THE GRAMMATICALIZATION OF PERFECT AUXILIARIES IN ROMANIAN. HISTORICAL AND DIALECTAL ASPECTS

MANUELA NEVACI, AIDA TODI

Abstract. The auxiliaries (developed into free or bound morphemes) originating from verbs represent a classic case of *grammaticalization*. The meaning we assigned to the term is the one regularly employed in Romanian linguistics: "the process of transformation of an independent lexical item into a functional morpheme, by losing its lexical-grammatical independence, in the evolution of a language or in its transfer from a language to another" (DSL); DSL provides as main example the case of "all the auxiliaries derived from independent lexical items and developed into free morphemes, or in some cases even bound ones (the 'perfect compus' auxiliary in Romanian *am cântat* 'have-1sg. sung' (free morpheme), as compared to the future auxiliary in French, which merged with the verb (*je chanterai* 'I will sing')". The evolution from independent item to the status of morpheme being a phenomenon with a slow, gradual development, our aim is to highlight a few stages of this transformation from Latin to Romanian (with all its dialects), with references to older intermediary stages of grammaticalization, disappeared nowadays in standard Romanian or preserved regionally, or as archaic elements in Daco-Romanian.

1. INTRODUCTION

It is well-known that the auxiliaries (developed into free or bound morphemes) originating from verbs represent a classic case of *grammaticalization*. Although the term is used in the literature in various contexts, the meaning we assigned to the term in this paper is the one regularly employed in Romanian linguistics; in DSL the grammaticalization is defined as "the process of transformation of an independent lexical item into a functional morpheme, by losing its lexical-grammatical independence, in the evolution of a language or in its transfer from a language to another" (DSL). The DSL chapter dealing with the grammaticalization provides as main example the case of "all the auxiliaries derived from independent lexical items and developed into free morphemes, or in some cases even bound ones (the "perfect compus" auxiliary in Romanian ***am*** *cântat* 'have-1sg. sung' (free morpheme), as compared to the future auxiliary in French, which merged with the verb (*je chanter**ai*** 'I will sing')" (*ibidem*). Since the evolution from independent item to the status of morpheme is un a phenomenon

RRL, **LIV**, *1–2*, p. 137–150, Bucureşti, 2009

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

with a slow, gradual development, the aim of this paper is to highlight a few stages of this transformation from Latin to Romanian; we considered standard Romanian, present-day Daco-Romanian idioms and literary old Romanian, as well as Aromanian – the best represented South-Danubian dialect, dwelling on those aspects which show a divergent evolution, or explain older, intermediary stages of grammaticalization, disappeared nowadays in standard Romanian or preserved regionally, or as archaic elements in Daco-Romanian.

2. THE "PERFECT COMPUS"

To express the resultative perfect meaning, Romanian (as well as other Romance languages), develops, starting from vulgar Latin, the process of forming some compound forms from constructions originating in *habeo* + *participle* (for transitive verbs) and from constructions originating in *sum, esse*, *fui* or *fio*, *fieri* + *participle* (ILR 1965: 181). The rise of the "perfect compus" is tightly connected to the status of the auxiliaries, the participle and the preference of late Latin for the construction *habeo* + *perfect participle* (in the Accusative) (*ibidem*). In classic Latin, the participle indicated the completion of the action and was used as such in the compound tenses of the passive voice: *vocatus est* 'was-3sg called', *vocatae sunt* 'were-3pl called'. Therefore, the perfect passive resembles a construction such as 'bonus est', with the distinction that, given its meaning, the participle attracts *sum* in the sphere of the past, *sum (fui, esse)*, becoming in this case an auxiliary (Iordan, Manoliu 1965: 195).

There are periphrases of the type *scriptum habeo, lectum habeo* as well, where *habeo*, not an auxiliary, gives the constructions the meaning of 'I have something to write, I have something to read'; 'something written, something read is in my possession'. These could have influenced the construction of the passive as well, making *sum, es, est* to return to the present tense value. The two constructions (*vocatus sum* and *habeo lectum*) supported each other. *Habeo*, supported as well by the capability of *sum* to associate with un adjective, similarly to the participle construction, caused that *sum* return to a present tense value; this, in turn, pushed *habeo* towards the auxiliary function. Constructions of the type *habeo scriptum* gave rise to the "perfect compus" indicative, which, in Romanian, unlike some other Romance languages, does not employ *sum* even for intransitive verbs.

In Proto-Romanian, the "perfect compus" is made up of the present form of *habere + past participle of the main verb.*

The present tense forms of the derivative of *habere* are: *habeo* > *aibu*; *habes* > *ae* > *ai*; *habet* > *ae(t)* > *a*; *habemus* > *aemu* (acc) > *amu* (neacc.); *habetis* > *aveți (acc)* > *ați* (neacc.); **habunt* > *au* (ILR 1969: 265).

