Tense and Control Interpretations in to + Gerund-participle and to + Infinitive Complement Constructions with Verbs of Agreement

Mémoire

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Sous la direction de :

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RÉSUMÉ

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a semantico-pragmatic study of the verb *agree* and ten other verbs of agreement with the English verbal complements *to* + infinitive and *to* + gerund-participle. Together with *agree*, the other verbs expressing the notion of agreement, i.e. *accede, accept, acquiesce, assent, concede, concur, conform, consent, subscribe* and *yield* are studied through the analysis of a corpus of attested usage to explain the various expressive effects and the principles underlying the use of the structure ‘main verb + complement.’ The general problems of tense and control are addressed. The interaction between the grammatical meaning, the lexical meaning and the pragmatic understanding from the larger context plays a defining role in the understanding and explanation of the verb + complement constructions examined. The analysis is based on the hypotheses in Duffley (2000; 2006; 2014) of the contribution of these parameters to the overall message conveyed.
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CHAPTER 1.  
INTRODUCTION

Defined as ‘the act of agreeing or of coming to a mutual agreement, the state of being in accord, an arrangement that is accepted by all parties to a transaction, unanimity of opinion’ (Dictionary.com), agreement is something that everyone experiences every day and that individuals have need of whatever their chosen profession. In that light we would like to describe this rather common verb and its equivalents to further our understanding of how these verbs work and how they are used by speakers of English. Much of the research and interest in linguistics is split between generative linguistics, which is based on an autonomous view of grammar, and cognitive linguistics, which sees language as part of overall cognition and views meaning in terms of conceptualizations, as in the work of Gilles Fauconnier, Ronald Langacker and George Lakoff. Complementation is an area that is very complex and in spite of recent interest in the area, there are vast swathes of this region of language that have been left virtually untouched by research. This calls for work both on the descriptive and the explanatory levels. Besides this, on the pedagogical level another objective of this thesis will be to propose linguistic explanations that can contribute to improving the teaching of English as a second language. A final desideratum would be to help native speakers appreciate the underlying order behind the apparently arbitrary usage of their mother tongue.

1.1 Problem and Research Questions

The objective of this research project concerns both temporality and control (i.e. the identification of the implicit subject of a non-finite verb) in constructions involving English verbs expressing the notion of agreement: accede, accept, acquiesce, agree, assent, concede, concur, conform, consent, subscribe, and yield and the verbal complements with which they can be construed. On the theoretical level, this fits into the wider objective of Linguistics which is to further the knowledge of language. On the more practical level, we would like to target second language teaching, following Corder’s very broad interpretation of applied
linguistics (1973, p. 10) as including the ability of teachers to teach and students to learn various facets of a language (cf. Davies, 2007, p. 3). Our goal therefore is to propose a semantico-pragmatic explanation of usage of verbs of agreement and verbal complements in English that will also have practical applications to second language teaching and contribute to improving the way this area of usage is taught (cf. Bach, 2001, p. 153).

There are several problem areas in the English language surrounding the usage of the infinitive and gerund-participle in regards to verbs of agreement. Semantically related matrix verbs tend to follow the same patterns of either accepting or rejecting the to + gerund-participle construction. In Quirk’s grammar, they are treated in the section Complementation by a non-finite clause in a subsection called Subjectless infinitive clause as direct object and listed as verbs that keep the preposition in an –ing clause (1985, pp. 1185, 1189-1191):

(1) She agreed to the meeting.
(2) She agreed to holding a meeting.

There is no discussion, however, of why this particular verb family relates to the –ing clause in this way. The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language does not even mention this particularity (2002, pp. 513-7, 525-6, 545-6).

The following sentences illustrate the problem involving the gerund-participle:

(3) Cotroni agreed to kill Rizzuto.
(4) Cotroni wanted to kill Rizzuto.
(5) Cotroni agreed to killing Rizzuto.
(6) *Cotroni wanted to killing Rizzuto.

The construction in which the verb is followed by the to-infinitive is allowed with both the verb wanted and the verb agreed. It is evident that there is a major difference between the forms of sentences (5) and (6) in that the verb of agreement is followed by to + gerund-participle and the verb want does not allow this construction.
There is also an important difference in control, i.e. the identity or non-identity of the subjects of agree/want and that of their verbal complement, between the example sentences. In sentences (3) and (4) the subject of the main (matrix) verb is also the subject of the infinitive: (3) Cotroni is the agent of both agreed and to kill Rizzuto. Likewise in (4) Cotroni is the agent of both wanted and to kill Rizzuto. However, in sentence (5), although a subject-control interpretation is possible, read similarly to (3) and (4), it is not necessarily the case. It could be that Cotroni agreed to the action, but someone else actually carried out the act comprising the killing.

A question on the level of the temporal relation between the main verb’s event and that of the complement also exists. In examples (3) and (4), the events in the sentence are felt to be successive: the event expressed by the conjugated matrix verb exists first, and the to-infinitive, to kill, follows it in time. (It is not even clear whether the infinitive is actualized either). Example (5) is undefined as to whether or not the killing has taken place, so that the gerund-participle’s event could be understood to be either prior or future with respect to the agreeing. The agreement can be seen as ‘consent in principle’ whether the action has or has not, or even will ever take place.

The problems of control and temporality with to + gerund-participle vs. to-infinitive are even clearer when uses with the same verb agree are compared, as seen in the following examples:

(7) Cotroni agrees to kill Rizzuto.
(8) Cotroni agrees to killing Rizzuto.

In (7), the complement’s event is understood to be non-realized, whereas in (8) it could either be realized or yet to be performed. In addition, the subject is understood to be the same for both verb forms in (7), whereas in (8) the subject of agree may not be Rizzuto’s assassin. The to + gerund-participle construction is therefore problematic in that a close reading of the sentence appears to show that the actualiser of the event is not necessarily the same for the matrix verb as for the
gerund-participle. This contrasts sharply with the description offered in Quirk’s grammar, in which the gerund-participle construction is treated in the same way as the infinitive clause, with the understood subject being claimed to be “always the same as the subject of the subordinate clause.”

This raises the following questions: Why does the possibility of the after-the-fact interpretation exist solely with the to + gerund-participle construction (Duffley, 2000, p. 225)? Why is the controller in the construction to + gerund-participle construction not restricted to the subject of the matrix verb as it is in the to-infinitive construction (Duffley, 2000, pp. 235-236)?

Other questions that arise are:
1. Is the meaning of the class of verbs of agreement a determining factor in the use of to + gerund-participle?
2. What is the role of to with respect to the gerund-participle? Can this be generalized or is it different for different gerund-participles?
3. Do all verbs of agreement follow this pattern? If not, which verbs of agreement do not and why?
4. What role does to have in relation to control with verbs of agreement?
5. Why is temporal variation found with verbs of agreement followed by to + gerund-participle in spite of the presence of to?
6. What is the difference in meaning between the bare infinitive kill and the gerund-participle killing and how is this distinction related to the difference in temporal and control interpretations found with these two types of constructions?

Traditional grammar does not adequately describe the relationship of to to the gerund-participle following verbs of agreement. In addition, the meanings of the gerund-participle and the infinitive are not adequately defined, nor is the relationship between these components of the constructions properly described. The principles of a meaning-based approach to language (semantico-pragmatic) will be applied to explaining these problematic areas of usage in English and applications will be drawn for improving the teaching of these structures in the ESL classroom.
1.2 Approaches to Control

The problem of control with non-finite complements concerns the determination of the understood subject of the infinitival or gerundive verb phrase that lacks an overt subject. The implicit subject of a gerund or an infinitive is the controlled element, the item that identifies the latter is the controller. Complementation is the grammatical relation of a word or phrase to a predicate (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002, pp. 215-216). Categorization of verbs can be conceived of as: (a) intransitive, where no complement is necessary and there is no object: for example, *He died* or *I sleep*; (b) transitive or mono-transitive, where there is one direct object: for example, *She knows the way*; and (c) di-transitive where there are two objects: for example, *They told him the answer*. In English, the conjugated finite verb always has an expressed subject. For example: *Mary goes to Rome on Monday*. *Mary* is the subject and the agent (cause or initiator) of the verb *goes*. Thus the syntactic subject and the semantic subject are the same.

Non-finite verb forms, on the other hand, only have a covert subject; the gerund-participle in *Driving an ATV can be dangerous* does not indicate of itself the ordinal rank or identity of the driver. The identification of the latter occurs via reference to the immediate context. Thus, for example, Quirk et al. (1985, p. 725) observe that “the implied subject of a subject-less non-finite or verb-less clause is normally identical with the subject of the superordinate clause” using the example *Susan telephoned before coming over* [‘…before Susan came over’]. In this way the subject of the non-finite clause is seen as implicitly the same as that for the matrix verb. The paraphrase of this gerundive phrase shows where the subject would be inserted into the non-finite clause. In infinitive clauses a paraphrase is also used by Quirk to show the insertion of the subject in the complement clause. “With infinitive clauses, a corresponding finite clause also enables one to identify an understood subject: I asked to go. ~ I asked if I could go. I asked him to go. ~ I asked if he would go.” (Quirk et al., 1985, p. 995). Even though these paraphrases may seem unnecessary, because there is potential ambiguity in the second sentence, the paraphrases serve to disambiguate the meaning of the infinitive
clause. It is possible to imagine this sentence in a situation whereby *him* is an authority figure and the subject of the matrix verb *I* is asking for permission to go.

According to Benjamin Lyngfelt, the various theories that “account for obligatory control in verb complements are essentially of two types: configurational or semantic/lexicalist” (Lyngfelt, 2009, p. 36). Configurational control theory fits into the formal linguistics group and is roughly equivalent to the Minimal Distance Principle (MDP) of Rosenbaum which states that the closest subject is the controller of the verb, or where the referent PRO (pronominal determiner phrase) “is controlled by the closest Noun Phrase (NP) higher in the phrase structure” (Lyngfelt, 2009, p. 36). It is necessary for the syntactic subject of the matrix verb to be the semantic subject of the matrix verb as well. Furthermore, this same subject must fill not only the syntactic role but also the semantic role in the complement.

As in:

(9) Mary promised to PRO handle the situation just fine.

Here *Mary* is both the promiser and the handler of the situation, being the actor of *promise* as well as being the actor of *handle*. *Mary* is both the syntactic subject and the semantic subject of the matrix verb as well as being the semantic subject of the infinitive.

In the following example, an object is added to the sentence and a comparison is made with the verb *persuade*:

(10) She persuaded him to PRO stay. (where PRO refers to *him*.)

(11) She promised him to PRO stay. (where PRO refers to *she*.)

In the first example *him* is closer to the infinitive and is indeed the semantic subject of the infinitive. However in the second example, even though *him* is closer to the infinitive, it is not *him* but *she* that is the semantic subject of the infinitive. Thus the verb *promise* is an exception to the principle of minimal syntactic distance as the determinant of the controller.

Control has also been addressed by a semantic/lexicalist theory utilizing lexical categories from which meaning is built. This approach attempts to integrate
the case of *promise* by taking the meaning of the verb as the factor which determines control. In a lexicalist approach, the verb *promise* is treated as a verb of commitment whose semantics entails that it manifests subject control (Sag & Pollard, 1991). The problem with this is uses such as (12):

(12) Mom promised me to have a bowl of ice cream if I did my homework.

