## Experimental data for the licensing of PPIs in Romanian Mihaela Zamfirescu, University of Bucharest, mihaela.zamfirescu@gmail.com

- **1. Aim and Claim:** The aim of this paper is to present experimental evidence with native Romanian speakers with respect to the licensing of lexical positive polarity items in Romanian. This study works in the framework proposed by Szabolcsi (2004) and Ton van der Wouden (1997) and shows that most PPIs in Romanian are compatible with downward entailing operators (putini 'few',  $cel\ mult\ N$  'at most N' etc.) and with anti-additive operators (fara 'without', neaga 'deny' etc.) and cannot occur in the immediate scope of clausemate negation, the antimorphic operator nu 'not'.
- **2. Analysis:** It has been argued that PPIs exhibit strong scoping preferences with respect to overt negation, or that PPIs do not have licensers but they seem to be anti-licensed by classical negation. Working in the framework proposed by Szabolcsi (2004) we notice that whenever the PPI occurs in the immediate scope of clausemate negation, the two semantically negative features incorporated in the PPI get activated, but the problem is that only one of the negative features can be licensed by resumption with the higher operator *not*, and this is the reason why the sentence is considered ungrammatical. The only way to rescue the sentence is to embed the configuration in a context where there is another NPI-licenser and thus, the doubly-marked PPIs occurs in the scope of two licensers, specifically: in the scope of *puţini* ('few') the downward-entailing operators and in the scope of *nu* ('not') the antimorphic operator at the same time.
- (1) \*Mondenii nu au suflat premiul APTR (The T.V. Show) 'Mondenii' not have-3<sup>rd</sup>.p,pl. blown prize-the APTR

## într-o clipită

in a moment.

\*not > într-o clipită

'The T.V. show 'Mondenii' didn't snatch the APTR prize in a jiffy.'

In line with Szabolcsi's (2004) analysis, example (2) shows that lexical PPIs can scope below superordinate negation.

(2) Nu cred că a ajuns <u>într-o clipita</u>.

Not believe-1<sup>st</sup>.p.sg that have-3<sup>rd</sup>.p.sg. arrived in a moment.

'I don't think that he arrived in a jiffy.'  $\sqrt{\text{not}} > [\text{CP/IP într-o clipită}]$  Example (3) shows that lexical PPIs can occur in the scope of negation if there is another operator, like *fiecare* ('every') or *întotdeauna* ('always') intervening.

(3) Maria nu a plecat de la fiecare ședință <u>într-o clipită.</u>
Maria not have-3<sup>rd</sup>.p.sg leave-past.part. from each meeting in a moment.
'Mary didn't leave from every meeting in a jiffy.'  $\sqrt{\text{not}}$ -every>într-o clipită
Most PPIs occur in the scope of the anti-additive operator fără – 'without' as in example (4), or in the scope of refuză – 'refuse', as in example (5).

(4) \*Concurenții au așteptat în culise **fără** a se emoționa Contestant-pl.-the have-3rd.p,pl. waited in backstage without to get nervous **într- o clipită**.

in a moment.

- "The contestants waited backstage without getting nervous in a jiffy."
- (5) ? Politicienii **refuză** să voteze **într-o clipită**.

Politician-pl.the. refuse SA vote in a moment.

'The politicians refuse to vote in a jiffy.'

This paper also presents results we obtained in grammaticality judgement tasks with native speakers of Romanian. According to Szabolcsi (2004), PPIs, whose licensing implies the checking and activation of two negative features, together with the semantic operator that normally anti-licenses them - form a non-lexical NPI, subject to familiar constraints on NPI-licensing. Example 6(a) shows that lexical PPIs in Romanian are doubly marked NPIs.

(6) a. *Puţini studenţi nu au ajuns în sala de*Few student-pl. not have-3<sup>rd</sup>.p.pl. arrive-past.perf. in room-the DE examen <u>într-o clipită.</u>

exam in a moment.

'Few students didn't get to the exam room in a jiffy.'

- b. **Puţine** secretare dactilografiază 100 de cuvinte <u>într-o clipită.</u>
  Few secretary-pl. type 100 DE word-pl. in a moment. 'Few secretaries type 100 words in a jiffy.'
- c. \*Concurenții au așteptat în culise **fără** a se emoționa Contestant-pl.-the have-3rd.p,pl. waited in backstage without to get nervous **într-** o clipită.

in a moment.

- d. \**Trimit* scrisorile deloc <u>într-</u> o <u>clipită.</u>
  Send-1<sup>st</sup>.p,sg. letter-pl.-the at all in a moment.
  '\* I will send the letters in a jiffy at all.'
- e. \*Ajung la serviciu **nicidecum** <u>într-o clipită.</u> Get-1<sup>st</sup>.p,sg. at work not-at-all in a moment.

"\*I get to work in a jiffy not-at-all."

Example (6a) shows that 86% of the participants considered the sentence grammatical and 14% judged it ungrammatical. Example (6b) shows that 96,6% of the participants considered this sentence grammatical and 3,3% judged it as ungrammatical. Example (6c) shows that 10% of the participants considered this example grammatical and 90% judged it as ungrammatical. Example (6d) shows that 1,1% of the participants considered the example grammatical and 98,8% judged it as ungrammatical. Example (6e) shows that 23,3% of the participants considered this example grammatical and 76,6% judged it as ungrammatical.

**3. Conclusion:** This paper shows that native speakers of Romanian are sensitive to the occurrence of lexical PPIs in different types of negative contexts and proposed that the adequate semantic mechanism in the interpretation of PPIs in Romanian is similar to the one proposed by Szabolcsi (2004), where the licensing of PPIs involves the checking and activation of two negative features. Example 6(a) which is grammatical because the doubly-marked PPIs occurs in the scope of two licensers, specifically: in the scope of *puţini* ('few') – the downward-entailing operators and in the scope of nu ('not') – the antimorphic operator – at the same time.

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