The 1st person singular *aibu* changed to *amu* by analogy with the 1st person plural, after *aemu* had changed to *amu*. The forms *aemu, aeți* being attested in Aromanian, we may assume that in Proto-Romanian the 1st person singular form

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

was *aibu* (the root *aib-* appears in old Daco-Romanian and at the gerund: *aibăndu*) (Densusianu 196: 239). The 2nd person singular **ae** > **ai** by syneresis (**ae > aę > ai**) (ILR 1969: 265)[1]. The 3rd person **ae** changed to **a** when the verb was unstressed (*a cantatu)* (Densusianu 1961: 143; Frâncu 1969: 301; Gheţie 1973: 422). The form ***are*** from Aromanian originates in *haberet* or *habuerit* (Rosetti 1968: 239). The forms *aemu, aeţi* changed to *avemu, aveţi* in all the Romanian dialects, with **-v-** by analogy with the from *avut* (ILR 1969: 265). For the form **au** we must assume a **habunt*.

In Aromanian, the "perfect compus" is formed with the auxiliary and the participle of the main verb. It has the meaning of the dialectal "perfect compus" in Daco-Romanian of the type *am fost văzut* (Saramandu 1984: 463).

am^{u} *aį́* *ári* *avém*^{u} *avéţ* *áų*	*viḑutâ* *arsâ*

The structure of the auxiliary is analysable as an invariant segment **a-** functioning as root and the endings **-m^{u}, -į́, -i, -m, ţ, -ų,** attached directly to the root, without any intermediary suffix (for Daco-Romanian, see Brâncuş 1976: 61).

For old Daco-Romanian, in the 16th century it is attested the form *au* for 3rd person sg. and pl.: *el au fost/ei au fost* ("The differentiated form with *a* is rarely used in texts, even in the Muntenian ones" (Gheţie 1997: 339). The form with *a* for the 3rd person sg. and pl appears sporadically after the 17th century, only in Muntenian documents. In the other regions it appears rather accidentally. In the texts from Transylvania, along with the forms with *au*, there appear forms with *o*, resulting from *au* by reciprocal vowel assimilation (*m-o prins*). The few attested occurrences of the form *a,* present mainly in the non-translated texts, were interpreted by some researchers as graphical inconsistencies, since they do not always represent markers of the singular, but they also appear in the 3rd person plural (Densusianu 1961: 143; Frâncu 1969: 299-318). The authors of *The History of Literary Romanian. The Old Age* have a different opinion: "even if some of these forms can be considered as graphical negligence, we consider that at least those from the Southern texts can be interpreted as involuntary penetrations of colloquial speech in literary writings" (Gheţie 1997: 138). For the 'perfect compus' we notice changes of position, the auxiliary appearing preposed or postposed with respect to the verb.

[1] A falling diphthong with **e** semivowel element is not found in Romanian. Also, **i** may have appeared as 2ns person singular marker (Rosetti 1968: 239).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

In present-day Southern Daco-Romanian idioms, the "perfect compus" auxiliary appears frequently with the form *a* in the 3rd person sg. and pl.: *când a venit părinţii mei aici în sat* 'when my parents came to this village'. The generalization of the form *a* as the 3rd person (sg. and pl.) "perfect compus" auxiliary is also represented in the maps showing *The distribution of the forms in a and au* of the "perfect compus" indicative auxiliary form of the verbs from NALRR Oltenia (vol. V) and Maramureş (IV), as well as from dialectal texts. The homonymy sg. = pl. in the 3rd person in the present-day Southern idioms does not represent a case of conservation, but an innovative phenomenon, taking into consideration the chronology of the phenomenon and the fact that the form *a* does not appear in Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian, but only in Istro-Romanian, the form *a* being, as Frâncu (1969) claims, either a common innovation, from the times when Istro-Romanian hadn't separated from Daco-Romanian, or a case of independent innovation, following the separation of the dialects.

In old Romanian, the periphrastic perfect was also expressed by a form employing the "perfect simplu" of *to be* + the gerund of the main verb. The periphrastic verbal forms with the gerund are fairly frequent in the 16th century Romanian texts translated from Slavonian. With this function it is found in constructions with the verb *to be* in various tenses and moods. A study of the periphrastic verbal forms *to be* + *gerund* in the 16th century shows that, in general, these forms from our old translated texts correspond to some similar constructions in the Slavic source texts (which, in turn, reflect the Greek source texts); in these texts the Romanian translator avoided rendering the Slavic construction *to be* + *active present participle* as such, using other verbal forms, and in a limited number of cases, the Romanian texts contain the periphrastic form *to be* + *gerund* in cases where the Slavic text uses a different form (Rădulescu 1960: 391-398). This construction is attested both in Psaltirile rotacizante ("totu anul *fuiu lucrându* Domnului"; "and-mi *fu întorcându-me* întru Ierusalim and *rrugându-me*")[2], and at Coresi (Densusianu 1961: 143).