Here *promise* occurs with non-subject control of the complement, a fact which indicates that a purely lexicalist explanation of control does not do the trick either.

Cognitive grammar sees the complement relation in terms of conceptual subordination as described by Langacker (1991). In this approach, the verbs are divided into semantic categories based on their meaning and based on a binding scale (Givón, 1980) and the meaning of the classes are seen as encoded in the verbs themselves, which gives greater or lesser control assignment. The complements, the *to*-infinitive, gerund-participle and deverbal noun, follow a loosening pattern based on their syntactic structure, not on the meaning of the matrix verb nor on the meaning of the complement and notwithstanding the semantic category in which they are classified. “The scale of tightness of the relation between the matrix subject and complement is thus sensitive to the form in which the complement’s event is represented, and not just to the thematic roles implied by the lexical content of the matrix verb” (Duffley, 2014, p. 149). This is not what is expected to happen according to the conceptual structural approach. The formal-syntactic approach to control based on the Minimalist programme is a revised version of the MDP and the elimination of PRO, with the subsequent restructuring of that part of the theory to accommodate this rejection and the supplementary emphasis on movement. The simplification of the syntactic operations that must be carried out in order to predict the controller of the complement brings it no closer to an intuitive explanation of this phenomenon.
1.3 Should Semantics be Treated as Truth-Conditional and Pragmatics Defined Accordingly?

Formal semantics or truth-conditional semantics, in which linguistic meaning is treated using a philosophical model, is common in many schools of thought. The proposition is the vehicle for meaning in this model. If there is no proposition or if no proposition is possible, no meaning is possible. While being suitable for explaining mathematics and logic, a logical approach is not necessarily well adapted to elucidating language or meaning. Furthermore, this approach locks the linguist into a sentential analysis, when a word-based determination of essential features and their relations would be more appropriate.

Hewson, in his article *The ideal sentence as a linguistic datum*, disagrees with the propositional definition of semantics. He says, “The English language... has no sentences: sentences belong to discourse (=parole) in English” (Hewson, 1992, p. 583). He argues that “language is a theoretical, not an empirical entity” (Hewson, p. 580). In the Saussurean model of the *langue-parole* distinction, language (*langue*) is not considered to be a directly observable phenomenon but only indirectly observable through its manifestations in discourse (*parole*). Hewson asks if a sentence such as *He made a stand* can actually mean anything without a context of situation, thereby questioning the possibility of the sentence having truth conditions (Hewson, p. 586). Because the sentence above is ambiguous, it is not possible to judge it true, due to the fact that there is more than one possible meaning. Pragmatics, in the form of contextual material, is needed to give the necessary background information in order to establish truth conditions and therefore the semantic content. In this case pragmatics is required to determine the semantics. It is hard to see the coherence of this position that on the one hand looks at sentences as belonging to discourse but also treats sentences out of context as not having meaning. In this study, we will take the approach that most linguistically-signified meaning is word-based rather than sentence-based.
Saeed (2011) observes, “The idea that semantics is concerned with representations is widespread, even in functional approaches, along with the associated idea that pragmatics is then concerned with interpersonal action” (Saeed, p. 461). Semantics thus adheres to the formal-representation format even in theories that are not formal in their approach. Pragmatics by this definition, always involves two parties and a movement between them. The movement is seen as the distance the hearer has to cover linguistically to be able to understand what the speaker means. Saeed recognizes that “…if propositions are bearers of determinate truth or falsity then the literal meaning of sentences cannot be equivalent to propositions” (p. 462). Saeed is stating that people always mean something different than the actual literal meaning of the words. This cannot be true just from a probability standpoint. It may be that in many cases people are using language in a figurative sense or that they use things like pragmatic irony to give additional meaning to what they are saying or that there is ambiguity built into the phrases.

The preceding problem noted between sentences and propositions is linked to the need for disambiguation in the following phrases (Saeed, p. 463), in which he notes three types of ambiguity:

- Structural ambiguity exemplified in (13) He tracked the man with binoculars.
- Quantifier scope in (14) All reviewers watched one movie.
- Lexical ambiguity in (15) She held the note.

In (13), the ambiguity is related to whether the prepositional phrase with binoculars is associated with track or man. In (14), the ambiguity comes from the scope of the quantifiers all and one. If all has scope over one each reviewer watched a different movie. If one has scope over all, they all watched the same movie. The third example (15) is similar to the example in Hewson’s article where there are lexical issues of distinction between homonymy and polysemy. The words held and note both having more than one meaning. While it is true that pragmatic information coming from additional context will disambiguate all of these sentences it is also true that each word in the preceding examples has meaning and the sentences
they form have potential meaning(s) because of this. Whereas appealing to pragmatics to determine the semantics of the ambiguous sentences entails considerable pragmatic incursion, a model framed in terms of potential meaning and subsequent pragmatic refinement does not.

1.4 Conversational Implicature – Pragmatics

Underspecification is always a problem, especially in reference to cardinal numbers is the view of Sadock (1984), Horn (1992) and Carston (1998) in connection with propositions based solely on semantic content (Saeed, p. 465). In examples (16), (17) and (18) below from Saeed, Sadock, Horn and Carston would see the numbers in these examples as having three different meanings. Examples:

(16) He has six children but one died so now he has five.
(17) She needs to reach thirty meters to make the javelin final.
(18) Undergraduates may borrow six books from the library.

The problem they see is that in the first example the numbers represent the exact number as written. In example (17), the number is the minimum requirement and in the last example the number is the maximum allowed. They claim that pragmatic enrichment is needed to explain the intended interpretation.

The problem stems from the fact that the analysis is of the sentence meaning rather than that of the individual words. It can be argued that the meaning of the numbers is stable in all three cases but that the surrounding words like needs to reach have to be considered in order to understand the meaning of sentence (17). Needs to reach means that she literally has to attain at least thirty meters. The number is precise as encoded and the information pertaining to a minimum is found in the meaning of the other words in the sentence. The last example contains the word may in which the possibility and permission implied in this word give the impression of a maximum amount. The authorized person has permission to borrow, up to the precise number as written, six books. The number remains stable in this phrase as well. The surrounding words are the key to the
message conveyed. This is concurred by Ruhl (1989) who goes even further saying that dictionaries often overspecify so as to attribute meaning that is in reality supplied by the context (Ruhl, p. 1). Ruhl uses *take off* as an example of this. According to the *Collins Canadian English Dictionary*, the signification of *take off* is ‘(v) (of an aircraft) leave the ground’. Ruhl gives several corpus examples including ‘… *Jones took off at a gallop down the right sideline*’ (p. 2) which clearly has nothing to do with either an aircraft or of leaving the ground.

Paul Grice developed the fundamental pragmatic notions of Cooperative Principles and Maxims (Grice, 1991). He divides *what is said* in an utterance, which is roughly interpreted as semantics (propositions and truth conditions) and *what a speaker means* by an utterance, which can be roughly interpreted as pragmatics or the implications of the utterance (Saeed, 2011, p. 467). For Grice, “semantics is concerned with the proposition expressed while pragmatics is concerned with the implications of the utterances” (Saeed, p. 467).

An example of implication is the following:

(19) Would you like another drink?

(20) I’d better go home; I’ve an early start in the morning.

(20) implies a refusal even though the encoded information is not explicit. Grice is quite clear on the division of labour, with semantics as the carrier of propositional truth-conditions, and pragmatics bringing in implications, entailments and presuppositions.

Levinson (2000) is also concerned about pragmatic intrusion, which is contextual inference in the determination of the truth-determinate propositional meaning expressed by an utterance. Levinson sees inferences as an act of deriving a logical conclusion, which will in turn affect the truth-determinate proposition or semantics expressed (Saeed, p. 465). This is another case of pragmatics determining semantics. The inference drawn by Saeed is that the growing emphasis on the context sensitivity of language raises fundamental challenges to philosophical approaches that base theories of meaning on theories
of truth (Saeed, p. 466). Indeed it is very problematic not only to have pragmatics determining semantics but also the very foundation of semantics. It is all the more surprising that no one seems prepared to abandon the postulate that propositions are semantic, even though this is where the problem lies. Truth-determinate propositional meaning cannot be the basis for semantics because words have meaning and the sentence, taken as a whole, does not have a stable meaning as seen in (13), (14) and (15). In like manner, pragmatics cannot take over and become the bedrock supporting semantics because words have potential meaning before context comes into play.

As no linguistic discussion can be undertaken without consideration of Noam Chomsky’s model, his position will be considered next. Chomsky claims that the internal mapping between grammar and conceptual structure throws doubt on the value of truth-conditional denotation for semantics. In fact, writing in *Language and Nature* in 1995, he states “the argument for a reference-based semantics (apart from an internalist syntactic version) seems to me weak. It is possible that natural language has only syntax and pragmatics” (Chomsky, p. 26). In truth-conditional semantics, only sentences that specify these conditions can be said to have meaning. Because, as noted before, so many possible utterances do not fall into this category and also because a speaker can and often does say something different from what he means, sentences would have no meaning: because sentence meaning is not stable, semantics does not exist. Chomsky goes further and says, “while people refer to things, words don’t.” This might suggest that it could be possible to put any string of words together and assign it a reference in context. However, it is not just the speaker’s intention that determines reference; word-meaning does too.

Cognitive semantics rejects the view that literal encoded meaning has a privileged position and thereby does not make a decisive delineation between semantics and pragmatics (Saeed, 2011, p. 479). Encyclopedic knowledge is
postulated to be at work with all words in order to construct the message in context. Thus regarding the adjective *safe* in:

(21) The child is safe.
(22) The beach is safe.
(23) The shovel is safe.

they argue that the hearer must appeal to the encyclopedic knowledge or fully inclusive, specific information pertaining to *child*, *beach* and *shovel* as well as knowledge relating to *safe* in order to construct the meaning in context. Saeed sees this as a way to avoid acknowledging any border between semantics and pragmatics but only a range of cognitively motivated representations and computations existing in this area. While it is true that the nouns colour the meaning understood from *safe* in each of the sentences, there is a similar abstract meaning running through each of the examples. The problem once again is that if each of the preceding sentences (21), (22), (23) is considered as a single unit it seems as if the semantics of the word *safe* are not stable. However, if the words are considered individually, the significance of the subject nouns will probably account for the meaning drift associated with the word *safe*.

The position taken in this study will be that linguistic semantics is concerned with the notional content permanently attached to linguistic signs. Since there is generally no stable sign-meaning correlation on the level of the sentence, attention will be focussed here on the pre-sentential level of the word and the morpheme. The explanation of the temporal and control interpretations will consequently be sought on the level of the meaning of the main verb, the meaning of *to*, the meaning of the bare infinitive and the meaning of gerund-participle, as well as the pragmatic implications that can be drawn from their combination.
CHAPTER 2.
RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Corpus

In order to establish a corpus of data for the purpose of our research, the following procedures have been followed. First a list of possible verbs of agreement was made using Thesaurus.com. Starting with that list, modifications were made using an American dictionary, The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary (11th edition) and a British dictionary, The Oxford English Reference Dictionary. To establish a list of verbs to be used as the basis for this project, it was considered essential to have the widest possible range of synonyms that worked within the two structures under investigation. The most comprehensive list of synonyms was expected to be found using larger physical dictionaries rather than their online analogue versions.

