceived of as focalized. By contrast, sentence (9) was produced with a clearly deontic intention, and suggests that the event referred to must occur during a certain interval of time, also due to the adverb employed. [11]

Futhermore, Spanish St-PROG may also appear in two coordinated sentences depicting durative events (the following example is quoted by Squartini, in preparation, from a corpus of spoken Colombian Spanish):

(10) […] mientras *estamos conversando está escribiendo* […]
     while (we) are talking (he) is writing
   'While we talk, he writes.'

Although none of our Spanish informants exploited this solution in PRQ:70 (*Yesterday, while Ann READ in her room, Martin PLAY in the courtyard*), this possibility is frequently exploited in spoken Spanish. At any rate, it is quite understandable that this occurs in Spanish rather than in Italian, because of the obvious durative character of the situation envisaged. This feature is even emphasized, because of the adverb employed, in hyperbolic contexts such as: [12]

(11) ¡Siempre *te*   *estás quejando* !
   always   you-refl. are complaining
   'You are always complaining!'

In these contexts, Italian speakers would rather use, as an alternative to the simple Present, a periphrasis like "*non fare altro che* + INF" (lit. "do nothing but + INF"). [13] Alternatively, some speakers would use St-PROG-INF: *ti stai sempre a lamentare* 'you are always complaining'. No wonder, then, that Spanish St-PROG may also colloquially appear in habitual contexts, such as:

(12) a. No me digas que la echas de menos, porqué la estás viendo todos los días.
     Not me tell that her miss   because her are seeing all the days
     'Do not tell me that you miss her, because you see her every day.'
    b. Estoy yendo al centro cada tres días.
     I-am going to-the center every three days
     'I am going downtown every three days.'

Obviously, there may be focalized habitual contexts, such as: *Whenever I arrive, he is writing*. In such contexts, St-PROG would be allowed in any language possessing this device (cf. section 6.3.2). But this is clearly not like sentence (12); witness the durative adverbial contained in this example.

It is of special interest, in this connection, to understand the meaning of constructions such as Spanish *Pedro estuvo dormiendo todo el día* (lit.: P. was sleeping [S.PAST-PROG] the whole day). Since these sentences are grammatical only in conjunction with adverbials expressing a delimited duration, it is clear that St-PROG retains here the perfective meaning inherent to the tense employed. On the other hand, there is good evidence that even in these cases St-PROG detelicizes any basically telic predicate. Consider the following sentences (drawn, like some others in this section, from Squartini, forthcoming):

(13) En Mérida *estuvieron reconstruyendo   el puente* *en / durante   dos años.
        In Merida   (they) were   rebuilding   the   bridge   in /   for   two years
        'In Merida they kept rebuilding the bridge for two years.'

(14) a. ?? Ayer Pilar llegó a su casa, *estuvo   leyendo   la* carta,
                yesterday P.   arrived to her home, was-PRET   reading   the letter
          estuvo   preparando su ponencia, *estuvo   comiendo* y   se   fue
          was-PRET   preparing   her paper   was-PRET eating   and   her-REFL. went
          a la cama.
          to the bed
          'Yesterday, P. came home, spent some time reading the letter, preparing her paper and eating, and finally went to bed.'
      b. Aquel día nos lo pasamos muy bien: *estuvimos   bailando*, *estuvimos*
          that day we it   spent   very well: (we)were-PRET dancing   were-PRET
          charlando, *estuvimos comiendo.*
          chatting   were-PRET   eating
          'That was a very nice day: we spent some time dancing, chatting, and eating.'

From (13) we learn that, with potentially telic predicates, adverbials such as *en dos años* (which insist on the completion of the event) cannot be employed, in contrast to adverbials such as *durante dos años*, which, although only compatible with perfective tenses, require an atelic situation (Bertinetto & Delfitto, this volume). From (14) we learn that a series of "*estuvo* + Gerund" forms cannot be used to suggest a strict temporal sequence of events, such that the end of one coincides with the beginning of the next, as in example (a). We can only use them as in example (b) to express a temporally unordered series of events, where each event localization may be interpreted independent of others, allowing for iterations and overlappings. In conclusion, Spanish St-PROG with perfective tenses expresses a perfective, durative and (in most cases) atelic situation. Some caution is in order concerning telicity, because (as pointed out by Squartini, p.c.) one can find examples such as *Estuvimos investigando todos los locales de Valladolid* 'We kept searching all the bars of Valladolid',

which seem to suggest that the search was conducted till the end. However, I am inclined to think that this is simply a pragmatic implicature, rather than a true semantic effect.

3.2. Durativity in Catalan, Portuguese and English St-PROG

Most of the observations made in the preceding section apply to Ibero-Romance St-PROG in general, i.e. to Portuguese and Catalan, as well as Spanish. Admittedly, some of the usages reported appear to be strictly colloquial, like those illustrated in (9, 11), but others are fairly common. Support for this also comes from PRQ, as may be gathered from the following examples, in which I also list the responses of the English, Italian and French subjects for comparison:

(15) PRQ:48: /Yesterday, during my sleep/ Ann PLAY for two hours all by herself.
       Cat: … l'Anna *va estar jugant* [S.PAST-PROG] tota sola durant dues hore.
       Fr: … Anne *a joué* [C.PAST] pendant deux heures toute seule.
       It: … Anna *ha giocato* [C.PAST] per due ore tutta sola.
       Prt: … A Ana *esteve a jugar* [S.PAST-PROG] sozinha durante dos horas.
       Spn: … Ana *estuvo jugando* [S.PAST-PROG] dos horas ella sola.
       Eng: … Ann *was playing*   [PAST PROG] for two hours all by herself.
(16) PRQ:72: /What did Martin do yesterday evening?/ He STUDY from 2 to 6, he READ
               the paper from 6 to 7, he EAT from 7 to 8, and then he GO to bed.
       Cat: our informant alternates the Simple Past and the Simple Past Progressive with
             the first two verbs, while the last two trigger the Simple Past only: *va estar
             estudiant*, *va estar llegint*, *va menjar*, *se'n va anar al llit*.
       Fr: both informants use the Compound Past only.
       It: three out of four informants use nothing but the Compound Past; only one
             (significantly, from Sardinia) alternates this tense, again with the first two
             verbs, with St-PROG-INF: *è stato a studiare*, *è stato a leggere*, *ha mangiato*, *è
             andato a letto*.
       Prt: all three informants alternate the Simple Past and the Simple Past Progressive
             with the first two verbs; only one of them extends this usage to the third verb,
             as in: *esteve a estudar*, *esteve a ler*, *esteve a comer / comeu*, *foi para a cama*.
       Spn: one of the two informants uses the Simple Past Progressive with the first two
             verbs: *estuvo estudiando*, *estuvo leyendo*, *cenó*, *se fue a la cama* .

   Several observations are in order here. First, as can be seen in (16), Spanish is not the most liberal among the Ibero-Romance languages concerning the usage of St-PROG with perfective tenses, as is shown by the behaviour of one of the Portuguese speakers. [14] Second, the general allergy of Italian speakers to the usage of PROG with perfective tenses does not concern all local varieties of the language. Sardinia is one of the areas (together with large areas in Southern Italy) where St-PROG-GER is used most freely. This could be one of the linguistic features left behind by the long period of Spanish domination of the island, but of course this is little more than speculation. Finally, it is interesting to note that, among the four

events of (16), the ones which elicit most of the PROG responses are the first two. It will not go unnoted that precisely the first two events correspond to atelic verbs, while the last two correspond to telic ones (with the possible exception of the verb EAT, although it may easily be taken in the sense of 'complete one's meal'). This peculiar distribution of the responses suggests that the durative interpretation of PROG bears clear evidence of its link with the early stages of development of this periphrasis, when it presumably worked like an actional operator much more than an aspectual one, i.e. like a device conveying the idea of the continuous development of the event over a given interval of time (cf. Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume, and Squartini, in preparation, who presents convincing evidence related to the interaction of actional and aspectual values within the category of progressive).