3. THE "MAI-MULT-CA-PERFECT"

In classic Latin, the "mai-mult-ca-perfect" was subordinated to the perfect aspect, and it was a synthetic tense formed from the perfect. Used more and more rarely with its initial value of relational tense, in the transition to the Romance languages, it became a variant of the "perfect simplu" and eventually it disappeared (ILR 1969: 100). In Romanian it was inherited mostly as the Latin perfect subjunctive (Frâncu 1982: 282). To express anteriority, Late Latin used periphrastic constructions, which consolidated gradually after the appearance of the

[2] The examples are taken from *Codicele Voroneţean* (Todi 2002: 47).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

analytic "perfect compus" form: *quod comparatum habebat* 'what he bought'. This periphrasis made up of the imperfect indicative form of the auxiliary *habēre* and the perfect participle of the lexical verb was the basis of the "mai-mult-ca-perfect" from most present-day Romance idioms (Lausberg 1988: 270; Posner 1996: 112; Ronconi 1959:124).

It. trapasato prossimo:	*avevo cantato*
Fr. plus-que-parfait:	*avais chanté*
Cat. plusquamperfet:	*havia cantat*
Sp. pluscuamperfecto:	*habia tomado*
Port. mais-que-perfeito composto:	*tinha cantado*

In *Danubian Latin*, the periphrasis *perfect participle* + *habēre* is limited to expressing the perfect, the disappearance of the "mai-mult-ca-perfect" being compensated by the extension of the subjunctive as "mai-mult-ca-perfect". The periphrastic "mai-mult-ca-perfect" forms from Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian probably represent more recent creations (ILR 1969: 96).

In Proto-Romanian, the *analytic* "mai-mult-ca-perfect" was formed with the *imperfect* of the verb **to have** + *participle* of the main verb, attested in old Daco-Romanian (Densusianu 1961:144) and preserved in Aromanian and in Megleno-Romanian.

The "mai-mult-ca-perfect" indicative in Aromanian[3] is an analytic tense (Capidan 1932: 463-464. Caragiu Marioțeanu 1968: 109; Saramandu 1984: 457)[4], formed with the auxiliary *am*^{u} „am" in the imperfect indicative and the participle of the main verb (augmented with a vowel **-â (ă)**):

avẹámu *avẹáị* *avẹá* *avẹámu* *avẹáț* *avẹá*	*lucrátâ* *viḍutâ* *ársâ* *durńítâ*

[3] Capidan (1932: 464): „as concerns the origin of this 'mai mult ca perfect', it must be traced to the Balkan languages: Greek, Albanian and Bulgarian, which influenced the Meglenit dialect". See also Saramandu (1969: 162): „The formation of the compound verbal forms system in Aromanian can be explained taking into account the evolution of the dialect in the context of the Balkan languages and, especially its closer contacts with Albanian and Modern Greek […]. These characteristics indicate the position of the Aromanian dialect– Romance idiom – among the Balkan idioms".

[4] Forms of synthetic 'mai mult ca perfect' indicative are identified by Capidan (1932: 463) in the idiom spoken by „Romanians from Samarina" [4]: *adrasim*^{u}*, vinisim*^{u}. Papahagi (1924: 331) mentions forms of synthetic 'mai mult ca perfect' present in Aromanian, and forms of analytic 'mai mult ca perfect' found dialectally in Daco-Romanian (Maramureş): „ Dialectological studies show that, just as the 'mai mult ca perfect' type *purtasem* is dying out in Aromanian, where it is still used in isolation, the 'mai mult ca perfect' type *aveam* + *lucrat(ă)* must have circulated in the past at the North of the Danube, since we have found it in Maramureş: *aveam mâncată, aveam stătută*".

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

The present tense form of the auxiliary *am* is opposed to the imperfect form to express different temporal values: *am cântată*/*aveam cântată* "perfect compus" indicative/"mai-mult-ca-perfect" indicative.

In present-day Muntenian idioms we have identified periphrastic constructions equivalent to the "mai-mult-ca-perfect". The types of constructions found in Muntenian texts employ the auxiliary *to have* in the present tense or *to be* in the present tense, imperfect and 'mai mult ca perfect' along with a participle:

am, ai, a fost cântat
sunt, eşti, este cântat
earam, erai, era cântat
fusesem, fusese cântat.

The constructions of the type *am fost cântat* appear frequently in old Romanian and can be found even nowadays on a fairly large dialectal area (North Moldavia, Maramureş, Crişana, Transylvania, Banat, Muntenia). The type with the auxiliary *to be* in the present tense + participle active is frequent in the Southern idioms and shifts the perspective from the action proper towards the result of the action, which thus appears as present.

In old Daco-Romanian, although the synthetic forms are predominant, the analytic "mai-mult- ca-perfect" is frequent in some texts; in Codicele Voroneţean, for example, its presence might be explained by the influence of the source text (in old Slavic, the "mai-mult-ca-perfect" had the structure: imperfect of the verb *to be* + *past participle*) (Olteanu 1975: 133). These periphrastic forms are attested in Romanian documents from the 16th - 18th century period. Here are few periphrastic constructions with the structure: *imperfect of the verb to be + participle of the main verb,* agreeing with the subject: *purrtaţi eramu*; *era… vădzutu*; *era…venritu*; *era… dzis*; *era aduraţi*; *era merrşi*; *era vădzuţi* (Todi 2002: 49). Forms of "mai-mult-ca-perfect" where the participle does not show agreement are identified in the old texts (Rosetti 1986: 505). In some cases, other parts of speech can be interpolated between the two components of the analytic "mai-mult-ca-perfect": pronoun in the Nominative (*era* elu *vădzutu*) or adverb (*era* amu *venritu*) – both examples are from Codicele *Voroneţean* (*ibidem*), which indicates that the structures under discussion were not fully grammaticalized; this gives sometimes the difficulty of establishing accurately the value of this construction found in the text, where *to be* (in the imperfect) can sometimes be interpreted either as 'mai mult ca perfect' auxiliary or as a constituent of the passive voice. Such periphrastic perfect forms are found in Romanian texts until later (Todi 2001: 38). The periphrastic construction (today with a colloquial character) continues to be attested in all the dialectal areas of Daco-Romanian[5].