From The Oxford English Reference Dictionary (2002), the following diagram shows the start of the process.

```
agree
  consent,
    give permission, agree
      (permit)
    give permission or consent, admit
      accept as valid or true, acknowledge
        consent to receive, be prepared to subscribe to (a belief or philosophy)
          express one’s agreement with an opinion, resolution
```

A similar process was undertaken with The Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary (2003).
Several of the synonyms, notably *conform, subscribe* and *yield* are on the far end of the scale while *concur, consent* and *assent* are on the near end of the synonym scale. What that means is that verbs were found in the actual definition and some were found in the definitions of definitions of *agree*. In the *Merriam-Webster, consent, accede, acquiesce*, and *subscribe* are all definitions of *assent* which is itself a definition of *agree*. In the *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* however, *consent* is a definition of *agree*. *Permit* was used to find *consent* and *admit*, the latter led to *accept* which in turn led to *consent* and *subscribe*. The *Oxford Thesaurus* (1991) was used in a similar way to ensure that all of the terms selected were related to *agree*. *Permit* was excluded as well as other verbs that are construed with the structure Verb + Direct Object + *to*. The verbs on the final list were construable with the following structures:

\[ V = \text{conjugated verb of agreement} \]

\[ V + \text{to-infinitive} \]

and

\[ V + \text{to + gerund-participle} \]

Only verbs of agreement that can function in both of these structures have been retained, as it is the structures themselves and the verbs that can be used within them which are of interest to us in our present research. The verb + *to*-infinitive construction is very frequent; however, the *V + to + gerund-participle* structure is not as common. The latter construction will help to properly define *to* in both of the constructions above because it allows one to isolate *to* from the bare infinitive and compare the effect it produces in this structure to that produced when it introduces the gerund-participle. The nature of the particular verbs of agreement whose function in the second structure will be studied closely to determine what it is in the semantics of the verb which allows the use of *to* with the gerund-participle.

The Corpus of Contemporary English (COCA), containing examples of spoken and written American English, will be one of the corpora used to gather occurrences of the above-mentioned structures. It is accessible online at http://corpus.byo.edu/coca/. It contains 450+ millions of words collected between
1990 and 2012. Twenty million words per year were collected between 1990 and 2012. The corpus is updated regularly. The written samples come from spoken language from television interviews, written language from fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts.

The British National Corpus (BNC), containing 100 million written and verbal samples of British English, will also be used. Ninety per cent of the samples are written and the remaining 10% are oral. The samples collected are representative of the years 1970 – 1993. A range of sources was used in the collection of samples in order to represent a wide cross-section of British English from the latter part of the 20th century. The spoken samples were taken from unscripted informal conversations provided by volunteers with a wide distribution of geography, age, sex, etc. Formal contexts such as business and government meetings were also used. Radio shows and phone-ins were included as well. As for the source of the written samples, they were gleaned from regional and national newspapers, specialised periodicals and journals for all ages and interests, academic books and popular fiction, published and unpublished letters, memoranda, and school and university essays. This corpus can also be accessed online at http://www.natcorp.ox.ac.uk/corpus/index.xml as well as through http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/.

The Strathy Corpus of Canadian English (Canadian corpus) contains approximately 50 million words. It contains samples collected between the years 1970 and 2010 of both written and spoken forms. The samples are from newspapers, magazines, biographies, historical writing, academic theses and journal transcripts of university classes, Internet news, as well as fiction and nonfiction texts and are representative of language used by real people everyday. It can be accessed online at http://corpus2.byu.edu/can/.

These corpora have been selected not only to gather the widest possible range of the most common and prominent forms of English but also to ascertain if
there exist any differences in usage between American, British and Canadian English regarding these constructions. The corpora chosen have already been submitted to the rigours of selection “to produce a large and principled collection of natural texts” covering all varieties of the language (Biber, Conrad & Reppen, 1998, p. 12). Thus the methodology of the quantity of sample size to provide for generalization and the range of individuals to represent the general population is already satisfied (Meyer, 2002, p. 30). Having satisfied the quantitative representations that exist in the corpora, our analysis will be of a highly qualitative (functional interpretation) type, which is also seen as an essential step in corpus based analysis (Biber et al., 1998, p. 9).

2.2 Method of Analysis

A group of approximately 200\(^1\) samples of each verb of agreement found to function within the structures V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle were collected randomly from the corpora. The following guidelines were observed: 1) rule of thumb in terms of percentage of the total number of possible samples which would be applicable to the study, 2) statistical considerations to ensure a normal distribution across the breadth of samples within each corpus, 3) sample composition which will consider subgroups with the corpus to ensure that samples that may behave differently are included (which may include counter-examples), 4) safety margins to ensure a representative sample size, and 5) reverse approach to determine the statistical significance of the sample size versus the size of the corpus will be followed to ensure that a sufficient number of samples be studied (Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 99-100). It is hoped that the aforementioned 200 samples will be sufficient for the characteristics of the particular subset to become evident and for the guidelines to be satisfied.

The method of analysis of the corpora will take the following form. Pragmatics and semantics are the key guiding principles to the analysis of the

\(^1\) The actual number of examples consulted for the verb agree was superior to 200 because of agree's importance, being the main verb under study.
forms and their meanings. A number of different dictionaries are used, including popular online dictionaries to which many English as a second language learners look in times of need, to establish useful terminology and definitions. We use the pragmatic facet to understand and establish the meaning of these phrases in their wider context, as well as to establish the co-text of the V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle in their place in the sentence.

The usage of the forms will be analysed using the wider context of each of the occurrences of the verbs of agreement, which is available in the form of the paragraph within which it originally occurred. Contextualisation is important for the analysis since it is the only way of establishing the meaning of the verbs and forms in which they are found. A thorough observation of this data will help us to avoid errors of interpretation that could result from an insufficient study of the construction (Duffley, 1992, p. 4). This scrutiny will be sufficient to determine the time (temporal) and subject (subject control) relationship between the V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle.

The description of the meaning of the V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle will be divided into two distinct areas. The temporal relation of the complement’s event (to-infinitive or to + gerund-participle) to that of the matrix verb will be classified as being prior, subsequent or simultaneous with regards to the timeframe of the matrix. The question regarding control is that of the subject of V being in a subject control (same subject) or non-subject control (different subject) relation to that of the complement.

Although objectivity is one of the defining characteristics of scientific research, there is no machine to date that is capable of quantifying meaning. And although quantitative methodology has indeed gone a long way towards standardizing research procedures to ensure that they remain stable across investigators and subjects (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 211), the only measure by which meaning can be known is the interpretation of the phrase as established by a
native English speaker, which is an obviously qualitative task. Because of our status as mother-tongue English speakers, by this definition my thesis director and I are competent observers of meaning in our mother tongue, English. Furthermore, the study will be devised in such a way that meaning will have to be accepted by both parties so that no idiosyncratic interpretations are introduced. This peer-checking in order to minimize idiosyncratic human variability and bias, provides an adequate approximation of objectivity, as the results arrived at in this way will not reflect only one researcher’s subjective perceptions (Dörnyei, 2007, pp. 61-2), but will be subject to a certain intersubjectivity. Where there is doubt or lack of consensus between the initial two observers, the data will be submitted to the examination of other native English speakers in order to ascertain what temporal and control relations are perceived to hold between the main verb and the complement. This safeguard will be put into place to preserve the validity and reliability of the findings. The functioning of these complex grammatical structures is intuitive to a native speaker. However, linguistic analysis is essential to explain why these forms function the way they do. Accordingly, once the analysis is concluded, the theory that usage in this area can be explained by the meanings of the forms and the semantic relations between them can be confronted with the data and either validated or disproven.
CHAPTER 3.
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework that will be used for the analysis involves four basic parameters: 1) the contribution of the meaning of the preposition *to* of the *to*-infinitive, 2) the contribution of the meaning of the infinitive itself, 3) the fundamental lexical meaning of the matrix verb and 4) the meaning of the gerund-participle. As argued by Duffley (1992) in *The English Infinitive*, based on the differences in meaning of the minimal pairs of sentences:

(24) I saw him be impolite.
(25) I saw him to be impolite.
(26) I had nine people call.
(27) I had nine people to call,

the difference in meaning between the phrases cited above “implies that the *to* preceding the infinitive has meaning” (Duffley, 1992, p. 14). There are abundant examples of verbs in the infinitive exhibiting uses with *to* as well as without (bare infinitive) to show that there is a distinction to be made, based not only on the use or non-use of *to* but also on whether the meaning of the matrix allows *to* to be used.

(28) He made us laugh.
(29) He got us to laugh.
(30) She made me look stupid.
(31) She got me to look stupid.

The meaning of the matrix verb *make* in (28) paraphrases as ‘He provoked our laughter’, “with the clear impression of a causal agent directly producing the laughter without any independent intervention of ‘me’” (Duffley, 1992, p. 67), whereas in (29) “*get* itself evokes the efforts required to obtain a certain behavior from someone or something and the *to* infinitive expresses the result obtained” (Duffley, p. 69). Furthermore, “whereas *make* focuses on the mere producing of an effect, *get* evokes something which precedes the effect – prolonged efforts in (29), persuasion winning out over unwillingness in (31) – and so *to* must be used before
the infinitive to represent the latter’s event as a result coming after what led up to it” (Duffley, p. 69).

Duffley proposes that just as the preposition to expresses movement when complemented by a noun, so too does the to used before an infinitive, although instead of a movement in space such as that exhibited by to in I walked to the mall, a movement in time is understood, more precisely “…the possibility of a movement from a point in time conceived as a before-position to another point in time which marks the end-point of the movement and which represents an after-position with respect to the first” (Duffley, 1992, p. 16). The meaning of to thus implies a temporal relation of subsequence when it expresses the relation between two events in time.

It is essential that not only the meaning but also the function of to in relation to the infinitive be understood “in order to provide a full explanation for the semantic effects created” (Duffley, 2006, p. 50). In most cases, to acts as an “adverbial goal specifier” rather than a direct object, contrary to Quirk et al.’s analysis (1189-1191), which treats the to-infinitive as a direct object. The following example shows the direct object function of the to-infinitive rather than that of the adverbial goal specifier:

(32) John said to get a new job.

Here the matrix verb does not imply a movement of its subject toward the actualization of the to-infinitive. Rather it denotes what it was that John said. There is thus a clear difference between the function of the to-infinitive in (32) and in (33) and (34) below:

(33) John agreed to get a new job.

(34) I wonder if Father would agree to getting a shepherd at t’Martinmas Hirings,’ he mused.’ (BNC, C98, W_fict_prose)

In (32), the to-infinitive can be replaced by the pronoun that:

(35) Did John really say that?

In (33), in contrast, the pro-form is to and not that:
(36) Did John really agree to?

And in (34), it is to that:

(37) Would Father really agree to that?

The fact that to must be maintained in the pro-forms of (33) and (34) shows that its meaning is necessary in order to express the relation between agree and the implicit infinitive or gerund-participle; this distinguishes these structures from the one with direct object function, where no preposition is needed and the to-infinitive simply specifies the identity of the patient of the saying, i.e. ‘that which was said.’

