

Irina Stoica, *The Syntax and the Semantics of Manner of Speaking Verbs*. Limbi, culturi, identități series. București: Editura Universității din București, 2021. xv + 217 pages. ISBN 978-606-16-1291-8

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The book under review represents a substantial study of Manner of Speaking Verbs (MoS verbs henceforth) and is the result of the doctoral research conducted by Irina Stoica with the University of Bucharest, under the guidance of esteemed professor Larisa Avram. The book is the first of its kind as, to our knowledge, such an extensive discussion of MoS verbs as a distinct class of verbs has not been attempted before. From this point of view, we have to fully agree that the book comes as an important and comprehensive addition to work done on the syntax and semantics of verbs in English.

The aim of the book, as declared in the first pages by the author, is to take a close look at the syntax and semantics of MoS verbs in English. The intention is to treat MoS verbs as a distinct class rather than merely focus on semantic components that would differentiate these verbs from other verbs. In that, the author takes a different approach, departing from studies such as those of Mufwene, 1978 or Levin 1993, which treat classes of verbs as 'epiphenomenal'. A distinct class of verbs is characterized by a cluster of properties that can be accounted for, which is what the author intends to do in the case of MoS verbs: to correlate properties of MoS verbs already discussed in the literature, such as extraction, complementizer omission and compatibility with double object constructions. Previously, as pointed out in the introduction of this book, a connection between such properties was traced by Erteschik-Shir, 1973; Snyder, 1992 (extraction and complementizer omission) and by Pesetsky, 1995 (complementizer omission and double object constructions), but no study has attempted to correlate all these three properties.

The line of inquiry expressed in the introduction of this book is worth pursuing since, if the syntax of MoS verbs is accounted for in terms of their semantic representation, one would expect that the behavior of MoS verbs should be similar in other languages as well. The book is thus typologically oriented, with a major focus on some of the languages of Europe, such as Romanian, Spanish, Italian, German, Hungarian, even Lithuanian and Estonian. These languages, as the author remarks, constitute the "control group" for MoS verbs in English. An investigation of the behavior of MoS verbs in various languages can only lead to a better understanding of MoS verbs in general, as is demonstrated by the end of this book.

While readers of this review are undoubtedly knowledgeable about what MoS verbs are supposed to be, we will nevertheless endeavor to provide a reminder of the discussion revolving around MoS verbs, which sums up the discussion in the introductory chapter of Irina Stoica's book. As pointed out by Zwicky, 1971, MoS verbs

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in English evince several transparent properties: they are activity verbs (a property which can be checked by their ability to combine with the progressive aspect), the referents of their subject and object are [+human], they can be used parenthetically, they can take three types of complements: (a) a DP, (b) a sentential complement, finite or non-finite, which is interpreted non-factively, and (c) a quotation. Stoica points out that in addition to these properties, these verbs evince more opaque properties that differentiate these verbs from the larger class of verbs of communication: thus, these verbs can be used intransitively, they cannot be used performatively, they can be used with directional adverbials and can undergo passivization only when understood non-communicatively (i.e. when the focus is on the emitted noise). Stoica points out that most of these 'transparent' properties of MoS verbs are checked cross-linguistically. As for their 'opaque' properties, MoS verbs in Romanian, Italian and German share some of these properties with their English counterparts, but differ in some respects. For instance, intransitivity is a property available to Romanian MoS verbs, but when they are used intransitively, the focus is on their non-communicative use (i.e. the emitted noise). An important property that distinguishes these verbs from their English counterparts is the fact that their corresponding nominals are not homophonous, as is the case with their English pairs (*whisper-whisper* vs. *șopti-șoptă*). This is a property that proves of utmost importance for the analysis provided in this book.

A cluster of properties that are extensively discussed and checked in the book (Chapters II-IV) are the following syntactic properties: a) extraction – it appears that English MoS verbs ban extraction of arguments and adjuncts from their clausal complements, unlike verbs of communication (*\*What did she simper that Fred had done <what>?* vs. *What did she say that Fred had done <what>?*). Stoica points out to the existence of some contexts where extraction is however possible, such as: *Who did John whisper to his friend that Mary loved <who>?* Unlike MoS verbs in English, Romanian MoS verbs do not ban extraction of arguments and adjuncts, behaving similarly to verbs of communication, as proved by the fact that both the following sentences are grammatical: *Cine a spus Ioana că <cine> a plecat?* vs. *Cine a strigat Vasile că <cine> a plecat?* Extraction has been correlated with another syntactic property in the literature, that of complementizer omission: English MoS verbs do not allow for complementizer omission, unlike communication verbs (*Bill says Mary likes John.* vs. *\*Bill whines Mary likes John.*), although some studies (Doherty, 2000) challenge this distinction (*She screamed the house was on fire.*) Just like other romance verbs, Romanian MoS verbs behave similarly, although in Romanian complementizer omission can be checked only when the mood of their clausal complement is the subjunctive (*I-a șoptit copilului să plece cât mai repede.*) The syntactic property of complementizer omission has in turn been correlated with the ability of a verb to be compatible with double object constructions. As pointed out in the literature (Pesetsky, 1995 *inter alia*), English MoS verbs are incompatible with double object constructions but appear freely in prepositional object constructions: *\*Sue shouted Ben the news.* vs. *Sue shouted the news to Ben.* There are, however, examples that disprove this claim: *She whispered him the secret.* (Avram, 2012). As confirmed by the experiment conducted by Stoica and described in Chapter IV of this book, Romanian MoS verbs are compatible with two object constructions: *Cristian i-a șoptit vecinei secretele lui.*

The fifth chapter of the book under review is aptly entitled *Drawing the threads together*, since this chapter accomplishes an important goal: it manages to correlate the three syntactic properties we have mentioned above and to account for the variable behavior of English MoS verbs with respect to these properties. The analysis put forth by Stoica revolves around the dual nature of MoS verbs in English: she argues that these verbs are both manner verbs and verbs of implicit creation. The fact that English MoS verbs have zero-derivation available (the homophony existing between the verb and its nominal, see *whisper-whisper*) accounts for their hybrid behavior. To quote from Stoica: “When the MoS verb behaves like a manner verb, root-derived, there is nothing to prevent extraction out of the post-verbal CP or complementizer omission. When they behave like verbs of implicit creation, the CP occurs in a specifier position, a subject position, which explains the ban on both extraction and complementizer omission.”

This approach has excellent explanatory power and has the merit of allowing for a coherent cross-linguistic account: while English MoS verbs have variable behavior to the three syntactic properties mentioned above (extraction, complementizer omission, compatibility with double object constructions) due to the fact that verbs and their corresponding nouns come in zero-related pairs, other languages which do not have zero-derivation available do not evince a similar variable behavior. It appears that this morphological property lies at the basis of different syntactic behavior in MoS verbs across languages.

Apart from the crystal clear, inspired demonstration which is the result of numerous experiments and of poring over an extensive bibliography, the book is a welcome and innovative answer to questions about this class of verbs that has until now not been given enough scrutiny. Moreover, the book leaves room for further typological research, which will undoubtedly be pursued in future work from Irina Stoica.