English does not significantly differ from the Ibero-Romance languages. In both cases, we can find St-PROG with perfective tenses, as in the following examples, which exhibit more specifically perfectal tenses:

(17) PRQ:81: /I am so tired:/ I BAKE all day since I got up this morning.
    Eng: I have been baking all day since I got up this morning.
    Cat: *He   estat fent   pa* tot el dia   des que m'   he llevat aquest
            (I) have been making bread all the day   since   REFL. have got up this
            matí.
            morning
    Prt: *Tenho estado a cozinhar* desde que me   levantei .
            (I) have been at cooking   since   REFL. got up
    Spn: *He   estado cocinando* todo el día desde que   me   levanté.
            (I) have been cooking   all the day since   REFL. got up
(18) PRQ:82: When John came home yesterday, he was very tired because he WORK hard all week.
    Eng: … he was very tired because he *had been working* hard all week.
    Cat: … estava   molt cansat perqué *havia   estat treballant* molt tota la
            (he) was very tired because (he)had   been working much all the
            setmana.
            week
    Prt: … estava muito cansado porque *tinha estado a trabalhar* muito toda a
              was   very tired   because had been at working much all   the
            semana.
            week
    Spn: … estaba muy cansado porque había   trabajado   toda la semana.
             was   very tired because had   worked   all the week

In these contexts, PROG carries an 'inclusive' meaning: it suggests that the event considered has been going on for some time up to (and including) the reference time, which in (17) coincides with the speech time. English has a marked preference for this solution in contexts of inclusivity: this is indeed the specific function of PROG with compound tenses in this language. But in other languages this may not be the only way to convey this interpretation, as can also be gathered from our informants. The non-progressive Compound tenses are a

viable alternative in the Ibero-Romance languages, provided the requirements for the usage of these tenses are met. Indeed, this consideration is simply obvious in the case of Portuguese Compound Past, which conveys almost uniquely an inclusive meaning (cf. Squartini & Bertinetto, this volume). Note that a non-progressive tense is the only response given by our Spanish informants in (18) above, although PROG is not altogether excluded in that type of sentence. [15] But of course the crucial case is (17), for in some Romance languages there could in principle be competition between Simple and Compound Past. The behaviour of Spanish in this case is particularly instructive when compared to English, given the broader freedom with which Spanish speakers use the Simple and the Compound Pasts. (Note that the distribution of these tenses is to some extent, i.e. not for all speakers, regulated by the criterion of proximity, in the sense of "hodiernal/prehodiernal"; cf. Squartini & Bertinetto, this volume). Consider:

(19)　　Esta mañana, Pedro estuvo　　　/ ha estado estudiando durante cinco horas.
　　　　this　morning　Pedro was-3SG-PAST　/ has been studying　for　five　hours
　　　　'This morning, Pedro studied (was busy studying) for five hours.'

A similar usage of the English Present Perfect Progressive is obviously ruled out, for this tense necessarily conveys an inclusive meaning, obviously impossible here because of the explicit past localization of the event. But even the Simple Past Progressive is not accepted by all English speakers in conjunction with delimitative adverbs, such as *for five hours* in (19) (cf. section **xxx** of Bertinetto & Delfitto, this volume). Indeed, although our English informant used PROG in (15) as an alternative to the Simple Past, in (16) he added a question mark to the Simple Past Progressive (which was proposed as an option for the first three verbs), thus indicating his doubts as to the appropriateness of this solution. For the sake of comparison, consider that Italian and French informants used the Compound Past in (17) and, overwhelmingly, the Pluperfect in (18). [16]

　　A good indication of the fact that English PROG may have a durative meaning is provided by the fact that in cases like (10-11), the speakers would normally employ PROG. For further support of this, consider now the following example, in which English and Italian are contrasted:

(20)　　a. Nero was fiddling, when Rome burned.
　　　　b. Nerone *stava suonando / suonava la cetra, mentre Roma bruciava.
　　　　　Nero　　was　playing　/ play-3SG-IMPF the lyre while　　Rome burn-3SG-IMPF
　　　　c. Nerone stava suonando la cetra, quando Roma bruciò.
　　　　　Nero　　was　playing　the lyre　　when Rome burn-3SG-PAST

In (a), the dependent clause may receive two interpretations: a simultaneous reading, in which the fiddling and the burning supposedly have (nearly) the same duration, and an inceptive reading, according to which the beginning of the burning took place at a point in time when Nero was already engaged in his musical activity. These two readings are clearly distinguished in Italian, as shown by (b-c), exhibiting the simultaneous and the inceptive reading respectively, due to the imperfective vs. perfective tense employed in the dependent clause. Crucially, PROG is allowed in (c) and is ruled out in (b).

4. A comprehensive picture

From what we saw above, we can draw some conclusions as to the present state of evolution of the Romance and English St-PROG devices. Consider again Table xx of section xx in Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume, repeated here for convenience, which exhibits what was called there "PROG imperfective drift":

Table 2. *PROG imperfective drift in Romance.*

(i)   pure locativity   = stative, durative
          (ex.: the meaning to be observed in some Latin examples)
(ii)   progressivity I: = residually locative, durative, aspectually neutral
          (ex.: PROG periphrases based on the verb 'come', which preserves some kind of a
          deictic orientation)
(iii) progressivity II: = durative, aspectually neutral
          (ex.: PROG periphrases based on the verb "go")
(iv)   progressivity III: = focalized, strictly imperfective
          (ex.: Italian "*stare* + Gerund)
(v)   pure imperfectivity = loss of the progressive character
          (ex.: possibly to be observed on some non-standard varieties of Latin American
          Spanish)

Ibero-Romance St-PROG and English PROG embrace stages (iii) and (iv), for they may occur both in prototypically focalized contexts (cf. (4-5) above), and in durative contexts such as those exemplified in (6) and in section 3. This shows that, in principle, St-PROG is not restricted to truly imperfective situations, although it shows a striking predilection for such contexts. In fact, as suggested by Squartini (in preparation), until stage (ii) the component which is most involved appears to be actionality, rather than aspect proper. This also transpires through the preference for atelic predicates (with the obvious restriction concerning stative verbs) in sentences such as (16) where, in the relevant languages, St-PROG is likely to be used to express a purely durative situation.

The extent to which these features are manifested varies from language to language. As we observed, some varieties of spoken (particularly Latin American) Spanish allow for an extreme behaviour, but on the whole Standard Spanish does not seem to be as liberal as English and Portuguese (or as some colloquial varieties of Italian). Obviously, more research is needed to ascertain this. What is already clear, however, is that Italian St-PROG-GER behaves in a very different way. This periphrasis has steadily reached stage (iv), being now a purely focalized (thus, purely imperfective) device, although it previously behaved exactly like the English and Ibero-Romance types. On the other hand, Italian St-PROG-INF has retained its ancient status, and is thus strictly comparable to its nearest cognate, namely Portuguese St-PROG-INF, which is the standard PROG device in European Portuguese.