The idea of movement denoted by to also has an impact on the question of control. In constructions consisting of ‘verb + to + infinitive’ such as He longed to see her again, “since the preposition to evokes the movement of the subject toward the infinitive event, this construction always implies subject control” (Duffley, 2006, p. 83). In order to account for both the imperfectivity observed in You are stepping on my toe and the perfectivity perceived in I regret stepping on your toe yesterday, Duffley proposes that the gerund-participle denotes the interiority of the event, the content of which is the same from beginning to end: “The interiority of an event is constituted by a series of instants, all of which have the same nature due to the fact of their being located between the beginning and the end of the event” (Duffley, 2006, p. 20). Furthermore, the interiority can be construed in two ways: 1) from the point of view of one instant inside the event or 2) from the point of view of the inside of the event taken as a whole (Duffley, 2006, p. 35).

In contrast to the to-infinitive, in which the infinitive’s event is seen as following the matrix verb’s, the gerund-participle “has been seen to be capable of evoking events which are not only simultaneous, but also prior or subsequent with respect to the main verb” (Duffley, 2006, p. 34). It must be noted that within a phrase containing a gerund-participle, the meaning of the matrix verb is pivotal in the perception of the gerund-participle being prior, simultaneous or subsequent to the matrix verb. Thus an event which is enjoyed will be understood to be simultaneous to the enjoying thereof (I am enjoying talking with you about it), one
which is regretted will be understood to be prior to the regret (I regret talking with you about it) and one which is considered will be understood to be subsequent to the matrix verb (I am considering talking with you about it).

The meaning of the preposition to is not sufficient of itself to account for temporal and control interpretations in Verb + to + Non-finite Complement constructions, however, as the nature of the terminus of the movement denoted by the preposition must also be taken into account. With the infinitive as object of the preposition to, the notion of movement is construed as a path potentially or actually leading to the actualization of the infinitive’s event, a semantic configuration which entails that the subject of the matrix verb is represented as possibly or actually moving to the realization of the action expressed by the infinitive. This produces a reading of both temporal subsequence and subject control as in I want to talk to you about it. With the gerund-participle as object of the preposition, on the other hand, the notion of movement denoted by to is not construed as a path leading to actualization, but rather as an orientation with respect to an action or state represented as an abstract interiorly-homogenous entity. Thus, for example, the notion of agreeing implies a mental association of consent with some object, and so the preposition to in I agreed to the plan indicates that agreeing is conceived as implying a mental movement of associating agreement with the plan (a noun) in question. The same meaning-configuration is present in structures with the gerund-participle such as I agreed to building another parking lot, with to construing the gerund-participle’s event building another parking lot (which is similar to the noun phrase the building of another parking lot) as that to which agreement was given by the speaker. The difference between these two construals has important consequences for the determination of both temporality and control. With regard to the latter, comparison with the to-infinitive (I agreed to build another parking lot) shows that while the infinitival construction manifests subject control, the gerund-participle allows the interpretation that it is someone other than the speaker who is going to build the parking lot. As concerns temporality, although with agree both the to-infinitive and the gerund-participle imply subsequence of the building to the
agreeing, with other matrix verbs the gerund-participle allows non-subsequence (as in *He confessed to stealing the money*). This is because the preposition *to* evokes the associating of the confession to the crime here, and one can only confess to crimes one has already committed.
CHAPTER 4.
DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we will analyse the data collected for each verb under investigation (accede, accept, acquiesce, agree, assent, concede, concur, conform, consent, subscribe, and yield). The lexical meaning of the verb will first be discussed in relation with a description of the usage found in our corpus. Temporal and control effects will then be examined. The role of the complement in the constructions found in the corpus will also be determined.

4.1 The Verb Agree

The verb agree is construed with the to-infinitive as well as the to + gerund-participle in our corpus. In total, we looked at about 800 examples (see page 17 note 1), coming from COCA, BNC and the Canadian corpus. In spite of the fact that we expected to examine only 200 samples per verb, partly due to the dearth of examples from some forms (see Appendices A & B) but more importantly because of the centrality of agree to the study, additional examples were admitted to the research in order to have a more thorough view of what the flagship verb agree offered in terms of sentence configuration and meaning. According to The Collins Canadian English Dictionary, the sense of the verb agree is ‘to be of the same opinion or reach a joint decision.’ The following four examples from our corpus manifest this meaning:

(38) We even had to sign a recitation that said that we agree to live together as husband and wife forever. (COCA, 2008, MAG redbook)
(39) The tape has been offered to a number of research institutions who have agreed to provide feedback to us on a pilot basis. (BNC, AP1 W_letters_prof)
(40) Harold Wilson had complained to me about the continuing hostility of the press towards him and wanted to know how to put it right. He suggested that I might give a dinner to the leading newspaper editors and proprietors, when he could make some statement calculated to neutralise some of the undoubted venom that was then directed at him. I agreed to give a dinner
and it took place in my London home some weeks later. (BNC, FPN W_biology)

(41) And he has phoned just about every week. Last week he agreed to take the plane, but today he says he’d rather drive. (Canadian, 1996, FIC, QueensQuarterly)

The agree + to-infinitive structure evokes a scenario in which two parties have come to an agreement in order to accomplish something. There is a clear before/after relationship between agree and the to-infinitive in every one of the examples. According to Duffley (2014, pp. 54-55):

Since the basic meaning of the preposition to is that of motion potentially leading to a terminus, in its use with the infinitive this preposition evokes the event expressed by the latter as the end-point of a movement. This accounts for the feeling of a constant temporal relation of subsequence between the infinitive and the matrix (…).

By way of this explanation we can more easily see the notion of a desired movement from the agreement to the future event that is to take place. The to in the to-infinitive is crucial in evoking this before/after relationship in which the subject moves towards the accomplishment of the infinitive’s event. In (38) the action to which the subject we is agreeing is set down in writing, and the agreement is to something that follows it in time, in this case living together as husband and wife forever, in the future. The research institutions in (39) have agreed that at some time in the future they will provide feedback on the content of the tape which has been given to them. They are committed to moving toward the accomplishment of providing feedback. In (40) the syntactic subject, also referred to as the semantic agent, I, came to be of the same opinion as Harold Wilson and subsequently some weeks later gave a dinner, as explicitly stated. The movement to actualization is documented explicitly in this sentence – and it took place in my London home some weeks later. Sentence (41) shows the subject as having reached a joint decision with whomever he telephones on a weekly basis to take the plane at some point in the future.
It is apparent in all of our samples that the subject of the verb *agree* is always identical with that of the *to*-infinitive. In (38) the pronoun *we* is the grammatical subject of *agree* as well as *to live*. In sentence (39) the pronoun *who*, referring to *a number of research institutions*, is the subject of both *agree* and of *to provide*. *I* is the pronoun representing the subject in (40), and is the grammatical subject and the semantic subject of both *agreed and to give*. In (41) the masculine singular pronoun acts as subject of both the simple past *agreed* and the infinitive *to take*.

The less prolific form, *V + to + gerund-participle*, will be discussed next. The most frequent temporal relationship between the main verb *agree* and the gerund-participle in our corpus is that of subsequence. This is evidenced in the following examples:

(42) The government had already **agreed to meeting** Unita this week and the UN had been waiting for Unita to set the date, UN officials said.  (BNC, K5D, W_newspt_other_report)
(43) He had **agreed to taking** on a reading tour in Scotland. (BNC, AC3 W_fict_prose)
(44) Meeting at the U.S. Treasury, representatives of the world's richest nations **agreed to replenishing** the International Development Association, the World Bank arm that gives grants and no-interest loans to 81 impoverished countries.  (COCA, 2005 NEWS WashPost)
(45) All but one of the activists interviewed by the author **agreed to being** identified in published material. (Canadian, 2004, ACAD, CanRevSocAnthr)
(46) He was the last of the major Plains Indian leaders to **agree to taking** treaty in the 1880s. (COCA, 2002, FIC Inroads)

Although the verb *agree* denotes a mental state, it is more complicated than a verb like *want* because it involves more than one party. In (42) the government had agreed to meeting Unita but Unita had yet to set a date. Agreement was reached by both parties to a meeting that was to take place soon, that week in fact. Besides the meaning of *agree*, this construction also involves the meaning of the –*ing* form.
The content of this form is described by Duffley as “the totality of the interiority is profiled, which amounts to evoking the event itself as a sort of abstract substance whose nature is depicted by the gerund-participle’s lexical content” (Duffley, 2006, p. 20). So the complete meeting, from the arrival of the officials to the receiving of the visitors to the discussion of issues to the snacks, and the inevitable photo shoot and press conference, is envisioned in the use of the gerund-participle in this example. The agreement was made prior to the meeting, evidenced by the fact that the date had not yet been set in spite of the fact that it was to be that same week. In (43) the person referred to by the subject he had been in agreement, at some point in the past, to having a go at a reading tour. Taking on is accepting the task of handling a difficult thing, in this case the reading tour. Consequently, he and his publisher came to a consensus on accepting the task of going on such a tour. The taking on of the tour is future with respect to the agreeing to it. The use of the to + gerund-participle makes it seem more momentous an adventure because of the feeling of a reference to the content of the tour – planning, transportation, accommodations, meetings, readings, talking to people at the readings etc. In (44) the representatives of the world’s richest nations came to have the same opinion on renewing the supply of funds to a particular branch of the World Bank. The people representing these rich countries first come to the agreement and the replenishing of the bank’s funds is to come later. In (45) the agreement is prior to the publishing of the identity of the activists. If their acceptance is secured, the author can subsequently reveal the identity of the interviewees. In (46) the sentence is somewhat more complex in that the main verb is a to-infinitive followed by to + gerund-participle. To simplify the sentence, it can be rendered as: He was the last to agree to taking treaty. Taking treaty is undoubtedly after the reaching of the agreement here.

As with the to-infinitive following verbs of agreement, the most common finding is that the subject of the main verb is also the subject of the to + gerund-participle, as in (42) where the government is the grammatical and semantic subject of both agreed and meeting. Likewise, in (43) he is the one who had
agreed and who would take on a reading tour. Further, in (44) representatives of the world’s richest nations both perform the agreeing and commit themselves to perform the replenishing. In addition, in (45) the noun phrase all but one of the activists interviewed by the author is the subject of both agreed and being identified. In (46), he is the head of the phrase, he was the last of the Plains Indian leaders, which acts as subject of the to-infinitive to agree and of the to + gerund-participle taking.