[5] As examples from present-day Romanian, see Marin (1985: 459−467), where it is specified that the level of grammaticalization differs from one region to another: "if, in some idioms [the construction] appears highly frozen, as proved by the reflexive form of the construction in the example from Arpaşu de Jos (*se era oprit apa*), in other idioms, especially in the Southern part of the country, the freezing degree is low and the construction can be dissociated – e.g.: *era calu căzut*".

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

4. THE IMPERFECT

In old Romanian, there also existed analytic imperfect forms, with the structure: *imperfect of the verb to be + gerund of the main verb*[6].

The 1st person singular: *era mărrgându* şi *apropiindu-me*, *era stându*; there is also the case where this construction, non-grammaticalized, allows for the insertion of other elements: *eraţi* ca oile *rrătăcindu*; in some cases the analytic imperfect appears in the same sentence with the synthetic form (only one example in *Codicele Voroneţean*): însumi *era stându* şi *lăsa* spre uciderea lui şi *străjuiia* (examples selected from *Codicele Voroneţean*, Todi 2002: 39).

5. THE SUBJUNCTIVE

The synthetic forms of the Latin subjunctive disappear in Romance languages, being replaced by a series of analytic tenses, an innovation which enriched the initial system of temporal oppositions within the subjunctive.

For Proto-Romanian we cannot provide a prototype of the perfect subjunctive form, all the formations from the present-day Romanian dialects appearing later.

In Aromanian, the subjunctive is a highly frequently used mood (Caragiu Marioţeanu 1975: 250 specifies that "it appears in cases where other Romanian dialects or other Romance languages employ the infinitive") and it has four tenses[7]: present, imperfect, perfect, "mai-mult-ca-perfect", tenses preceded by the morpheme *să* (< Lat. *si*), which, in Romanian, becomes the marker of this mood.

5.1. The perfect

In Aromanian, the subjunctive perfect is a compound tense, formed with *am*^{u} in the present subjunctive and the participle of the main verb:

s-	*am*^{u} *aĵ* *áibâ* *avém*^{u} *avéţ* *aibâ*	*viḑutâ* *arsâ*

[6] Such examples appear at Densusianu (1986: 138) and Rosetti (1986: 504). This type of construction is analysed extensively by Rădulescu (1960: 691−698) and Edelstein (1966: 253−262), Marin (1985: 459−467).

[7] Among the South-Danubian Romanian dialects only Aromanian develops four subjunctive tenses employing the auxiliary „to have" as in Western Romance languages; the Istro-Romanian and the Megleno-Romanian don't have a perfect subjunctive. Megleno-Romanian develops two subjunctive tenses: present and 'perfect compus' (Capidan 1925: 231 and Atanasov 2002: 249).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

In Daco-Romanian the auxiliary *to be* is found in texts as early as the 16th century, which differentiates Daco-Romanian from Aromanian.

5.2 The "mai-mult-ca-perfect"

In Aromanian, it is an analytic tense, formed with the auxiliary *am*^{u} in the imperfect subjunctive and the participle of the main verb:

s-	*avḑám*^{u} *avḑáḭ* *avḑá* *avḑám*^{u} *avḑáṭ* *avḑá*	*lucrátâ* *vi'utâ* *ársâ* *durńítâ*

The meaning of the "mai-mult-ca-perfect" subjunctive overlaps with that of the perfect conditional *aş fi lucrat* (*would-1sg. have worked*).

The imperfect, perfect and 'mai mult ca perfect' subjunctive forms are recorded by Theodor Capidan (1932: 464-465) under the „perfect subjunctive", with the notice that „it is expressed in several ways in Aromanian". The 'mai mult ca perfect' subjunctive form is considered as „rare" by Capidan, while Matilda Caragiu Marioțeanu asserts that it is „highly frequent" (Caragiu Marioțeanu 1968: 142). At Tache Papahagi it appears under the third type of imperfect conditional (*DDA*: 67).