As to present day French PROG, its status is fairly comparable to that of Italian St-PROG-GER, although the story is quite different. The original Old French PROG periphrases were morphologically identical to the ones exhibited by Italian and the Ibero-Romance languages. However, their usage declined in the course of time, so that by the end of the 16th century they had virtually disappeared (Gougenheim 1929; Werner 1980). The "*être en train de* + INF" periphrasis, which in Table 1 is listed under the label "marginal type", was registered by the grammarians in its current progressive meaning only at the beginning of the 19th century, replacing the original modal (namely intentional) meaning. According to Gougenheim, in the 17th and 18th centuries "*être en train de* + INF" had more or less the sense of: "être en humeur / en disposition de" 'to be in the mood to / to be inclined to'. Thus, apparently, this device entered directly at stage (iv), bypassing all previous stages. If this claim is correct, the French case is interesting both in itself, and for what it tells us about the general evolutionary picture. Although it is easy to reconstruct a locative meaning in French PROG, it is possible that this feature did not play the same role as with the other PROG devices we are considering here. It certainly was not conducive to the purely durative stage (iii). What is particularly remarkable is that, to my knowledge, the only other example in European languages of a PROG device exclusively actualising stage (iv), besides Italian St-PROG-GER and French "*être en train de* + INF", is the (colloquial) Albanian PROG periphrasis based on the particle *po* (cf. section xx of Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume). It is thus a fairly rare phenomenon.

As to the other, less prominent, Romance languages, it is worth observing that in Galician (Rojo 1974) and Occitan (Schlieben-Lange 1971) PROG is used with both focalized and durative meaning, just like in the Ibero-Romance languages analysed above. From the morphological point of view, the Occitan construction ("*estre a* + INF") is identical to Italian

St-PROG-INF, while in Galician there is a larger variety of forms: "*estar* + GER", "*estar a* + INF", and even "*ser a* + INF", the first being the most frequently employed.

5. Motion-PROG

As observed in section 2, Mot-PROG may only carry a durative meaning. But there is more to say about this device. To start with, it is worth observing that it presents a multifarious morphology, as shown in Table 1. In most languages where it appears (Catalan is a notable exception) there is the choice between 'go' and 'come' as auxiliaries. This was to be observed already in the early stages of Romance languages. It is perhaps daring to make a general statement about the difference between these two auxiliaries. I shall limit myself to noting that in Italian there is clear evidence that 'come' still implies some kind of deictic orientation, possibly at a metaphorical level (Bertinetto 1991). [17] What is certainly common to all Romance languages exhibiting Mot-PROG is that the form with 'come' is definitely less frequent than the form with 'go', which has reached a relatively high degree of grammaticalization, as witnessed by the semantic bleaching of the auxiliary verb. [18]

Although Mot-PROG was characterized above as a device conveying durativity, it is interesting to observe that in a language like Spanish, where all the morphological possibilities are fully exploited, one may contrast St-PROG and Mot-PROG in order to obtain subtle semantic differences. The following example was suggested by Ignacio Bosque:

(21)   a. Juan estuvo colocando libros de 3 a 5.
             Juan was   placing   books from 3 to 5
          b. Juan fue colocando libros de 3 a 5.
             Juan   went placing   books from 3 to 5
             'Juan kept putting back books from 3 to 5.'

While (a) simply depicts a durative situation, (b) adds to it the idea that the event be conceived of as a sequence of identical gestures which follow each other, as though the sentence said something like: "Juan kept putting back one book after the other…".. To put it differently, (a) describes a static scenario, while (b) presents a dynamic one. To render this contrast in a sufficiently plastic way, one could legitimately claim that while (a) is a mere case of durativity, (b) is (so to say) an instance of "plurifocalization", i.e. of a situation in which every instant of the given interval is conceived of as a possible vantage point for the evaluation of the event.

In the rest of this section I shall concentrate mainly on the actional restrictions that impinge on Mot-PROG. This device in fact presents striking properties from this point of view, which differs from language to language. As to Italian, there is a notable preference for

accomplishment verbs; however, activities may often be accomodated, by means of the appropriate adverbials. Compare the following examples:

(22)   a. * Luca andava ballando la mazurka.
           Luca go-IMPF dancing the mazurka
           'Luca was dancing the mazurka.'
    b. Luca andava ballando la mazurka *con un crescendo di trepidazione e*
           Luca go-IMPF dancing   the mazurka with a crescendo of trepidation and
           di rapimento.
           of ecstasy
           'Luca was dancing the mazurka with increasing trepidation and ecstasy.'
    c. * Luca andava *gradualmente / a poco a poco* ballando la mazurka.
           Luca go-IMPF gradually   little by little   dancing   the mazurka
    d. Luca andava *gradualmente / a poco a poco* scoprendo la verità.
           Luca go-IMPF gradually   little by little   discovering the truth.
           'Luca was gradually / little by little discovering the truth.'

In (a) we have an activity verb, and this creates an unacceptable sentence, whereas in (b) the same verb yields a grammatical sentence, due to the presence of a "manner" adverbial of graduality. Note, however, that in (c) the "temporal" adverb of graduality does not guarantee the desired result. The latter type of adverbial is instead perfectly compatible with the achievement verb of (d), where it plays a reinforcing role, for the sentence would be acceptable even without the adverbial. One might wonder how it is possible to employ achievements, as in (d), given that Mot-PROG necessarily requires durative situations. The answer is that whenever this periphrasis may felicitously be applied to an achievement, the verb is inevitably durativized, possibly via an iterative interpretation (but the latter requirement is not even necessary in (d) above). More precisely, when employed with Mot-PROG, achievements take on the reading that is typical of "gradual completion verbs" (such as *increase*, *get fatter* etc.; cf. Bertinetto & Squartini 1995); i.e. they suggest that the completion of the event may be reached at the end of a gradual (and, by implicature, slow) process.

Although this is the general trend, one significant exception should be pointed out. There is in fact a class of Italian activity verbs which are easily combinable with Mot-PROG, namely those that I propose to call "inherently intensified verbs". Among these we may for instance count *salterellare* 'hop about', *scribacchiare* 'scribble' and the like, i.e. verbs expressing the idea of an event which is carried out through actions (in most cases frequently iterated ones), similar in nature to the more neuter action to which they are related (e.g. 'jump', 'write'), but specifically connotated regarding the peculiar way in which the action is performed. In this class we may also include verbs such as *scrutare* 'scan with the eyes', *meditare* 'meditate' etc., which once again involve a particular insistence or intensity in the performance of the

event. For instance, 'meditate' indicates more than a simple event of thinking, for it means something like 'think over and over'. Interestingly, these activity verbs may easily accept Mot-PROG without the help of any sort of intensifying adverbial, as in:

(23)   a. Lucia andava scribacchiando sul   quaderno.
          Lucia go-IMPF scribbling   on-the exercise book
          'Lucia was scribbling on her exercise book.'
    b. Teresa   andava scrutando l'orizzonte.
          Teresa go-IMPF scanning the horizon
          'Teresa was scanning the horizon.'

To sum up, in Italian Mot-PROG shows the following actional restrictions (Bertinetto in press b; cf. also Brianti 1992, Giacalone Ramat 1995a, Squartini, in preparation). It is preferably combinable with durative telics (although not without exceptions), and accepts achievements only insofar as they are contextually turned into "gradual completion verbs". Activities are normally rejected, unless (a) they belong to the class of inherently intensified verbs, or (b) they are reinforced by means of the appropriate expressions of intensification (like the "manner" adverbials of graduality exemplified in (22b) above).