4.1.1 Variation in Temporality and Control

Although most of the samples in the COCA and the BNC followed the pattern of sameness of subject in terms of control and subsequence in terms of temporality, in the Canadian corpus there were some departures from this pattern:

(47) OTHER KINDS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE Sexual violence happens any time you don’t agree to being touched sexually. (Canadian, NF, MakingLinks)

(48) Of the 74% responding to the survey, at least 90% agreed or strongly agreed to being satisfied with 16 of the 27 items that assessed qualities such as promptness, communication, and knowledge. (Canadian, 2004, MAG, CanPharmJournal)

In (47), although it is possible to construe the agreement as prior to the touching, the reading that the touching happens first and agreement is not forthcoming is also within the purview of the sense of the sentence. It may therefore depart from the temporal pattern of subsequence and the complement’s event with respect to that denoted by the main verb. In (48), we find an instance of a state of being satisfied that coexists in time with the verb agreed. Another example of this type was found in the BNC:

(49) It is no surprise, therefore, that we have no ethnographic studies of powerful decision-making groups, in business or in politics, and many studies of relatively powerless groups. Some groups may, of course be unconcerned. But have school pupils, or patients in a mental hospital, ever been asked if they agree to having a researcher about the place? The
authorities may be asked, but that is a different matter. Bosk (1979) makes his view very clear: 'The privilege of being an observer is a gift presented to the researcher by his host and subjects. (BNC, CMF, W_ac_soc_science)

The use of the to-infinitive is possible here and would present the order of actualization of the main verb as prior to that of the infinitive. The use of the to + gerund-participle allows for the interpretation that the researcher is already about the place, leaving the agreement to be possibly actualized after the fact. One sees here that the fact of to representing a movement of association of agreement to a state tends to imply that the state already exists and the agreer is called upon simply to accept the status quo, whereas when to represents a movement leading to actualization, the agreeing is always felt to exist prior to the event that the agreer consents to move to the realization of.

Although this type of case was observed only once in the Canadian corpus and once in the BNC, a brief search on a regular search engine (Google) produced several thousand results, most of which related to surveys and responses to survey questions. The results were found to be from the UK, Australia, the US and Canada, as well as from English speakers from non-Anglophone countries around the world (the search field and the words ‘agree to being satisfied’ were used). Interestingly, this particular sequence cannot be used with the to-infinitive form and keep the same sense. The to-infinitive in this context gives rise to an impression that the subject is being induced to take a certain stance:

(50) Ed Bartolini When the final choice is made we agree to be satisfied and united. Until then, 'every one to his/her candidate.'

(Bartolini, 2012, comment 14, https://www.facebook.com)

The powers that be in the political arena make it clear that you can be as partisan as you like during the selection race for the nomination of a candidate, but once that process is complete, everyone has to get behind the chosen candidate.

(51) They have broken a court-made promise to Bob Mays that if he would agree to testing to prove whose child Kim was, they would not seek custody. (BNC, CBE, W_newsp_other_report)
In (51) the pronoun \textit{he}, referring to Bob Mays, is the subject of the main verb but not the subject of the gerund-participle, as he may be the object of the testing here. The subject of testing is some entity whose work it is to carry out this type of verification. The tendency for the subject of the main verb to also be the subject of the \textit{to} + gerund-participle does not hold in this case.

\subsection*{4.1.2 Summary of the Verb \textit{Agree}}

\textit{Agree} + \textit{to}-infinitive and \textit{agree} + \textit{to} + gerund-participle, both exhibit the pattern of having the subject of the main verb and the complement clause correspond to the same entity (subject control). Furthermore in terms of temporality, there is generally a relationship of subsequence between the main verb \textit{agree} and the \textit{to}-infinitive or the gerund-participle. It was found however that in certain circumstances this pattern does not necessarily hold with \textit{to} + gerund-participle. We have seen that the presence of a state represented by the gerund-participle in (48) and (49) allows an interpretation in which the state is understood to be already in existence at the moment of the agreeing. In addition, the gerund-participle also allows non-subject control as in (51) due to the fact that it reifies the action, thus construing \textit{to} not as a movement leading to actualization – a construal that necessarily implies subject control – but merely as an attaching of agreement to the action. ‘\textit{Agree} + \textit{to}-infinitive’ was shown to be found at a relative frequency of 99.4\% vs. ‘\textit{agree} + \textit{to} + gerund-participle’ at 0.6\% in the BNC and Canadian corpus and 99.6\% vs. 0.4\% in COCA.

\subsection*{4.2 The Verb \textit{Accede}}

The verb \textit{accede} has the sense of ‘to give assent, approval or adherence; agree; assent’ according to \textit{Dictionary.com} online. The main verb \textit{accede} + \textit{to}-infinitive was found only twice in the corpora studied. Both of these occurrences were in the COCA. The BNC and Canadian corpus were found to contain attestations of \textit{accede} + \textit{to} + noun but no verb forms followed this matrix verb. Here are the two examples with the infinitive:

\begin{enumerate}
  \item (52) He finally \textbf{accedes to embrace} the Minister, though with the tragic expression of a martyr, “los brazos abiertos en cruz” (228). (COCA, 1994, ACAD, HispanicRev)
  \item (53) Analysts believe that North Korea may have produced enough plutonium to produce one or two nuclear devices before \textbf{acceding to cease} efforts to build a nuclear bomb under the 1994 Agreed Framework. (COCA, 1994, ACAD, HispanicRev)
\end{enumerate}
In (52) the author is giving a review of a book. The simple present is used to bring the reader closer to the action, as if he or she were actually there. The actualization of the event expressed by the to-infinitive is understood to follow that of the main verb. The subject he is the subject of both accedes and of to embrace. Both verbs are understood to be actualized because we are told he accedes to embrace with the expression of a martyr, giving us to believe that he only agreed reluctantly. In (53) North Korea is the subject of both the matrix verb and the to-infinitive. Temporally, acceding is understood to lead to the cessation of efforts to build a nuclear bomb.

In spite of the fact that only two samples were obtained from the corpora examined, a simple web search using several common verbs including be, have, and do in the position of the to-infinitive in the phrase acceded to produced numerous results, such as:

(54) It all started middle of 1998 when my wife felt and noticed that something was wrong with me. She could feel that I was not the same person she knew as I was losing weight, weak and irritable at times. Through my wife’s persistence I acceded to have a thorough examination January of 1999. (Callejo, C.S., n.d., story 13, http://www.all-about-the-virgin-mary.com)

In this example, the matrix verb is in the simple past tense. The subject agreed to be examined by someone. Both verbs are actualized, given that the examination took place in January of 1999. The order of actualization is that of subsequence: first he agreed, then he was examined. The subject, I, is the same for both verbs.

(55) He might have implicitly / explicitly acceded to do production related jobs where the Production person may have asked him to do so. (Ingawale, P. B., n.d., para.2, http://www.citehr.com)

The above sample was taken from a conversational blog where two or more people are involved in a discussion on a particular subject, in this case that of a person who may have inadvertently done a job he was not allowed to do, was not
trained to do, or was not paid to do. The subject of the matrix verb is he and the subject of the to-infinitive is the same. The matrix verb is a modal perfect tense, with the modal calling the specific type of agreement made by the person into question. It seems clear because of the second modal in the sentence that all parties to the discussion are being very careful not to commit to anything. In spite of this, this use adheres to the basic pattern of both subject control and temporality.

None of the three corpora used contained any examples of the verb accede + to + gerund-participle. However, a Google search using ‘acceded to being’, ‘acceded to having’ and ‘acceded to doing’ turned up a number of results. An analysis of the results found similarities with the readings of other verbs of agreement occurring in comparable environments as will be seen below.

When ‘accede’ is entered into the search field of the Cambridge Dictionaries online, it is referred to as the first component of a phrasal verb used in the form of ‘accede to something: to agree to do what people have asked you to do’. The results in the corpora agree wholly with the use in this structure. The Oxford Dictionaries online definition adds that this verb belongs to the formal register and that its meaning is ‘agree to a demand, request, or treaty.’ The Merriam-Webster Dictionary online defines it as an intransitive verb with the meaning ‘to become party (as to an agreement)’ and ‘to express approval or give consent: give in to a request or demand.’ The Merriam-Webster online definition of ‘give in to a request or demand’ seems to encapsulate the feeling that is prevalent in the usage seen.

(56) Well, all is not lost. Jim graciously acceded to doing another interview and that is posted as a streaming audio on the ILR website. It is well worth the listen http://www.integralleadershipreview.com/mp3pages/2009-05-garrison-jim.php. (Volkmann, R., 2009, http://integralleadershipreview.com) As regards control, the subject of accede is Jim, who is also the subject of to doing. The matrix verb, acceded, in the simple past tense tells us that this verb is actualized; the gerund-participle is also understood to be actualized because we are given the web address where this particular interview can be accessed. The
temporal relation between the two events is one of subsequence. The to-infinitive is also possible in this context. The use of the to + gerund-participle makes it seem a more significant undertaking because of the feeling of the whole interview – planning, meetings, scripting, recording perhaps several times but all of that is subsequent to acceding to do it.

(57) “The point has to be emphasised, however, that what the Honourable Minister requested, and which Boeing has **acceded to doing** whenever their proposal is approved is an ‘airworthiness assessment’ of all the Nigerian registered aircraft manufactured by Boeing, and not ‘re-certification.’”

(Boeing to conduct airworthiness, 2013, http://businessdayonline.com)

The subject of the matrix verb, *has acceded*, is Boeing, which is also the subject of *doing*. The present perfect tense of the matrix verb leads us to the conclusion that the acceding is something that has been done. However the performance of the airworthiness assessment has not yet been carried out. The gerund-participle produces an impression of lesser actuality than the infinitive here: the sentence as it stands evokes a mere accession to a request, whereas the infinitive would produce a commitment to action (see also (66) page 38).

(58) In the course of the year I received an anonymous letter stating that a boiler, which was in course of erection, was of inadequate strength. I visited the spot, and the proprietors at once **acceded to having** a hydraulic test applied, which was subsequently done in my presence, at more than twice the required working pressure. (Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, 1862, p. 92, https://books.google.ca/books)

In this example the proprietors are the subject of both *acceded* and *having*. The simple past tense shows the main verb’s event to have been actualized. The rest of the sentence indicates that the effecting of the hydraulic test was also done, with the agreement coming before the testing. If the to-infinitive were substituted, it would suggest that the test was done immediately, as the *acciending* would be construed as a movement leading to the actualization of the infinitive’s event. In this respect, it is significant that in the original sentence with the gerund-participle,
the speaker felt the need to specify that the test was subsequently done in his presence.

(59) Great video, it almost felt like a guilty pleasure to get drawn in... but then I acceded to being pleased.


In (59) the example is a comment given following the viewing of a video shown on YouTube. The subject I is the subject of both acceded and being pleased. In the first part of the phrase the subject admits to liking the work and describing this as a guilty pleasure. The second part of the phrase can be read in two different ways: 1) that the subject accepted to let him or herself go and give in to pleasure or 2) that he or she was experiencing pleasure and finally admitted that he or she was in that state.

4.2.1 Summary of the Verb Accede

As regards control, ordinarily both accede + to-infinitive and accede + to + gerund-participle, display the control pattern found with agree + to-infinitive: that of the subject of the main verb also being subject of the complement. The variation in temporal relation between the events expressed by the matrix and the complement found with agree + to + gerund-participle with reference to a state was found with accede as well in (59), where the state of being pleased can be understood to be simultaneous with acceding to it or to be a state that existed before it was acceded to. No departures were found from subject control. We also want to highlight the fact that no occurrences of to + gerund-participle were found in the corpora perhaps due to limited use, notwithstanding the fact that there is evident use of this form by ordinary speakers attested on the Internet. The relative frequency of the to-infinitive to the to + gerund participle in COCA is 71.4% and 28.6% respectively (see Appendix B, Part 1). The Internet searches show a relative frequency of 64.2% for the to-infinitive. These show a distinct tendency for the to-infinitive following the verb accede(d) (see Appendix B, Part 2).

