The combinatorics of the Romanian periphrasis
a fi pe cale litt. 'to be on way' with change of state verbs and its aspectual readings

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This study highlights the relation between event structure, degree scales, telicity and stage structure (C. & N. 2005) and shows how these parameters contribute to the calculus of the three aspectual values of the Romanian periphrasis *a fi pe cale* (litt. 'to be on way'), namely the progressive (Bertinetto 2000), the proximative and the avertive (Kuteva 1998), when occurring with *degree achievements*. Our data set is extracted from *roTenTen16* (https://www.sketchengine.eu/rotenten-romanian-corpus/). The aim of this presentation is twofold: (i) first, we discuss variable telicity of degree achievements (e.g. *a se liniști* 'calm'); the modifier *oarecum* 'somehow' in (1) illustrates an open [+intensity] activity predicate, i.e. atelic interpretation, whereas its substitution by 'considerably' brings a telic interpretation; (ii) secondly, we discuss similar atelic readings of verbs that generaly occur as atomic telic predicates (e.g. *a exploda* 'explode'), cf. (2).

(1) **Eram**   **pe cale să**   mă   **liniștesc** <u>oarecum</u>,
      be.IPFV.1SG   on way SBJV   REFL   calm.SBJV.1   somehow
      când   lucrurile   s-au   încurcat   și
      when   things.DEF   REFL-have.PRF.3PL   messed up   even
      mai   tare. (3879, roTenTen16)
      more   strong
      'I was just calming down somehow when things got even more confusing.'   (avertive aspect)

(2) Beatlemania   **era**   **pe**   **cale să**   **explodeze**
      beatlemania.DEF   be.IPFV.3SG   on   way SBJV   explode.SBJV.3SG
      în America. (346, roTenTen16)
      in America.DEF
      'Beatlemania was exploding in America.'   (progressive aspect)

References: Bertinetto, P. M. (2000). The progressive in Romance, as compared with English. In Östen Dahl (ed.), Tense and Aspect in the language of Europe (pp. 559–664). Berlin/New York: Mouton de Gruyter. • Caudal, P. & Nicolas, D. (2005). Types of Degrees and Types of Event Structures. In C. Maienborn and A. Wöllstein (eds.). Event Arguments: Foundations and Applications (pp. 277–300). Tübingen: Niemeyer. • Kuteva, T. (1998). On identifying an evasive gram: action narrowly averted. Studies in Language, 22 (1), 113-160.