Note, however, that despite the telic orientation of Mot-PROG, there are clear indications that this periphrasis yields the detelicization of telic verbs, as is evidenced by:

(24)   a. Filippo risolse   il problema in due giorni.
          Filippo   solve-S.PAST the problem in two   days
          'Filippo solved the problem in two days.'
    b. * Filippo andò   risolvendo il problema in due giorni.
           Filippo go-S.PAST solving   the problem in two   days

In (a), the event described fulfills its telic character, due to the aspectual value of the tense employed (a perfective past). The same should happen in (b), for the tense of the auxiliary is the same; yet the sentence is not acceptable. This is clearly an effect of the periphrasis. The *in*-adverbial strongly requires perfectivity and telicity (Bertinetto & Delfitto, this volume); since perfectivity is guaranteed by the tense employed, the obvious conclusion to be drawn is that the periphrasis as such has a detelicizing effect, this being the only difference between the two examples presented. This may look like a paradoxical situation: apparently, one and the same device is telic-oriented, but induces detelicization. However, one should not confuse the passive actional restrictions that Mot-PROG undergoes in the selection of the appropriate predicates with the active consequences that this periphrasis induces in the actional character of the verb employed.

Interestingly, Squartini (in preparation) shows that in Spanish and Portuguese Mot-PROG exhibits different restrictions. Recall that in these languages the auxiliary 'go' can have two

translations: *ir* and *andar.* The former indicates a goal-directed motion, while the latter preserves by and large its original meaning (present also in Old Italian) of an undirected motion. This accounts for the divergent meaning of the two constructions. In Spanish, "*ir* + GER", is preferably used with telic verbs and, when used with activities or statives, suggests an inceptive reading, while "*andar* + GER" prefers activities and may easily be used with statives (*Luis todavía anda queriendo comprar el coche* 'Luis still wants to buy the car'). As often claimed in grammatical descriptions, the latter form of this periphrasis is often felt a possible alternative to St-PROG, to which it adds something like a hyperbolic meaning, not unlike the semantic nuance added by *siempre* in (11). The only contexts in which the form with *ir* and the form with *andar* appear to be basically interchangeable are those expressing iterativity (i.e. with achievements reinterpreted iteratively). As to Portuguese, the situation is essentially like in Spanish, the only relevant difference being that "*andar* + GER" accepts far more accomplishments and (durativized) achievements than its Spanish counterpart. If one takes this as the decisive factor, one may conceivably claim that Portuguese "*andar* + GER" is more advanced in the process of grammaticalization than any of its direct competitors because it undergoes virtually no actional restrictions. [19]

As to the remaining Romance languages, it should be observed that Mot-PROG was originally quite widespread even in languages like French, Catalan and Occitan, where it has now become extremely rare. Although "*aller* + GER" was still used by French novelists of the last century (cf. the following example, taken from Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* : *elle alla … montant et s'en détachant*, lit.: she rose-Mot-PROG and detached-Mot-PROG herself), and although it may occasionally be met even in contemporary journalistic prose, the decline of this construction began as early as the 17th century. Significantly, in each of the three languages mentioned above the evolution seems to have been the same as in Italian. From the early stage in which activity verbs were frequently employed, the periphrasis has evolved into a condition in which telic predicates tend to be preferred.

PRQ was not specifically devised to investigate all possible semantic subtleties of Mot-PROG. Yet this construction appeared in a number of instances. Specifically, it was used by one Portuguese informant in PRQ:18 (*anda a escrever*), by one Spanish informant in PRQ:51 (*iba tomando notas*) and PRQ:54 (*iba mejorando*), by one Italian (from Sardinia) in PRQ:52 (*va dimenticando*), and by the Catalan informant in PRQ:55 (*anava cobrint*). It is notable that Mot-PROG made its appearance in two sentences containing "temporal" adverbials of graduality (PRQ:54-55). In fact, although quite compatible with St-PROG, these adverbials show a high statistical co-occurrence with Mot-PROG (Squartini 1990; Bertinetto, in press d).

6. Some properties of Romance and English PROG

In the the reminder of this chapter, I shall review the most notable morphological, semantic and syntactic restrictions impinging on PROG in Romance and English. Except when explicitly stated, in this section I shall not consider Mot-PROG. Of course, this survey is by no means intended to be exhaustive. Note that in Romanian the usage of PROG is very limited; thus, I shall quote this language only when relevant.

6.1. Morphological restrictions

One morphological restriction which is often cited in the literature is that concerning the Imperative mood (Hirtle 1967; Scheffer 1975). The relevant input comes here from PRQ:73 (*/For goodness sake,/ WORK when the boss comes back!*). Although English Imperative Progressive is reported in the literature, our informant did not use it, thus confirming that this is but a marginal possibility. The Imperative Progressive was however employed by the Catalan informant (*estigues treballant*), and by two Portuguese ones (*Você esteja a trabalhar*). Surprisingly enough, two Romanian subjects offered here what seems to be a genuine PROG construction (*sa% fii în curs de a lucra* lit. 'be-Subj. in the course of work-INF'). The fact that our Romanian informants employ PROG devices only in this case and (to some extent) in relation to future-time reference (cf. section 6.3.3), both admittedly non-prototypical circumstances, demonstrates the very low degree of grammaticalization reached by these constructions. [20]

As to passive PROG (cf. PRQ:75), the only two languages which appear to use it rather freely are Portuguese (*está a ser servido*) and English (*is being served*). The other informants produced the passive form of the Simple Present or, in order to preserve PROG, transformed the passive sentence into an active one (by means of an impersonal construction in one case, and by means of an unspecified 3rd pl. subject in another). The latter solutions were adopted by the two Spanish informants. This is notable because passive PROG is reported to appear in Spanish. Squartini (in preparation) reports the following example from a linguistic textbook: *El corpus de los diccionarios españoles … está siendo publicado* 'The corpus of Spanish dictionaries … is being published'. [21]

PROG with the infinitive is also considered to be fairly marginal, although it is possible in English. Indeed, our English informant used it in PRQ:79-80 (*Tom must FEED the animals /I guess/; Ann should TEACH now /I guess/*), and this solution was also adopted by all the French and Portuguese speakers, as well as by one Italian informant (from Central Italy). The Catalan informant employed it only in PRQ:80. As to Spanish, example (9) attests that this form is allowed in some colloquial varieties. Thus, the reason why the speakers tend to avoid

PROG with the Infinitive must be due to the relative clumsiness of the construction, rather than to any morphological restriction proper.

6.2. Syntactic restrictions

Negation has no effect on the use of PROG in the languages considered (cf. PRQ:76-78). The situation looks more varied with causative constructions (PRQ:19-20), for the various languages seem to differ as to the readiness with which they allow PROG in these cases. In fact, our Portuguese and Romanian informants did not use PROG in any of the quoted sentences. [22]

One of the major syntactic functions of PROG is of course backgrounding. However, when a series of events considered from a progressive viewpoint are juxtaposed in a text, in order to compose a complex situation in which different activities occur simultaneously (as in PRQ:62), [23] not all languages appear to be equally ready to repeat PROG in adjacent sentences. The reason for this may be purely stylistic: it may have to do with the relative heaviness of the construction, which induces the speakers to make use of possible alternatives, whenever they exist. Thus, most Romance languages tend to avoid the repeated use of PROG, resorting to simple tenses or alternating the two options. Obviously, since this possibility is not available in English, it is no wonder that a sequence of several PROG is not uncommon in this language. But it is notable that two Portuguese informants, and one Italian (from Sardinia), offered this as a possible option. This is further evidence that Portuguese, as well as some varieties of other major Romance languages, tends to expand the usage of PROG considerably.

This is also confirmed by the use of PROG in two adjacent coordinated clauses (as in PRQ:70). Once more, English has no choice but to employ PROG in both clauses, while Portuguese proves to be the most flexible among the Romance languages. The remaining languages, in fact, present PROG in only one clause, and a simple tense in the others (a solution obviously also proposed by the Portuguese informants). However, this is not an inviolable constraint: one of our Sardinian subjects adopted the same options as the Portuguese informants; and cf. example (10) in section 3, showing that some Spanish colloquial varieties behave in the same way.