4.3 The Verb Accept

‘Agree,’ ‘consent to,’ and ‘accede to’ are all among the definitions found of this verb according to Dictionary.com. Its lexical meaning is similar to the first two verbs examined, agree and accede, but it has a less active feeling. With agree two or more people or groups are represented as being in an active bid to come to some sort of consensus, as per ‘to come to an arrangement’ or ‘to arrive at a
settlement’ (*Dictionary.com*), where ‘come’ and ‘arrive’ show action. Analogous to
the verb *accept*, the noun form *acceptance* also has a passive connotation and is
one-sided. The action of accepting implies an active person or group, who is giving
or offering some thing or some idea for consideration to the one who considers and
accepts or receives it. The accepting person or group has come to the conclusion
that whatever is offered is tolerable or sufficient. These impressions can be
observed in:

(60) The Six therefore simply **accepted to resume** collaboration even
though they had failed to reach a resolution acceptable to all governments:
in essence, they agreed to disagree. (BNC, CLR, W_non_ac_polit_law_edu)
In (60) the Six is a group of governments who could not agree on a decision that
was satisfactory to all six governments so they came to the conclusion that they
should take up or start up again their former cooperation. The simple past form of
the matrix verb shows that the action of accepting has been done. At the point in
time occupied by the accepting, the resumption of collaboration had not yet
occurred, although the context suggests that it has been implemented at the
present moment. *The Six* is the subject of both *accepted* and *to resume*.

(61) Albert Singer was one of the top names in the field, and Clarence was
expecting a much bigger turnout. It was the main reason he had **accepted
to chair** this panel. At conferences of this sort it was important to be seen.
(Canadian, 1997, FIC, QueensQuarterly)
This example shows the subject *he*, referring to Clarence, as the same for both the
main verb and the *to*-infinitive. The main verb is in the past perfect tense, its form
showing it to have been completed. The *to*-infinitive’s event is subsequent to the
accepting. Clarence had agreed to preside over the conference because he
wanted to be noticed or recognized. From the context we know that Clarence has
indeed chaired the panel, as he is disappointed in the attendance, but at the
moment of the acceptance the chairing had not yet taken place.

(62) KROFT: Did you have to pay them for protection? Mr-SALEM: No. We
were asked to pay. I'm not denying that. But never did I **accept to pay** a
penny, because once you pay one, there’s no end to a million. And then it
becomes blackmail. KROFT: Common in Beirut? (COCA, 1992, SPOK, CBS, Sixty)

(62) is from an interview between Steve Kroft from 60-minutes and Mr. Salem who is in charge of Middle East Airlines out of Lebanon. In spite of being in the midst of a challenging situation where workers can be taken hostage, he continues to keep his airline flying. Mr. Salem insists that he never agreed to pay a red cent due to the fact that once you do, it never ends. Accepting would lead to payment, which was not what was wished in this case. Both subject control and subsequent temporality are observed in this example.

Similar to the verb accede, none of the three corpora used contained any examples of the verb accept + to + gerund-participle; however, the outcome of a Google search using ‘accepted to being’, ‘accepted to having’ and ‘accepted to doing’ turned up a substantial number of results.

(63) While a stunning 98% admitted to surfing the web for non-work related activities, 42% accepted to doing this frequently, followed by 31% spending one to four hours in office time.

(Computer Virus & Trojans Hit 57%, 2009, http://www.spamfighter.com)

In (63), the sentence describes a survey which shows the results as a surprising 98% of respondents conceded to recreationally looking at the Internet for non-employment connected reasons, 42% admitted they did this often, and 31% consumed one to four hours of work time. The subject, 42%, of the main verb accepted is the same as the subject of the gerund-participle. The simple past tense shows that the action of accepting is in the past. To doing means that 42% did this activity frequently. They accepted that this activity had taken place frequently, with accept being used in the sense of ‘accept the fact, admit.’ That means that the to + gerund-participle’s event predates that of the matrix verb. It is possible to substitute the to + gerund-participle for the to-infinitive form, but the message conveyed becomes: they agreed to do this activity frequently as a future endeavor.

(64) Paul also accepted to being unethical and wily in his ways but justified it by saying that he would do anything to see his clients on top.

(64) describes Paul as admitting to be unscrupulous and scheming in his actions but defending this by affirming that he would operate in this way to make sure his customers had an edge on their competitors. Paul is the subject of both the matrix verb accepted and the gerund-participle. The matrix verb is in the past tense, so it has been actualized. The gerund-participle represents Paul as being in the habit of being unethical and wily in his ways which pre-exists the admission or acceptance of this fact. As in (63), the gerund-participle can be replaced by the to-infinitive, which implies that Paul is going to be unethical in the future.

(65) The IPCC panel on climate change has accepted to having posted unsubstantiated data about receding Himalayan glaciers, but, does this paint the true picture about the real gravity of the situation?


(65) is from a Facebook post of Mystic Himalayan Trails commenting on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s report that was deemed to contain disputable facts. The IPCC has admitted to something that was done prior to it being admitted to. This is similar to the impression given by (64) above where the being unethical existed before it was admitted to.

(66) “Friends Home” was a song that we wrote and recorded to be a b-side for the Ava single/EP we put out. Our label transgressive liked it so much they wanted to give it its own release so we accepted to having it as a single. It was the last song to be written as part of what became the whole Econo writing period so putting it on its own pedestal is a nice way to show a small indication of where we might be going as a band. (Ben, 2014, http://londontheinside.com)

This last example is from a website that discusses ‘the hippest trends, coolest bands, social events and industry secrets.’ The band Famy is discussing a song written as an add-on but that was eventually given its own release as a single. Here having it as a single is construed as a proposal made to the band by their recording company and accepting as giving approval to this proposal. This implies
that the implementation of the proposal is subsequent to its approval, similar to (57).

4.3.1 Summary of the Verb Accept

Accept + to-infinitive structures behave in the same way as agree + to-infinitive and accede + to-infinitive. The subject for both verbs is the same and a relationship of subsequence is generally understood to hold between the matrix verb and the infinitive. As noted with accede, accept + to + gerund-participle was not represented in our corpus but like accede, Internet data show that people do use this structure. Three cases were noted in (63), (64) and (65) which went against the general rule of temporal subsequence. In these three cases, accept was used in the sense of ‘accept the fact, admit’ and the event admitted to was understood to precede the admitting to it, which was post factum. As pertains to control, no departure from subject control was attested. The Canadian corpus was the only corpus to have both to-infinitive and to + gerund-participle following accept. The result is a tendency of 95.8% for the to-infinitive form. The Internet searches show a relative frequency of 73.5% usage of the to-infinitive form (see Appendix B).

4.4 The Verb Acquiesce

Acquiesce has a very passive sense. The senses proposed by the dictionaries consulted (Dictionary.com, The Collins Canadian English Dictionary, Oxford dictionaries.com and Cambridge dictionaries online) are: ‘to assent tacitly, to submit or comply silently or without protest, accept without complaining, accept something reluctantly but without protest, to accept or agree to something, often unwillingly.’ There is a usage note in the Collins English Dictionary online definitions for acquiesce which states that ‘The use of to after acquiesce was formerly regarded as incorrect but is now acceptable.’ This may account for the fact that no examples of acquiesce were found in the BNC or Canadian corpus with either of the complements: to-infinitive or to + gerund-participle. One example was found in the COCA of acquiesce + to-infinitive. It is the only example of this structure found in the three corpora:

(67) Rather than bringing a further appeal to the judicial committee of the House of Lords, which sits as the highest court in England, the parents acquiesced to permit the surgery. (n4) # The ensuing surgery brought some closure to a human drama that had played itself out not only in the
English courts, but also in the international media. Why did the case garner so much attention? In part, no doubt, because of the peculiar combination of fascination and repulsion that the phenomenon of conjoined twins continues to elicit from the general public. (COCA, 2001, ACAD, TheologStud)

Here acquiesce has the sense of ‘agree’ and the parents are the subject of the matrix verb as well as the to-infinitive. The main verb is in the simple past tense showing the actualization of an event or state in the past. The to-infinitive’s event is subsequent to that of the matrix verb. The larger context, the ensuing surgery, tells us that the surgery went forward after the parents agreed to let it happen. The meaning of acquiesce differs from agree in that according to the dictionary definition it means ‘to assent without protest’ (Dictionary.com).

The to + gerund-participle complement was found only in the COCA. There were seven examples in total, of which three involved modal constructions in which the hypothetical character of the acquiescing made it impossible to determine its temporal relation to the complement. The four non-modal constructions were therefore analysed.

(68) Tennenbaum suggested the purchases should be personally handled by Bear, Stearns’ chairman, Alan (Ace) Greenberg, a big-block securities trader of legendary skill. # "No, no, I want you to buy the stock," Kerkorian insisted. "I don't want anybody else involved, and I don't want anybody to know you're buying it." # It was the only argument Kerkorian lost that day.

He finally acquiesced to using Greenberg. (COCA, 1997, MAG, Forbes)

In (68), after losing the argument on who should buy the stock, Kerkorian finally gave in to using Greenberg. The context gives a rich tableau of the fight over which person would be the best candidate to fulfil the chosen task. The picture is of the loser giving in to the wishes of the winner. The subject is the same for the matrix verb and for the to + gerund-participle. Using the to + gerund-participle construction serves to represent using Greenberg as a well-defined option already put on the table by Tennenbaum which Kerkorian finally gave his approval to. This
is confirmed by (69), where one also has the impression of a proposal put on the table by someone else, to which the commander finally gives his approval:

(69) Aboard was Maj. John Andre, Arnold's inexperienced twenty-nine-year-old spymaster, who, like Arnold, had insisted to Clinton that a face-to-face meeting between Arnold and Andre was needed to confirm Arnold's identity and to plan in detail the surrender of the key American stronghold. The British commander had reluctantly acquiesced to sending Andre on the mission, and he had given three orders intended to safeguard the young officer: He was not to go behind enemy lines; he was not to disguise himself but was to wear his British uniform; and he was to carry no compromising papers. If he violated any of these rules of war, he could be hanged as a spy. (COCA, 1990, MAG, AmHeritage)

As with the other verbs of agreement considered thus far, although acquiesce is less commonly used orally, it is alive and well on the World Wide Web. The Google search sequences used were ‘acquiesced to have,’ ‘acquiesced to do,’ and ‘acquiesced to be.’ Here are examples with have, do and be:

(70) Mr. C. acquiesced to have a behavioral health session but did not agree to stop smoking. Enter Jack. He immediately recognized that counseling alone, even combined with the threat of hospitalization was not enough.
(Levkoff, Chen and Fisher eds., 2006, p. 81, https://books.google.ca/books)

(71) Jonah was not an acceptable representative until his attitude mirrored God's even though he had acquiesced to do God's will.
(Message18, Alkitab SABDA, http://alkitab.sabda.org)

(72) Starting off as a joke (who woulda thought?!), featuring the faces of the first coworkers I could find (fortunately all of whom are very-good looking AND graciously acquiesced to be in the game!), I hemmed and hawed (and played Fallout 3) a few months before deciding to publish it. (Danimal, n.d., http://www.highbrowgames.com)

In all three cases above, acquiesce + to-infinitive is used as a synonym of agree + to-infinitive. One gets the impression of a yes/no decision in favour of going ahead
and performing the infinitive’s event which is felt to be subsequent to that of the matrix. In contrast in (73) below, there are two positive options on the table: having a vegetarian wedding and having meat options. Acquiescing is conceived here as attaching one’s approval reluctantly to the second option.