The structure of the compound subjunctive verb forms is explained by comparing it with the Balkan languages model by Nicolae Saramandu, who shows that these employ „the same preverbal elements" (Saramandu 1969: 159) for constructing the periphrastic forms. Both Albanian and Modern Greek construct the form temporally equivalent to the perfect and 'mai mult ca perfect' subjunctive in Aromanian with the auxiliary *am*^{u} „to have" (Gr.: $^{a}\chi\omega$; Alb: *kam*.[8]) in the present or the imperfect. The model is the Balkan one: the conjunction *s-* + the auxiliary „to have" in the present or imperfect + participle of the main verb. But the construction of the compound subjunctive forms with the auxiliary „to have" in the present or imperfect + participle of the main verb is a property of Romance languages, developed in French, Italian, Spanish, Aromanian, as noticed in the examples below (Lausberg 1988: 277; 299; 302):

	Perfect subjunctive	'Mai-mult-ca-perfect' subjunctive
Fr.	*(que j') aie chanté*	*(que j') eusse chanté*
It.	*(che io) abbia creduto*	*(se io) avessi creduto*
Sp.	*haya cantado*	*hubiera cantado*
Ar.	*s-am*^{u} *lucrátâ*	*s-avḙám*^{u} *lucrátâ*

[8] For examples, see *Saramandu* (1969 the table on p. 160).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

The innovation of the compound subjunctive verb forms, in Romanian, is thus a Romance trend, developed in a favourable Balkan context.

6. THE CONDITIONAL-OPTATIVE

The conditional-optative mood is a Romance creation[9], without a formal correspondent in Latin, which expresses the unreal hypothetical and desiderative meanings by the imperfect and "mai-mult-ca-perfect" subjunctive (ELR 2001: 118; Lausberg 1988: 317; Reinheimer Râpeanu 2001: 287).

In Proto-Romanian the conditional is a synthetic mood.

In old Daco-Romanian, it is made up of the forms *aş(i), ai, ară (are), amu, aţi, ară* of the auxiliary *to have* and the infinitive of the verb[10].

In Aromanian, the conditional is a predicative mood with a synthetic tense (*the present*) and two analytic tenses (*the perfect* and *the "mai-mult-ca-perfect"*). The compound forms are not well established from the point of view of their function (Caragiu-Marioţeanu 1975: 251). In Aromanian we do not find, as in Daco-Romanian, conditional forms with a postposed auxiliary[11], the structure of the morpheme chain being fixed: the invariable auxiliary *to want* + variable verbal component.

6.1. The perfect

It is an analytic tense and it has several forms in Aromanian, all involving free morphemes, with a low grammaticalization level (Caragiu-Marioţeanu 1968: 112)[12].

a. vrẹa (the 3rd person singular imperfect indicative form of the auxiliary *voĺ* „vreau") + present subjunctive: vrẹa *s-áflu.*

[9] Among the Romance languages, Dalmatian had a synthetic conditional starting from the Latin 'mai mult ca perfect' indicative: *canta(u)ora* (lat.< *cantaveram*).

[10] There have been several debates with respect to the origin of the conditional auxiliary, which illustrate two major theories: a) the VOLĒRE theory (put forward by Weigand and adopted by Al. Philippide, I. Iordan, W. Meyer-Lübke, Fr. Streller, L. Morariu, S. Puşcariu, S. Pop, A. Scriban, Al. Rosetti); b) the HABĒRE theory (adopted by Tiktin). Some researchers, bringing arguments in favour of both theories, preferred to leave the issue open, without favouring one in particular (Alf Lombard); these points of view are presented in Titova (1959: 561−571), and in our work (Todi 2002: 64-65). Other opinions in Bugeanu (1970: 543−563).

[11] Such forms, constructed with the 'long infinitive' of the verb, followed by the auxiliary are relatively frequently found in literary old Romanian: *rugare-aşi, vreare-aşi* (Todi 2002: 65).

[12] Matilda Caragiu-Marioţeanu claims that there are four perfect conditional forms and includes under these the type *s-aveam cântatâ*, which we classified under 'mai mult ca perfect' subjunctive (see also Saramandu 1984: 459).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

b. vrẹa (*va*) + present subjunctive: vrẹa *s-aflárim* [u]

c. vrẹa (*va*) + imperfect subjunctive vrẹa *s- aflam*[u].

d. The construction vrẹa *s-áflu* is also found under the form vrẹa *áflu* with elision of the conjunction s-: *vrea ḑâcă* (*BA* 311/37), *vrea l-mâca* (*BA* 345/6). The auxiliary *to want* is also found under its regional variants *vreai*, *vai*, *va* (without its value being confused with that of *va* – present indicative).[13] In the structure of the perfect conditional, the first component vrẹa (*va*) is invariable; the paradigm of the second component is identical to that of the present subjunctive/present conditional/imperfect subjunctive. Pronouns in the ethical dative and weak forms of the personal pronoun can interpolate between the auxiliary and the second element of the perfect conditional structure: *vrea s-**lo** află* (*BA* 177/38), *vrea-**l’** agiungă* (*BA* 4/18), *vrea **l’**-afl’i* (*BA* 246/8), *vrea-**ń** faţi* (*BA* 371/26), *vrea-**l** frângă* (*BA* 106/8), *vrea-**l’** lom* (*BA* 30/21). The perfect conditional auxiliary can be preceded by the adverb *nu* (*not*): ***nu** vrea-l doară* (*BA* 132/37).