6.3. Semantic restrictions
6.3.1. Actional restrictions

In section 5 above, the actional restrictions that impinge on Mot-PROG were described. I will now outline the situation of St-PROG (cf. also fn. 9).

The most obvious restriction concerns stative verbs. Indeed, the unavailability of PROG is often considered to be a diagnostic criterion for the individuation of stative verbs in languages like English or Romance. However, this problem is rather complex, for in quite a number of cases the same lexical entry may or may not be compatible with PROG, depending on interpretation. When this happens, there are grounds to believe that this lexical entry is in fact ambiguous between a stative and a non-stative meaning (Bertinetto 1994). Compare:

(25) a. John *resembles* his father.
      b. John *is resembling* his father more and more.
(26) a. The mountains *surround* the lake.
      b. The army *was surrounding* the enemies.

While the (a) sentences depict a static situation (and indeed no informant used PROG in PRQ:41, repeated here as (26a), the (b) sentences suggest a process of transformation, to the effect that the predicate of e.g. (23a) may be paraphrased by means of expressions such as: 'is becoming more and more similar to'.

However, not all languages are equally prone to exhibiting this kind of duplicity in their lexical storage. This is particularly evident with copular verbs, such as *be silly*, *be kind*, *be rude*, *be clever* etc. (but also non copular ones, such as *have a head-ache*), which in English may instantiate both individual-level and stage-level predicates, to repeat Carlson's (1978) terminology. In fact, this is not a distinctive feature of English. In PRQ:43 (*You BE RUDE this evening*), not only the English but also the Portuguese informants presented PROG as an option; and in PRQ:42 (*you BE very KIND, now!*) the Spanish informants also presented this solution in addition to the ones already quoted. In fact, Squartini (in preparation) cites a number of Spanish examples of this type. Thus, the duplicity of copular predicates is to be observed not only in English, but also in some Ibero-Romance languages. Brazilian Portuguese is claimed to be even more flexible from this point of view, for even non-copular stative verbs like *saber* 'know' or *poder* 'can' may be treated in this way, suggesting a permanent or a temporary situation, respectively (Schmitz 1982). In fact, it was precisely the verb KNOW that elicited PROG as a possible alternative, with one Portuguese informant in PRQ:39 (*/Now, unexpectedly/ Peter KNOW the answer*). The verb LIKE in PRQ:40 (*/Now, unexpectedly/ Tess LIKE the music*) also yielded this option not only with all the Portuguese informants, but with one Sardinian subject and (with a question mark added) our English Subject as well. Thus, in general, English does not seem to be the most liberal language from this point of view. [24]

English, on the other hand, is unique among the languages considered here, for it exploits this possibility with a small set of (mostly) postural verbs, like *stand*, *lie*, *sit*, *wear*, and a

few others. Indeed, in PRQ:58-59 (*Ann STAND in the doorway /right now/; The statue STAND in the garden/for the summer/*), our English informant is the only one who employs PROG. These examples are especially relevant, because with these verbs it is not the case that PROG instantiates a non-stative meaning. Rather, it suggests the idea of the temporary validity of the (inherently stative) situation. In other words, in this particular case English does not exploit this grammatical device in order to destativize the predicate, but only to impose on it a temporal limitation. [25]

Connected with stativity is the notion of "non-agentivity", of which the last example was an instance. Among the test sentences, PRQ:36 (*The sun SHINE*) and PRQ:37 (*The water BOIL*) were less effective, possibly for idiosyncratic reasons, in eliciting PROG as compared to PRQ:35 (*He DREAM of his girlfriend*) and PRQ:38 (*The apples ROT on the tree*). As to the various languages, Portuguese and English presented PROG in each sentence, while some Italian, Spanish and Catalan informants rejected it in a few cases, and only one of the French informants used it in sentences PRQ:35 and PRQ:38. Thus, although the single languages differ, non-agentivity as such is no hindrance to the use of PROG. This also applies to non-intentionality (PRQ:33-34), [26] which did not prevent PROG in any of the relevant languages, although again the only languages where this was the sole solution proposed were Portuguese and English.

Non-durative verbs like THROW, REACH, GIVE (PRQ:30-32), on the other hand, seem to create serious difficulties for French speakers compared to the others, who used it to a greater (Portuguese and English) or lesser extent. This situation is also confirmed by the usage of the verbs LEAVE and DIE in PRQ:56-57, two sentences devised with the purpose of checking a specific effect of PROG as applied to non-durative verbs, i.e. the possible emergence of an imminential meaning. [27] Further inquiries with native speakers made it clear that the restriction concerning non-durative verbs is not absolute in French, but rather corresponds to a strong tendency. One special case of non-durative verbs is represented by the so-called phasal verbs like *begin* and *finish* etc. (PRQ:23-26). Here again, only French informants avoid PROG. [28]

Finally, it should be noted that in principle no restriction is to be observed concerning verbs of motion like GO OUT and FLY (PRQ:21-22), which even in French may be associated with PROG in the appropriate context.. This is also true of the verbs GO and COME that provide the auxiliaries of Mot-PROG. On the other hand, postural verbs like *sit* and *hang* in PRQ:28-29 never elicit PROG in Romance (unlike English), nor do they constitute, as in some Germanic languages, the basis for a PROG construction (cf. Ebert XXX, this volume).

6.3.2. More on aspectual restrictions

In sections 4 and 5, I observed that St-PROG and Mot-PROG are in principle compatible with both the perfective and the imperfective aspect. However, the situations of the two constructions are not completely identical. The latter appears to be intrinsically available to any kind of aspectual value, whereas the former is liable to be caught in what I named above "PROG imperfective drift", which indeed explains the development of the purely focalized meaning of Italian St-PROG-GER, as well as the transformation of PROG into a general purpose imperfective form in quite a few languages (cf. section 4 of Bertinetto, Ebert & de Groot XXX, this volume).

It is appropriate to add here a few more observations about the habitual aspect and its combinability with PROG devices. As we saw in (1-2) above, in their very early stages these periphrases had easy access to this aspectual value. However, this possibility was completely lost in the course of time with Italian St-PROG-GER, and severely constrained in the remaining Romance languages and in English. As a matter of fact, none of our informants used PROG in PRQ:2 (*A: What does Ann do every Saturday morning? B: She CLEAN the house*) and PRQ:4 (*Last year we usually CLEAN the house on Saturdays*). All speakers used a simple tense (in PRQ:4, our Romance informants used the Imperfect or, as one Italian and one Spanish speaker did, a habitual periphrasis with the Imperfect).[29] Nevertheless, the co-existence of PROG with the habitual interpretation can frequently be observed in any of the languages considered, provided connectives such as *whenever* appear:

(27) Eng: Whenever I checked, he *was working.*
      Fr: Chaque fois que j'ai contrôlé, il *était en train de travailler.*
      It: Ogni volta che ho controllato, *stava lavorando.*
      Spn: Cada vez que yo controlé, él *estaba trabajando.*

These sentences do not constitute any problem whatsoever, for they even allow a focalized interpretation of PROG (in contrast to example (12) above). The habitual event is viewed as occurring at some particular points in time, which repeat themselves more or less regularly. But if we depart from this kind of contexts, we may find that not all languages are equally ready to accept PROG in truly habitual situations, where the recurring event is not focalized by means of an incidental event which isolates single instants as evaluation points. Indeed, our English informant was the only one to use PROG in PRQ:63 (*At that time, he GO to dance every Saturday*). And this is substantially confirmed by the following example (or similar ones, inspired by Hirtle 1967 and Leech 1971), despite the presence of an incidential clause:[30]

(28) Eng: Peter *is* often *smoking* a cigar when he comes in.
      Cat: ? En Pere *está* sovint *fumant* un cigar quan arriba.
      Fr: * Pierre *est* souvent *en train de fumer* un cigare quand il vient.
      It: * Pietro *sta* spesso *fumando* un sigaro quando viene.
      Prt: O Pedro *está* frequentemente *a fumar* um charuto quando chega.
      Spn: ? Pedro frecuentemente *está fumando* un cigarro cuando llega.