(73) I’m vegetarian, but my fiance is not. I would have liked a vegetarian wedding, but acquiesced to having meat options. (AJuliaNJ, 2013, para. 5 Etiquette, https://forums.theknot.com)

This way of construing acquiescence is compatible with the idea of simply accepting an existing situation, as in (74):

(74) Since the organization of trained nursing and well into the twentieth century, nurses have acquiesced to being subordinate to physicians’ authority over patient care and over themselves in relation to the medical care of patients. (Dodd and Gorham, eds., 1994, p. 51, https://books.google.ca/books)

Here the acquiescing does not lead to the occurrence of the complement’s event as with the to-in infinitive; it simply involves giving tacit approval to the status quo.

(75) FIFTY Dollars. This was a steal!!!! I ran it by Diesel and he acquiesced to going to get the stove on Saturday. Friday night I was like a kid on Christmas Eve. I was SO excited.

We picked it up last night and it is in GREAT condition.


In this blog entry the author excitedly describes the acquisition of an antique stove. She told her partner about it and he agreed to picking it up that Saturday. The acquiescing is done by the subject Diesel, but the going was done by both Diesel and the author, as evidenced by the following paragraph above.

4.4.1 Summary of the Verb Acquiesce

Acquiesce conveys the notion of passive assent to an option presented to or already known to the acquiescer. This often leads to the performance of the event under discussion, as observed with agree. Departures from temporal subsequence are found in cases where a situation is already in existence and acknowledgement is given to it. This was observed only with the gerund-participle in cases such as (73) and (74). The more usual pattern of control is also departed from in usage with
the gerund-participle in (75). As can be seen from the table in Appendix B, Part 1, COCA is the only corpus having both *acquiesce to*-infinitive and *to + gerund-participle* forms. The occurrence is inverted from that of *accede, accept* and *agree* as 71.4% were found using *acquiesce + to + gerund-participle*. The Internet searches show a relative frequency of 33.5% usage with the *to*-infinitive, which is in line with the data from COCA for this verb.

4.5 The Verb **Assent**

The *Collins Canadian English Dictionary* succinctly defines this verb as meaning ‘agree or consent.’ The impression conveyed is one of passivity and absence of argument or comment. *Dictionary.com* online describes *assent* as meaning ‘to give in: yield; concede’ which seems to better match the attested usage with this verb. The primary sense given by *Dictionary.com* is ‘to agree or concur; subscribe to (often followed by *to*): to assent to a statement.’ The example given to illustrate this sense is with a noun introduced by the preposition *to*. This may account for the fact that the BNC did not contain any examples of *assent + to*-infinitive. There were a small number of examples, seven from the COCA and one from the Canadian corpus, one of which is given below:

(76) Informed consent was provided by teachers and parents/guardians with students **assenting to participate**. (COCA, 2011, ACAD, PhysicalEduc)

This type of sentence, in which the main idea is that of consent, was the most common. Here the students are seen as giving their permission or agreement, and participation in the study follows temporally upon the latter. The students are the subject of both the main verb, *assenting* and the infinitive, *to participate*. This is also the case in (77):

(77) At the end of that time he was moved once more by a purple creature who tried to grasp and suck his fingers with the avidity of a famished lizard, and only by those means did he **assent to make** peace with the family.

(COCA, 1995, FIC, LiteraryRev)

The main verb is in the simple past tense and is by definition actualized. The *to*-infinitive is future with respect to the main verb and has been actualized as well, as
implied by the phrase *only by those means*. Similar impressions were observed in (78):

(78) We've been in training for dark times such as these since the day we **assented to come** to earth. (Canadian, 2005, MAG, CatholicNewTimes)

*We* is the first person plural subject of both the simple past matrix verb and the *to*-infinitive. *Assented* is actualized due to the verb tense utilized. The *to*-infinitive is also actualized given the sense of *come*. The agreement is temporally prior to the arrival.

In general, gerund-participle usage with verbs of agreement is less frequent in comparison with the infinitive and *assent* is no exception. The sequence *assent* + *to* + gerund-participle was found only in the COCA, and only twice.

(79) Christian though she was, Maria was not about to **assent to having** her family torn asunder yet again for the sake of the unfortunate little girl. (COCA, 1999, ACAD, AmerScholar)

The above excerpt is taken from the quarterly magazine’s fiction section. It presents Maria as having no intention of consenting to have her household divided anew on behalf of the unlucky young girl, even though she considers herself to be humane and respectable. *Maria* is the subject of the main verb *assent*, as well as of the gerund-participle *having*. The gerund-participle’s event follows that of the main verb temporally. It is noteworthy that *have* has the sense of ‘passively experience’ here, which entails that Maria is not construed as actively doing something. There are two possible readings of (80):

(80) If the poor would only **assent to being** bit-part players in the lives of the rich, comedy walk-ons, much social unrest would be saved. (COCA, 1992, MAG, HarpersMag)

The first is that the poor are already bit-part players in the lives of the rich but that they refuse to give their assent to this. In this reading, the *to*-infinitive would not be possible, as it would imply subsequent actualization of being bit-part players. The second is that the poor are being solicited for the role of bit-part players but that they have not given their assent and therefore have not taken on this role. The
gerund-participle is used to show the full implications of this state: the diminished role in society and whatever psychological, physical and material repercussions that would have. In this sentence the poor are the subject of both the main verb assent and the gerund-participle being bit-part players.

As has been seen with several other verbs of agreement, assent also has a limited presence in the corpora considered (see Appendix B). Once again a Google search was carried out using the criteria 'assented to be,' 'assented to have' and 'assented to do' as well as their analogues 'assented to being,' 'assented to having' and 'assented to doing.' The results offer us the opportunity to look at the pairs 'assented to be' and 'assented to being' in very similar environments.

(81) No Mary, no Christ. Instructed by the Angel as to the Person and task of her Son, she freely assented to be the Mother of God. (Hardon, 1999, http://www.therealpresence.org)

Here after being informed who and what her son would become by the angel, Mary willingly consented to be the child-bearer of the divinity. This sentence shows the subject she for both the main verb, and the to-infinitive. The simple past of the main verb shows that it has been actualized. The to-infinitive is situated after the main verb in time. Based on Christian tradition the infinitive is understood to have been actualized. The infinitive expresses what she was about to do, become the mother of God. At the time at which Mary gave her assent, the to-infinitive had not yet been actualized.

(82) At the first Annunciation in Nazareth, she assented to being the mother of the Messiah; here she received a clearer picture of where this vocation would lead — to the pain and loss of the cross. (Sri, 2014, http://www.kofc.org)

At the first declaration of the angel in Nazareth, Mary consents to everything that being the progenitor of the promised deliverer entails. She was given a more precise account of the end result of this calling – the agony and defeat of the cross. The subject of both verbs is she. The main verb is in the simple past showing that it has been accomplished. The gerund-participle is not actualized at the time
described in (82). (81) describes the same event but the to-infinitive is used instead of the to + gerund-participle. The gerund-participle puts more emphasis on the state of being the mother of the Messiah and what is involved in this state. It gives a picture of everything that it takes, what is done, how one feels when one is a mother: the joys, the pain, the pride, the hard work.

(83) Under this deal, the government has assented to having all of its fiscal measures approved by the institutions (previously called the troika – the European Central Bank, European Commission, and the International Monetary Fund) and hence to not roll back austerity unilaterally. (Vgontzas, 2015, https://www.jacobin mag.com)

The subject in this case (83) is the Greek government. The government officials are in the unfortunate state of not being in control of their own finances, expressed by the passive meaning of the verb having. The to + gerund-participle structure does not convey the same interpretation as the to-infinitive would: the to-infinitive would denote the action as future to the agreement and not yet actualized; the to + gerund-participle gives the impression that ‘having all of its fiscal measures approved’ is already actualized.

(84) To review, folks, the #nysenate GOP assented to have this bill come to the floor, even as some members rage against it. (Vielkind, 2013, https://twitter.com)

(84) features a tweet from Jimmy Vielkind, Albany bureau chief for the capital of New York state. He says to go over the facts again, the Republicans of the New York Senate tacitly agreed to let this piece of legislation be presented for a vote, at the same time as some party representatives are making violent speeches against it. The subject of the main verb is the New York Senate GOP. The subject of the to-infinitive is the same, the NY Senate GOP (have has the sense here of ‘cause to do one’s bidding’). The to-infinitive’s event is situated after the main verb’s event in time. (85) is an excerpt taken from an e-book on the awakened self:

(85) I immediately agreed and then put the phone down wondering how I could have assented to doing something I was so afraid of. (Hoyle, 2012, http://www.creativity-portal.com)
The subject is discussing how different she is now that she has experienced a spiritual awakening. She states that she at once agreed to giving a talk on her personal enlightenment experience, then hung the phone up wondering how on earth she could have agreed to an action that she was so scared of. The subject of both the main verb assented and the gerund-participle doing is the first person subject, I. The main verb is in the modal perfect tense. It evokes a conditional possibility, in this case a questioning of one’s self. The to + gerund-participle denotes the event of making a speech (being in front of a crowd and a microphone, telling people about her innermost thoughts and feelings and feeling vulnerable because of all this entails). The main verb’s event is actualized. That of to + gerund-participle has not yet been actualized at the time of writing. The gerund-participle places greater focus on what is involved in the action that the speaker has assented to (its interiority) than the to-infinitive would. The Op-ed featured in (86) discusses the 2010 peace talks between the Israelis and Palestinians:

(86) No less astounding than Netanyahu's acquiescence to discuss the implementation of the very policy he correctly predicted would fail, is the identity of the "partner" with whom he assented to do so. (Sherman, 2010, http://jiw.blogspot.ca)

Netanyahu’s agreement to talk about the policy that he foretold would be unsuccessful is no less astonishing than the identity of the counterpart with whom he consented to talk. The subject of the main verb assented and of the to-infinitive is he, (Netanyahu). The simple past tense is used for the main verb showing that it has been actualized. The to-infinitive follows the main verb in time. The to-infinitive seems to have been actualized at the time of the writing of the text although it is possible that the discussions have not yet taken place. If one compares (85) and (86), one gets the impression in the latter that the mere fact of doing an astonishing thing is evoked, whereas (85) gives the impression of all that is included in performing the action agreed upon.

Although no examples of non-subject control were found in our data, an online search for assent + to + killing turned up the following occurrence:
Then again, pro-choice advocates insist that calling the human being in utero “a child” or “an unborn baby” biases the case against them from the start, since only a tiny fraction of the population would assent to killing a “baby” or a “child,” even if preborn. I will, therefore, speak usually of the “human fetus,” the “human being in utero,” or the Introduction 7 “fetal human being” as these terms are both scientifically accurate and the least “loaded” towards one perspective or the other. (Kaczor, 2011, http://samples.sainsburysebooks.co.uk)

A hypothetical situation is being discussed here evidenced by the modal would. In the example above, the speaker is describing the difference in emotional associations attached to calling the human fetus a baby or a child. He states that only a small number of people would agree to killing a baby. Non-subject control would be typical in this particular case as the discussion is more philosophical than concrete, the idea of killing a fetus is the concept that the population is attaching their agreement to.