In Daco-Romanian, the auxiliary *vrẹa* is found in the structure of the present conditional in the idioms from Banat and the North of Oltenia (Densusianu 1961: 148, Rosetti 1986: 353, Brâncuş 1976: 64): *vreaş cânta*. Weigand (1896: 139−161) and Iordan (1956: 154) consider the present conditional forms in Banat as intermediary between old Romanian and Aromanian, on the one hand, and the Romanian forms constructed with the auxiliary *aş*, on the other hand. Weigand claims that the present conditional auxiliary in Daco-Romanian originates in Lat. *volere*. The theory is adopted by Al. Philippide, I. Iordan, S. Puşcariu and rejected by Tiktin (1943: 145) and Titova (1959: 561−571), who claim that in Daco-Romanian the conditional was formed with the auxiliary *to have*. Tiktin specifies that the appearance of the dialectal forms is the result of a later process of contamination of the two auxiliaries: *to want* and *aş*. Alf Lombard[14] brings arguments in favour of both theories. Dan Bugeanu[15], analysing the system of oppositions necessity/volition, proposes the evolution of the conditional auxiliary by confusion of *habeo* with *habui.* Theodor Capidan[16], starting from the finding that in Aromanian, Istro-Romanian and old Daco-Romanian the conditional is formed with the auxiliary *to want*, claims that the form *aş scrie* (‘would-1 sg.

[13] As concerns the use of the various forms of the auxiliary *to want* in Northern and Southern Aromanian, Nicolae Saramandu claims that „they reveal the influence of Modern Greek and Albanian” (Saramandu 1969: 157).

[14] Cf. Lombard (1954−1955: 453). Lausberg (1988: 318−319): „No está dilucidado si labase de las formas del verbo auxiliar la constituze el imperfecto de *volere* (conforme al futuro) o un subjuntivo (*habuissem, habueris, habuerit, habuerimus, habueritis, habuerint*) de *habere*”.

[15] Cf. Bugeanu (1970: 543−563).

[16] Capidan (1932: 477): „whatever be the analysis of the form *aş scrie* (from the older *scrie-aş*), we must start, as Weigand (Jahresb. III, 139-152) claimed, from *scrie-reaş*, from an older *scrie-vreaş*. And in this *vreaş* we must see a *vrea* (irrespective of the way in which *ş* will be explained), which comes from the Greek construction with the imperfect of the verb □*έλω”.*

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

write') must be explained by „the older *scrie-vreaş*". In *Codicele Voroneţean*, studied by myself, there are two means of expressing this conditional tense: the perfect form of the verb *to want*, along with the infinitive: *au vrutu spregice*; the (synthetic) present conditional of the verb *to be* and the participle of the verb: *fure faptu* (Todi 2002: 67−68)[17]. Alongside the forms with *to want*, old Romanian also employs, for the perfect conditional, constructions with *to be*: *ară fi adus*.

6.2. The "mai-mult-ca-perfect"

It is a tense formed with the auxiliary *vr̦ea* (*va*) (the 3rd person singular imperfect indicative form of the auxiliary *voi̦* 'vreau') + "mai-mult-ca-perfect" subjunctive: *vr̦ea s- av̦eam aflâtâ*, *vrea-ń avea datâ* (*BA* 200/33)[18]. Theodor Capidan mentions the fact that this form is seldom found (Capidan 1932: 474).[19] The establishment of the compound conditional verb forms system in Aromanian was explained by invoking the influence of the Balkan languages by Sandfeld (1930: 105)[20], Capidan (1932: 477) and Saramandu (1969: 159).

As concerns the analytic conditional forms, comparing Aromanian to Balkan languages, Nicolae Saramandu highlights the fact that some of these languages, such as Modern Greek and Albanian and, to a lower extent, Bulgarian and Macedonian, proceeds in a similar way to obtain the compound verb forms (*ibidem*). Thus, from the perfect conditional forms *vrea (va) s-cântu*, *vrea (va) s-cântam*, *vrea s-cântarim*, the first two verb structures can be found in Modern Greek (*h [v] χάσω*, *h [v] ªχανα*) and Albanian (*vrea (va) s-cântam ~ do të afroja*); the last one contain a verbal component originating in a perfect subjunctive form inherited from Latin. The author shows that, while in the Balkan languages the perfect conditional forms are analysed as the auxiliary *voi* – invariable homonymous form of 3rd pers. singular present and imperfect indicative (*h* -gr./ do- alb.) + conjunction *s-*: *v* ngr. , alb. *të* + verbal component in the imperfect indicative (ªχανα)or participle (χάσει) – Gr./ imperfect indicative (*afroja*) or participle (*afruar*) Alb., in Aromanian *vrea s-cântu* must be analysed as: the auxiliary *vrea* + present subjunctive. The 'mai mult ca perfect' conditional in Aromanian *vrea (va) s-aveam cântată* is equivalent to the Balkan forms *h [v] εΈχα χάσει* (Greek) and *do të kisha afruar* (Albanian).

[17] Densusianu (1961: 147−148) does not mention this case.

[18] Cf. Saramandu (1984: 459).

[19] Rosetti (1986: 140, 354) rejects Capidan's theory concerning the formation of the analytic conditional in Aromanian by following the Balkan languages model.