One type of contexts rather close to habituality, although presenting peculiar characters of its own, is that exemplified in (11) (cf. also fn. 12). The hyperbolic meaning of such sentences suggests that the event tends to repeat itself with rather unusual frequency. Besides English and Portuguese, whose behaviour is predictable, Catalan and Spanish also have free access to this usage (at least in the colloquial variety), while in French and Standard Italian this possibility is ruled out altogether, due to the focalization requirement that impinges on PROG in these languages:

(29) Cat: En Pere *está* sempre *fumant* un cigar.
      Spn: *Pedro está* siempre *fumando* un cigarro.

However, in colloquial Italian one may hear sentences like the following, which do not seem very far from the hyperbolic contexts illustrated above: [31]

(30) E' un mese che me lo sta dicendo.
      is one month that me-DAT it-ACC is saying
      'He's been telling me for a month now.'

Even more common are sentences like: *Sta piovendo molto, quest'anno* 'It is raining a lot, this year', which express again a meaning of insistence, or (in Blansitt's 1975 terms) a "generic" meaning close to habituality.

Also somewhat related to habituality are the "interpretative" uses of PROG, which are not uncommon in English. What is typical of these sentences is that a given action performed by somebody runs parallel to an equivalent action, to which a positive or negative value (possibly a merely explicative value) is assigned (König 1995). Consider PRQ:64: *If you insist in calling me Fred, you INTRUDE in my private life.* Given the correlative structure of these sentences, they bear a resemblance to examples such as (27). PROG is consistently used here by the English, Portuguese and Spanish informants, while avoided by the others. However, in the related sentence PRQ:65 (*As soon as you start asking what is the use of education, you ABANDON the basic assumptions of any true culture*), two of the Italian informants also offered this alternative, together with the preceding subjects. Once more, we find English and Portuguese in the lead, with French far behind. [32]

6.3.3. More on temporal restrictions

There are no restrictions concerning temporal reference. PROG may occur with past, present or future localization of the event. In particular, PRQ:83 (*If you come at 8 o' clock, I still COOK*) was specifically devised in order to test the availability of PROG with the Future tense, which in some languages is claimed to be subject to restrictions. With the exception of French, Future PROG (or something close to it) was used, or at least offered as an alternative, by virtually all informants. One surprising finding is represented here by two Romanian informants, who proposed the following quasi-PROG construction: … *sa% ma% ga%ses ≠ ti înca ga%tind* 'you will find me still cooking'. These data suggest that, except for French and to some extent Romanian (two languages known for the limited exploitation of PROG in general), there is no constraint at work, provided the context is felicitous enough. The observation concerning the restricted use of PROG with future temporal reference has thus more to do with pragmatics, namely with the relative rarity of such contexts in actual communication, than with morphology or semantics. [33]

One notable fact is the use of PROG in contexts corresponding to a sort of extended present (but similar examples may be built with past temporal reference). PRQ:61 is an example (*The boss TYPE his own letters, while the secretary is ill*). The only informants who use PROG in this case are, once more, the English and Portuguese ones. This possibility seems to be totally excluded in French, while in the remaining languages, choices may vary depending on register. In the standard varieties, speakers tend to avoid this usage.

Perhaps the most striking feature of English PROG, as compared to all the remaining languages considered here, is the possibility of expressing future-time reference, as in sentences like: *Ann is leaving tomorrow* (cf. PRQ:66; cf. also PRQ:67-69). [34] Note that in these cases the future-time reference is conveyed by the Present Progressive, rather than by the Future Progressive, as in sentences like: *Tomorrow I'll be leaving* (cf. also the comment to sentence (3a) above). This property of PROG , although rather rare, may be found in other European (as well as non-European) languages. This is notably the case in Icelandic (Ebert, this volume) and to some extent also in Finnish (Tommola, this volume), but also in Judeo-Spanish, spoken in Israel, and in some colloquial varieties of Latin American Spanish (Squartini, in preparation), as well as in some colloquial varieties of Southern Italian (like in Naples; cf. *Gliela sto passando subito* 'I am going to pass her [on the phone] right now'). It is not easy to understand how this use may have arisen. The hypothesis that most obviously comes to mind is that it is somehow related to the imminential meaning often expressed by achievement predicates under PROG (cf. section 6.3.1), which conveys something close to a

futural sense. The data gathered from languages other than English are too scanty to allow us to put forth a hypothesis as to the actual meaning of PROG with future-time reference.

As to English, Haegeman (1981) suggests, among others, the following facts. First, the Simple Future differs from both the Present and the Present Progressive because it is not oriented towards the speech time:

(31)   a. ?? I *will* already *meet* John for lunch and Ann for dinner; I cannot have any other appointment.
        b. I already *meet* John for lunch and Ann for dinner; I cannot have any other appointment.
        c. I *am* already *meeting* John for lunch and Ann for dinner; I cannot have any other appointment.

Here, the relevance of the speech time is ensured by the adverb *already,* and the contrast of (a) with (b-c) is quite evident. Moreover, the Simple Future is characterized by what may be called "subjective speaker-commitment", while the two remaining tenses are rather characterized by some kind of "objective factual commitment". This confirms again the same distribution of grammaticality judgements among the three tenses:

(32)   a. ?? The Queen, who *will open* Parliament tomorrow, may be detained at the airport. In this case, Prince Charles will take her place.
        b. The Queen, who *opens* Parliament tomorrow, may be detained at the airport. In this case, Prince Charles will take her place.
        c. The Queen, who *is opening* Parliament tomorrow, may be detained at the airport. In this case, Prince Charles will take her place.

The event designated in (32) may be regarded as fairly objective, inasmuch as it is a scheduled one. The two Present tenses seem to be highly preferable in these contexts. On the other hand, in order to have a perfectly felicitous use of the Present Progressive, as opposed to the Simple Present, the scheduled event should best be conceived of as fairly exceptional, rather than predictable and routine:

(33)   a. Who *is being* Santa Claus at the party tomorrow?
        b. ? Who *is being* captain of the team tomorrow?
(34)   a. ? The train *is leaving* tomorrow at 5.
        b. The train *leaves* tomorrow at 5.

The difference in (33a-b) is due to the fact that the presence of a Santa Claus must be considered as a fairly uncommon event, while there always ought to be a captain of a team. As to (34a-b), these sentences should be regarded as statements uttered while consulting the timetable, rather than statements concerning a non-customary event. If the train were to leave at 5 for some exceptional reason, then the Present Progressive would be perfectly acceptable.

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[3]   The question marks in Table 1 are motivated by the fact that marginal types may also exist in the languages for which I have not collected enough information in this respect. Indeed, even French has further PROG devices, such as the periphrasis "*être après* + INF" (as in *il est après lire* 'he is reading', lit.: he is after read), which is mainly used in the Loire Valley and in parts of the South of France. A limited geographical distribution has also to be ascribed to the morphologiclly almost equivalent Italian marginal type listed in the Table, which can be found only in some areas of the North-East. Cf. also fn. 4.

[4]   I use the term "vernacular", for lack of a better denomination, to refer to what in the Italian linguistic tradition is called "dialetto", i.e. a local language which developed independent of the national language, although (in most cases) connected to it from a diasystematic point of view. "Vernacular" should not be confused with "local variety of the standard language", a notion which would rather correspond to the most prominent meaning of English "dialect".