[20] „Si les traits mentionnés témoignent d'un rapport spécial très étroit entre le grec et l'aroumain, il y en a d'autres qui s'observent aussi en albanais ou en bulgare. See also Capidan (1936: 134).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

In old Romanian there existed several past conditional constructions. Ovid Densusianu lists the types: *eu să vrea lăuda, eu aş fi lăudat, am vrut lăuda, aş fi vrut lăudat* (ILR: 147−148). For the 17th – 18th century Daco-Romanian, one of the analytic perfect conditional forms was made up of the auxiliary *to want* and the infinitive of the main verb: *rădica-vrea.*

7. CONCLUSIONS

The brief survey of the history of the Romanian perfect forms from Latin – classic, then vulgar – to Romanian shows the development of some verbs, from their independent predicative status, to their auxiliary one.

The evolution of some compound perfect verb forms is similar in the Romance languages: the "perfect compus" auxiliary in Romanian *am cântat* – with its known diachronic and dialectal fluctuations –, where *to have* currently has the status of free morpheme; the periphrasis made up of the imperfect indicative form of the auxiliary *habēre* and the perfect participle of the lexical verb, which is the basis of the 'mai mult ca perfect' in most present-day Romance idioms (it. *avevo cantato*, fr. *avais chanté*; cat.: *havia cantat*; sp. *habia tomado*; port.. *tinha cantado*), preserved in Proto-Romanian, in Aromanian and in Megleno- Romanian, but replaced in standard Romanian by the synthetic form (*cântasem*) etc.

Other structures are specific to the Balkan space where Romanian arose and developed, as well as to the source texts of the first Romanian translations: such as, for example, the periphrastic verb forms constructed with the "perfect simplu" of *to be* + *gerund* of the verb, fairly frequent in 16th century Romanian texts translated from Slavonian (found in Psaltirile rotacizante, but also at Coresi), which presumably corresponds to some similar constructions from the Slavic source text (which, in turn, reflects its Greek source text).

Our study also presents specific perfect forms of the type *am fost văzut*, present in some Daco-Romanian idioms; forms with the imperfect of the verb *to be* + *past participle*, agreeing or not with the subject, attested in the old Romanian documents (16th – 18th century, but even nowadays, colloquially, in various dialectal areas of Daco-Romanian: *purrtați eramu*; *era (elu) vădzutu*; *era (amu) venritu*; *era dzis*; *era aduraţi*; *era merrşi*; *era vădzuți*, sometimes with various interpolated elements, which shows that the structures under discussion were not fully grammaticalized; this gives sometimes the difficulty of establishing accurately the value of this construction, where *to be* (in the imperfect) can sometimes be interpreted either as "mai-mult-ca-perfect" auxiliary or as a constituent of the passive voice; analytic imperfect forms, with the structure: *imperfect of the verb to be + gerund of the main verb*: *era mărrgându and apropiindu-me*, *era stându* (in some cases this construction, non-grammaticalized, appears with the insertion of other elements: *eraţi* ca oile *rrătăcindu*).

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

The examples provided by the old Romanian texts, the state of the dialects and idioms show different stages of the grammaticalization process which the verbs analysed have undergone in time.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Atanasov, P., 2002, *Meglenoromâna astăzi*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Bidu-Vrănceanu, A., C. Călăraşu, L. Ionescu-Ruxăndoiu, M. Mancaş, G. Pană-Dindelegan, 2001, *Dicţionar de ştiinţe ale limbii*, Bucureşti Nemira. [DSL]

Brâncuş, Gr., 1976, *Limba română contemporană. Morfologia verbului*, Bucureşti, Tipografia Universităţii din Bucureşti.

Bugeanu, D., 1970, "Formarea condiţionalului în limba română", *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice*, XXI, 5, 543−563.

Capidan, Th., 1925, *Elementul slav în dialectul aromân*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Capidan, Th., 1932, *Aromânii. Dialectul aromân*, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti.

Caragiu-Marioţeanu, M., 1968, *Fono-morfologie aromână*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei.

Caragiu-Marioţeanu, M., 1975, *Compendiu de dialectologie română (nord şi sud-dunăreană*), Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.

Codicele Voroneţean, 1563−1583, ediţie critică, studiu filologic şi lingvistic de Mariana Costinescu, Bucureşti, Minerva, 1981. [CV]

Coteanu, I. (ed.), 1969, *Istoria limbii române*, vol. II*,* Bucureşti, Editura Academiei. [ILR]

Densusianu, D., 1961, *Istoria limbii române*, II, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Frâncu, C., 1969, "Formele de persoana a III-a singular ale auxiliarului de la perfectul compus. Privire istorică", *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice*, XX, 3, 299−318.

Frâncu, C., 1982, "Vechimea formelor de mai mult ca perfect, perfect compus, prezent indicativ şi conjunctiv cu *-ră*", *Limba română*, XXXI, 4−5, 281−293.

Gheţie, I, 1973, "Originea auxiliarului *a* de la persoana a III-a singular a perfectului compus", *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice*, XXIV, 4, 421−430.

Gheţie, I. (ed.), 1997, *Istoria limbii române literare. Epoca veche (1532-1780),* Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Graur, Al., 1968, *Tendinţele actuale ale limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică.

Guţu-Romalo, V., 1968, *Morfologia structurală a limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Iordan, I., 1956, *Limba română contemporană*, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, Bucureşti.

Iordan, I., M. Manoliu, 1965, *Introducere în lingvistica romanică,* Bucureşti, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică.

Lausberg, H., 1988, *Lingüística románica,* II*,* Madrid, Gredos.

Lombard, A., 1955, *Le verbe roumain. Étude morphologique,* II, Lund, C.W. Gleerup.

Marin, M., 1985, "Formes verbales périphrastiques de l'indicatif dans les parlers dacoroumains", *Revue roumaine de linguistique,* XXX, 5, 459−467.

Neiescu, P. (ed.), 1997, *Noul Atlas Lingvistic Român pe Regiuni. Maramureş*, vol. IV, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [ALRR – Mar.]

Nevaci, M., 2005, "The Structure and the Evolution of the Verbal Forms in Aromanian, in: *Languages and Dialects of the Ethnic Minorities in the Balkan area*, 2005, St. Petersburg, Academi Print*,* 29−37.

Nevaci, M., 2006, *Verbul în aromână. Structură şi valori*, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.

Papahagi, P., *Basme aromâne*, Editura Academiei Române, Bucureşti. [BA]

Papahagi, T., 1924, "Din epoca de formaţiune a limbii române", *Grai şi suflet*, I, 1924, 2, 201−234.

Papahagi, T., 1974, *Dicţionarul dialectului aromân, general şi etimologic,* ediţia a doua augmentată, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [DDA]

Posner, R., 1996, *The Romance Languages*, Cambridge University Press.

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)

Rădulescu, M., 1960, "Formele verbale perifrastice *a fi + gerunziul* în textele româneşti traduse din secolul al XVI-lea", *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice*, XI, 3, 391−398.
Reinheimer Râpeanu, S., 2001, *Lingvistică romanică. Lexic, morfologie, fonetică*, Bucureşti, All universitar.
Ronconi, A., 1959, *Il verbo latino: problemi di sintassi storica*, Firenze, Felice le Monnier.
Rosetti, Al., 1986, *Istoria limbii române*, Bucureşti, Editura Ştiinţifică şi Enciclopedică.
Sala, M., (ed.), 2001, *Enciclopedia limbii române*, Bucureşti, Univers Enciclopedic. [ELR]
Sandfeld, Kr., 1930, *Linguistique balkanique. Problèmes et résultats*, Paris, Librarie Klincksieck.
Saramandu, N., 1969, "Sistemul formelor verbale compuse în aromână", *Fonetică şi dialectologie*, VI, 155−162.
Saramandu, N., 1984, "Aromâna", in: *Tratat de dialectologie românească*, Craiova, Scrisul Românesc, 423−475.
Teaha, T. (ed.), 1984, *Noul Atlas Lingvistic Român pe Regiuni. Oltenia*, vol. V, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române.
Texte dialectale şi glosar Dobrogea, 1987, publicate de Paul Lăzărescu, Victorela Neagoe, Ruxandra Pană, Nicolae Saramandu, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [TDD]
Texte dialectale. Muntenia, 1973, publicate de Galina Ghiculete, Paul Lăzărescu, vol. I, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [TDM I]
Texte dialectale. Muntenia, 1975, vol. II, publicate de Paul Lăzărescu, Maria Marin, Bogdan Marinescu, Ruxandra Pană, Magdalena Vulpe, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [TDM II]
Texte dialectale. Muntenia, 1987, vol. III, publicate de Costin Bratu, Galina Ghiculete, Maria Marin, Bogdan Marinescu, Victorela Neagoe, Ruxandra Pană, Marilena Tiugan, Magdalena Vulpe, Bucureşti, Editura Academiei Române. [TDM III]
Tiktin, H., 1895, *Gramatica română pentru învăţământul secundar. Teorie şi practică,* Partea I, *Etimologia*, Bucureşti.
Titova, V. P., 1959, "O problemă litigioasă a morfologiei istorice româneşti (originea condiţionalului)", *Studii şi cercetări lingvistice*, X, 1, 561−571.
Todi, A., 2001, *Elemente de sintaxă românească veche*, Bucureşti-Piteşti, Paralela 45.
Todi, A., 2002, *Aspecte ale morfologiei verbului în secolul al XVI-lea*, Constanţa, Ex Ponto.
Todi, A., 2007, *Îndrumător pentru studiul diacronic al limbii române*, Bucureşti, Cartea Universitară.
Todi, A., M. Nevaci, "The Structure and Evolution of Periphrastic Perfect Forms in Aromanian and Daco-romanian, in: *MicroCAD*, International Scientific Conference (University of Miskolc), 10-11 March 2005, Miskolc, Hungary, 133−138**.**
Weigand, G., 1894−1896, *Die Aromunen*, I-II, Leipzig.

BDD-A332 © 2009 Editura Academiei
Provided by Diacronia.ro for IP 216.73.217.31 (2026-11-27 03:13:36 UTC)