Very little attention has so far been given to tense-aspect problems in the study of Italian vernaculars. Rohlfs devotes only three sections of his monograph (§§ 739-741) to this. With specific regard to PROG, he points out a number of morphological variants. In the North-East (Verona, Trieste) the form "*stare* + INF" is to be found. In the South-East (Salento) we find the form *s%to ffazz@* 'I am doing', repeating the type "*STARE AC* + VERB", where the auxiliary and the main verb agree in tense and person (in most cases the descendant of the Latin conjunction *ac* is merely inferable through the doubling of the following consonant). In some localities, the auxiliary presents the undeclinable form *s%ta*, which in a restricted area has even been grammaticalized as an obligatory marker of imperfectivity. In one part of the Centre (Abruzzo), PROG may manifest itself as "*tenere a* ('keep at') + INF", with possible absorption of the preposition and concomitant doubling of the following consonant.

Some remarks concerning Sardinian and the Italian variety of Sardinian are provided by Loi Corvetto (1983), while Amenta (1994-95) is mostly concerned with the variety spoken in Palermo. Both authors attest that these varieties are much more liberal than Standard Italian with respect to the usage of PROG.

[5]   Cf. also S%kerlj (1926), Spaulding (1926), Gougenheim (1929), Lyer (1934), Werner (1980), Dietrich (1973; 1985). As to general information concerning verbal periphrases in Romance languages, see the bibliography at the end of this chapter, and the references quoted therein (see in particular Squartini, in preparation).

[6]   For the history of English PROG, cf. at least Mossé (1938), Visser (1969/1973), Kisbye (1971) and Scheffer (1975).

[7]   Note however that in Iberic languages and in Italian PROG is often preferred over simple tenses with achievement verbs (cf. fn. 9). Thus, this statement should be taken with caution.

In PRQ:3, one Spanish informant provided as an alternative, the continuative periphrasis "*seguir* + GER" '*keep* V-*ing*' (*seguía trabajando*). This is not to be considered a PROG device in the proper sense, for it expresses the idea of continuation, but it certainly bears some resemblance to Mot-PROG.

[8] One of the Spanish informants also provided, as an alternative, an instance of Mot-PROG: *iba anotando*. This is remarkable, because the specific function of this periphrasis is precisely that of expressing durativity; cf. section 5. Obviously, PRQ:51 could also be rendered by means of a purely perfective tense; indeed, some of our informants provided this alternative. Interestingly, the Portuguese subjects also yielded the Simple Past Progressive *esteve a tomar notas* ; as to the use of PROG with perfective tenses, cf. section 3.

[9] The last observation corroborates previous data found by Squartini (1990), who also gathered data concerning the non-literary language. On the other hand, it is worth noting that, whenever a PROG device has reached a sufficient degree of grammaticalization, it is precisely the presence of achievement verbs that makes the appearance of the relevant construction almost compulsory, even in languages which have the alternative of non-periphrastic imperfective tenses. The reason for this is that the use of an overt morphological device is strong enough to force a progressive reading with predicates which are not easily amenable to such an interpretation. In fact, this is to be observed even in Estonian (Metslang 1995), a language where PROG is only weakly grammaticalized. As to the contribution of PROG with achievements in Italian, as opposed to non-progressive tenses, cf. Delfitto & Bertinetto (1995).

[10] Indeed, St-PROG-INF is employed in PRQ, as a possible alternative, by one Italian informant speaking the Sardinian variety. Cf. fn. 11 and 15 for further comments.

[11] Actually, the possibility of a deontic use of modal verbs with PROG is not entirely ruled out even in Italian. Mario Squartini has drawn my attention to the following colloquial sentence:

(i) Per aver diritto   al ritardo del   servizio militare, devi   star facendo il dottorato
    for have   right   to delay of-the service military   must-2SG be   doing the doctorate
    'In order to be entitled to postpone military service, you must be working on
    your PhD'.

An even stronger example is quoted by Amenta (1994-95) from the *Lessico dell'Italiano Parlato*, a corpus of Contemporary Spoken Italian (this sentence is presumably uttered from a Southern speaker): *Non stanno potendo più cambiare nulla* 'They cannot change anything anymore' (lit.: they can-PROG not). However, these should be regarded as fairly exceptional cases, as evidenced by the following contrast between St-PROG-GER and St-PROG-INF:

(ii)   a. * Maria deve sempre stare   lamentandosi.
              Maria   must-3SG always be   complaining-RFL
        b. Maria   deve sempre stare   a lamentarsi.
           Maria must-3SG always be   (at) complaining-RFL
           'Maria is always complaining about something.'

This sentence asserts that what is typical of the intended person is her readiness to complain, as though she had to obey some sort of inner compulsion.

[12] In PRQ, there was one sentence which tested this particular interpretation. Only the Portuguese and English subjects used PROG in such a sentence, proving that these languages are the most liberal in this respect (as in many other respects concerning the use of PROG):

(i)   PRQ:52: He continually FORGET people's names.
       Port.: *Está* sempre *a esquecer* [Prs-PROG] os nomes das pessoas.
       Eng.: He *is* continually *forgetting* [Prs. PROG] people's names.

However, similar sentences are quite possible in Spanish (witness example (29)), and are not impossible even in colloquial Italian, as shown by the following sentence reported by Amenta (1994-5) from a corpus of Contemporary Spoken Italian (the sentence was presumably uttered by a Southern speaker): *mi sta chiedendo sempre cose sugli autori* 'he is always asking things about the authors'.

[13] Periphrases of this sort were indeed used by some Italian and French informants in PRQ. Namely, we find them with one Italian subject in PRQ:49, while both French informants used "*ne pas cesser / s'arrêter de* + INF" (lit.: 'do not stop doing') in the same sentence, and one of them employed it in PRQ:50 (and in PRQ:81). Obviously, all these constructions insist on the duration of the event. Although they cannot be considered PROG devices in the proper sense, they bear some relationship to durative PROG devices.

[14] Intriguingly, the Catalan informant is the only one who used PROG in PRQ:71 (*/What did Martin do yesterday evening?/ He STUDY, he READ the paper, he EAT, and then he GO to bed*). This pattern of responses is exactly the same as the one just illustrated. This sentence differs from PRQ:72 only because of the lack of durative adverbials. Although the two situations are apparently identical regarding the problem of the sequentiality of events, the absence of explicit indications of duration strongly suggests viewing every single event as directly anchored to the preceding and following ones, whereas in PRQ:72 it is easy to view every single event in and by itself, i.e. relative to exhaustive temporal coordinates.

[15] Another alternative that is given by two Portuguese informants for (17) is PROG with the Present tense. However, it is important to observe that PROG seems to be the most natural response in this class of examples. Note further that the same Sardinianinformant who allows for St-PROG-INF in PRQ:72, as shown in (16), admits this possibility in (17): *sono stata ad arrostire* (lit.: I have been-(femin.) at roasting). This informant also used this option in PRQ:48-51, i.e. in examples crucially testing the effect of durative adverbials on PROG.

[16] It should be remarked that some informants (namely, one French, one Italian, two Romanian, one Spanish) produced the Compound Past instead of the Pluperfect in (18). Evidently, these speakers interpreted the clause *because he WORK hard all week* independent, so to say, of the preceding context, as though it expressed mere anteriority to the speech time.

[17] As an example, consider the following sentences:
    (i)   a. La barca si andava   / veniva   avvicinando   a riva.
              the boat   itself   go-3SG-IMPF / come-3SG-IMPFapproaching   to shore
              'The boat was approaching the shore.'
           b. La barca si andava   / ?? veniva allontanando   da riva.
              he boat   itself   go-3SG-IMPF / come-3SG-IMPF getting farther   from shore
              'The boat was getting farther from the shore.'

As may be seen, *andare* is independent of deictic orientation, whereas *venire* seems to be sensitive to this parameter, thus showing that the bleaching of its meaning is far from complete. Even in Spanish "*venir* + Gerundive" is the preferred option in case of an event "continuing up to the present or to a past moment of reference" (Blansitt 1975: 26), as in:
    (ii)   Vienen estudiando   ese problema desde hace   tres años.
           they-come studying   this problem   since   three years
           'They've been studying this problem for three years.'

[18] Obviously, the level of grammaticalization varies from language to language. In Spanish and Portuguese it is certainly higher than in Italian, as is shown by the virtual lack of actional restrictions (cf. below). According to Giacalone Ramat (1995a), Mot-PROG in Italian is an instance of what she calls "interrupted grammaticalization". As to the acquisition of PROG in Italian as L2, cf. Giacalone Ramat (1995b).

    Needless to say, the semantic bleaching shown in most cases by the auxiliary "go" does not prevent it from preserving its original meaning in specific contexts, where this periphrasis plays the role of a "perambulative" construction. This is the case, for instance, in:
    (i)   Il mendicante andava   bussando   di porta in porta.

<div style="text-align:center">the beggar   go-3SG-IMPF knocking from door to door</div>
<div style="text-align:center">'The beggar was walking around, knocking at every door.'</div>

Apparently, the persistence of a perambulative meaning in Spanish Mot-PROG is more frequent with *andar* than with *ir*, judging from examples such as: *Anda revisando las puertas* 'He is (moving about) checking the doors' (Blansitt 1975:25).

[19] Portuguese also presents the much less frequent variants "*ir/vir + a* INF", which are shaped like the St-PROG variant most commonly used in Standard Portuguese.

[20] The informants who did not use PROG in PRQ:73 proposed most of the time either one of the following solutions: bare Imperative or some form of a modal verb meaning 'must' followed by the Infinitive.

[21] In Italian the passive is admitted in the form of the so-called "process" passive, with the dynamic auxiliary *venire* instead of *essere*, as in the following sentence heard by the author: *Il pacco ti sta venendo (*essendo) mandato al tuo indirizzo* 'the parcel is being sent to your address'. Note further that the marginal types (cf. Table 1) admit more freedom. Thus, in the Northern vernacular spoken in Pavia (cf. fn. 4), the periphrasis corresponding to "*essere dietro a* + INF" may be passivized, as in: *l'e dre ves mangià* 'it is being eaten'.

[22] It should be observed that sentence PRQ:19 (*He HAVE his hair CUT /right now/*) was not correctly interpreted by some informants, who used a Compound Preterite. This sentence was also infelicitous because the causative construction employed in that sentence elicited in Portuguese an idiomatic expression.

[23] Here is the example: *It was a bright sunny day. The bees HUM, the birds SING, the cows GRAZE in the greenfield. Suddenly, the earth opened and the devil came out.*

[24] The constraint concerning stative verbs may sometimes be circumvented even in Italian, especially in some colloquial varieties. Amenta (1994-95) presents a few spontaneous examples gathered in Palermo. But even a Northern newspaper like *La Stampa* may occasionally present sentences such as the following: *Non credo che ci sia un maggior narcisismo. Anche se una certa generazione di sacerdoti quarantenni si sta vestendo un po' alla 'monsignore'* 'I do not believe there to be more of a narcisistic attitude, even though a certain generation of priests is (currently) dressing so to say *à la monsignor*'. This case is remarkable because the usage of PROG does not destativize the predicate, as normally happens in such cases. Rather, it merely introduces the idea of the temporary validity of the statement. We shall find further examples of this in the English postural verbs quoted below. Another example leading to the same conclusions is the following, heard on the radio in a commentary about the economic situation: *I profitti quindi stanno rimanendo all'estero* 'the profits are thus kept abroad for the time being' (lit.: are remaining).

[25] Apparently, this could be considered a quite natural application of the intrinsic semantic value of the progressive, which is obviously related to the notion of temporariness. Indeed, also in *John is being kind* there is a clear implication that this is a temporary situation. However, it must be understood that this is just a strong preference, rather than an inviolable constraint, as we may gather from PRQ:60, a sentence depicting a permanent (non-stative) situation (*Think, while we are talking about our matters, the earth TURN around the sun*), which elicited PROG in almost all the languages considered (excepting Catalan and of course Romanian). Thus, temporariness is not a necessary feature of PROG.

[26] Here are the examples: *John inadvertently INSULT his neighbour with his silly questions; Philip unconsciously ADMIT the guilt.*

[27] Actually, PRQ:56 (*The train LEAVE*) was an unfortunate choice in the case of French because the word *train* could not possibly appear as the subject of a periphrasis based on the same word. As to imminentiality, it should be noted that a few subjects (one Italian, two

Portuguese) also provided, as an alternative to PROG, explicit imminential periphrases in sentences PRQ:56 and PRQ:57, as did one French informant in PRQ:32 by means of the construction "*aller* + INF". By contrast, the future-time reference meaning (cf. section 6.3.3) focussed upon in PRQ:66-69 did not elicit a single instance of an imminential periphrasis. This type of construction was instead used by one Romanian informant in PRQ:24 and PRQ:26, containing the phasal verb *FINISH*.

[28] PRQ:27, containing the durative phasal verb *CONTINUE*, elicited quite a number of PROG responses, including those of three Italian subjects, of the English subject, and even of one French subject. Curiously, no Ibero-Romance speaker used PROG in this context; however, one Spanish informant and the Catalan informant made use of the continuative periphrasis ("*seguir* + GER" in Spanish), which is morphologically close to PROG, and bears some semantic resemblance to it.

[29] Respectively: *eravamo soliti pulire*, *soléamos limpiar* ('we used to clean'). These are not the only habitual constructions available in the languages under investigation; and indeed "*used to* + Inf" could have been employed in PRQ:4. For more information, cf. Bertinetto (1991; in press *c*), Gougenheim (1929), Werner (1980).

[30] The problem, for the relevant languages, seems to derive in part from the adjacency of PROG to an adverb such as *often*, and in part from the respective order of main and subordinate clause, which is reversed in comparison with (27). Although the data collected suggest that Spanish is less prone to using PROG in these contexts as compared to Portuguese, it should be noted that in several South American varieties of Spanish this usage is widespread, as reported by Squartini (in preparation).

[31] It might be claimed that here there is some sort of focalization point, analogous to what is to be observed in: *Stava mangiando da un'ora* 's/he had been eating for an hour' (lit.: (at the given point) s/he was eating since an hour). However, the verb *dire* 'say' in (30) is compatible with a hyperbolic, rather than with a truly progressive meaning (i.e. it suggests an idea of speaker-insisted iteration). In fact, the event of saying is not necessarily occurring when the sentence is uttered.

[32] In the following example, found in a scientific paper, the interpretive use of PROG is combined with passive morphology: *This suggests that the relative clause tense is being interpreted indexically* (meaning: if the given condition occurs, then …)

[33] Portuguese presents a choice between synthetic and analytic Future. Both allow PROG in cases such as PRQ:83: *estarei a cozinhar*, *vou estar a cozinhar*. In Spanish too, there is an analytic future construction ("*ir a* + INF"), but it may not be used with PROG.

[34] Our English informant also used PROG in PRQ:74, which presents a negative Imperative: /Mother to daughter, whom she wants to punish/ *You NOT GO to that party!* The use of PROG in this sentence suggests that the Imperative has been replaced by a tense expressing a future-like meaning. In fact, the Simple Future is employed by most other informants.