4.5.1 Summary of the Verb Assent

Assent + to-infinitive, although not frequent, behaves in a canonical way. The subject conforms to the control pattern of being subject of both the matrix verb and the infinitive. The temporal readings are also typically that the infinitive follows the matrix verb in time. In (79) and (83) with the gerund-participle, the passive meaning of have places the responsibility for the actualization of the event upon some other agent, and so the subject of assent is not represented as willing to proceed to the actualization of the event denoted by its complement. In the other case involving a gerund-participle, (80), the gerund-participle allows the reading that the poor were already bit-part players, an interpretation which is not possible with the infinitive. The gerund-participle also allows non-subject control, as illustrated by (87) above. The COCA was the only corpus with examples of both forms. The results show an 80% tendency for usage with the to-infinitive. The Internet results for assented show a relative frequency of 60.6% for the to-infinitive.

4.6 The Verb Concede

The Collins Canadian English Dictionary defines concede as ‘admit to be true; grant as a right; acknowledge defeat in (a contest or argument).’ Concede is often used in relationship to capitulation, (88) below being an emblematic example:
President Goodluck Jonathan has defended his decision to concede defeat to Muhammadu Buhari in the March 28 election, saying he was concerned about allowing his personal ambition scuttle a democratic system he helped nurture, with the likely consequence of a “collective tragedy.”


This particular verb is often found with a passive infinitive. In fact, when used in the sequence concede + to be it was found in the passive form eleven out of twelve times in the COCA and four out of four times in the BNC. Concede + to-infinitive and concede + to + gerund-participle are also frequently used to mean ‘to finally decide in favour of doing a certain thing’ in the corpora studied. The four examples below illustrate this usage:

(89) Now a fun fact which some of you may know is that in addition to the environment and labor secretaries, we now have a trade secretary which we have conceded to have for Mexico. (COCA, 1994, ACAD, CanadaLaw)

(90) Tombo called a family meeting where she confronted him on the matter. Although the accused at first protested that he had not done anything wrong, after much discussion he conceded to remove the canal. (COCA, 2002, ACAD, AnthropolQ)

(91) GOLLUM # This way, Hobbits. Follow me! FRODO quickly runs after him. SAM, with a scowl, conceded to follow as well. (COCA, 2002, FIC, Mov:LordRings)

(92) Then I noticed two young German tourists, a boy and a girl, getting ready to make the descent. They stood for a moment in the threshold, the girl conceded to go first, then took her breath in deeply, stepped lightly into the well and counted down, eins, zwei, drei, etc., disappearing around in the curve. (COCA, 1996, FIC, ChicagoRev)

In (89), which is a discussion surrounding changes that the Canadian government made in the wake of the North American Free Trade Agreement, we, referring to Canadian citizens and residents, now have a trade secretary which we have agreed to have because of Mexico. Mexico either already had a trade secretary and we needed to provide a Canadian counterpart or perhaps the Mexicans
wanted to create this position and the Canadians went along with it. The subject is the same for both verbs and the temporal order is 1) matrix verb 2) to-infinitive. (90) portrays a land conflict. He is the subject of both conceded and to remove. In the end the accused, he, finally decided in favour of removing the canal, after much debate during which he at first objected that he had done nothing wrong. Whereas (89) shows no specific mention of a long drawn-out debate on the pros and cons of a trade secretary, the nature of international trade talks would seem to presuppose this type of activity. (90) unequivocally states this drawn-out process, ‘after much discussion’ to be the case. (91) describes film directions for The Lord of the Rings. Sam is the subject of both verbs. Temporally, the matrix verb conceded is immediately prior to follow. Because of the fact that these are film directions, we assume that whatever the writer wanted was done by the actor. In (92) as well, the subject is in an uncomfortable situation about to enter into an intimidatingly high stairwell. Even though there does not seem to be any discussion on the matter, the girl who is the subject, after standing in the brink for an instant, takes the initiative and goes first, perhaps after a period of weighing her options. She inhaled profoundly, advanced lightly into the flight of steps and numbered the steps she descended, dropping out of sight around the bend. This description demonstrates that the to-infinitive which follows the matrix verb in time is actualized.

As has been seen before, there are fewer attestations of the verb concede with the to + gerund-participle, none being found in the BNC. (93) below illustrates the use of concede in the sense of its synonym ‘agree’:

(93) These issues are introduced through a 'Green Room' meeting (of a few select states) called by the WTO Secretariat during the second WTO meeting, unprepared Southern states concede to exploring competition, government procurement and investment through 'working groups' of the WTO, thereby blocking Northern pressure to immediately begin negotiating treaties on these issues. (Canadian, 2003, MAG, GlobalEconJusticeR)

In the WTO meeting, the states from the Southern hemisphere, who were caught off guard by the unanticipated session, agree to researching competition,
government acquisition and financing using work groups of the WTO, in order to thwart coercion by Northern states to start bargaining contracts forthwith on the points in question. The unprepared Southern states are the subjects of both concede and exploring, and concede comes before exploring. The impression here is that of reluctantly giving their assent to a proposal tabled by the Northern states.

In contrast to this, (94) and (95) show a clearly different interpretation, closer to the idea of ‘admit to be true’:

(94) While refusing to admit specific transgressions, Robb has conceded to having "let my guard down" in the past. (COCA, 1994, MAG, TIME)

(94) refers to an American politician, who at the same time as he disowned responsibility for precise wrongdoings, did admit to not being careful in former times. This example reverses the temporal order found with the infinitive in that the gerund-participle, having let my guard down, came before he conceded to it. (95) also characterizes a situation where concede has the sense of ‘admit’:

(95) Many agencies quietly concede to having no more than three or four black professionals on staffs numbering in the hundreds. (COCA, 1993, NEWS, SanFranChron)

Many advertising firms confidentially admit to employing at most three or four black executives in the advertising occupation in a company work force that counts several hundred. As in (94), this example involves non-subsequent temporality, as the agencies admit to the existence of a certain state of affairs, which is that there is an inordinately small number of black executives in their agencies. This state is in existence before they admit it to be true.

(96) With my half-century mark looming ominously before me in the coming year, mere days before the world would pass into the new millennium, I had already learned to appreciate how one's clothes can carry the day as the other attributes fade. Not that I conceded to fading quite yet. One thing I had to thank my mother for was good genes. (COCA, 2007, FIC, Bk:WellBredAndDead)
‘Admitting defeat’ is the definition that best describes _concede_ in (96). The description is one of a woman approaching her fiftieth birthday seeing the changes that have already come and contemplating those yet to come. At the point of time described, the woman did not thus far capitulate to acknowledging that her attributes of youth were waning. While it is possible that she is fading but has yet to concede to it, it is also possible that she has not yet begun fading, with the gerund–participle’s event understood to be in the future. What is significant here however is that conceding does not lead to the actualization of fading, as the latter is outside the control of the speaker.

To complete the study of _concede_, Internet examples for the forms ‘conceded to be’, ‘conceded to have’ and ‘conceded to do’ as well as _conceded_ + _to_ + the gerund-participle forms of _be_, _have_ and _do_ were assessed. As in the corpora, the majority of examples yielded by the Internet were formulated with the matrix verb in the passive form. The following examples further illustrate the usages seen in the corpora.

(97) Freddy was quick to tell me that I was in the shooter seat first and with very little argument from me, I _conceded to be_ first. (Rush, n.d., http://www.archerschoicemedia.com)

(97) is taken from a hunter’s blog in which he tells of his experience hunting Whitetail deer on Anticosti Island. _Concede_ is used here almost in an ironic way, as the subject was in no way reluctant to lead off with the possibility of a deer kill; he was eager to agree. Freddy suggested a course of action that was pleasant and interesting to the subject, who then agreed to it. The agreement led to the actualization of the act of being first.

(98) Claire Williams _has conceded to being_ caught by surprise at Ferrari’s upturn in form this Formula 1 season. (Parkes, 2015, http://www.autosport.com)

Claire Williams, the deputy team principal of the Williams Formula One racing team, has admitted to being caught off guard by the improvement in the Ferrari team’s performance this season. The matrix verb _conceded_ does not lead to the
actualization of being caught by surprise here. She was caught off guard before she conceded to it. *She* is the subject of both *conceded* and of the state of being caught off guard. The *to*-infinitive would not make sense in this case because it would mean that she agreed to be caught by surprise in the future, whereas being caught off guard is not conceived as something one does voluntarily. (99) describes a survey that was done on employee satisfaction:

(99) In the survey of 150,000 US workers, 30% said they felt “engaged” at work, but 52% conceded to being “disengaged,” and 18% admitted to actively subverting their employers. (McGuire, 2015, http://www.randstadsourceright.com)

This is similar to the use of the verb *agree* in (48) where the respondent agreed to being satisfied. The verb *concede* expresses the notion of ‘admit’ here, and the state of being disengaged is understood to already exist at the moment at which it is admitted to. The *to*-infinitive cannot be used here as it would mean that they agree to be disengaged in the future, which would imply the contradictory impression of collusion in an action over which they have no control.

(100) He graduated from The University of Virginia and began work in New York City, where he fell in love with Beverly, conceded to being a Yankee, and moved to Greenwich, CT. (Lewis, 2013, http://www.legacy.com)

In this excerpt taken from an obituary, a South Carolina gentleman’s life is described: he finished his university education in Virginia and started his working career in New York City, where he met his future wife, at which time he yielded to being a Yankee and moved to Greenwich, CT. The sense is that of a concession made for love: being a Yankee is construed as exerting an attraction upon him due to his love for Beverly, an attraction to which he eventually succumbed. (101) is a blog written by an engineer for Exair, who in order to justify his television watching speaks of the cold weather that particular weekend and how he surrendered to being an idler in front of the TV because of it.

(101) The cold weather kept me indoors this weekend and I conceded to being a couch potato in front of the TV. (Panfalone, 2014, http://blog.exair.com)
Conceded is best rendered by ‘gave in to’ or ‘capitulated.’ As in (100), being a couch potato is construed here as having exerted an attraction upon the subject to which he succumbed. Thus, as a temptation exerting an attractive force on the subject, the state of being a couch potato has a form of prior existence to the conceding, which corresponds to a yielding to the latter’s power of attraction.

(102) The president has conceded to have underestimated Boko Haram.

(Angerbrandt, 2015, https://matsutas.wordpress.com

The preceding is an excerpt from an article written by a Ph.D. candidate in Political studies, who states that the president has admitted to have underrated the anti-Western group Boko Haram. This example is interesting because the movement expressed by the preposition to corresponds to a mental operation here, that of connecting the president to the actualization of the state of having underestimated Boko Haram. This use is thus similar to The president appears to have underestimated Boko Haram, in which the president is affirmed to have underestimated the Muslim terrorist group in question on the basis of appearances. The next example was taken from a website specializing in accounts by victims relating to the international cruise industry:

(103) I was terrified that I had been exposed to HIV. It was only after filing a civil suit against the cruise line and the individual who raped me that the cruise line conceded to have him tested for HIV. (Kelly, n.d., http://www.internationalcruisevictims.org)

The author relates that only after initiating a lawsuit against the luxury shipping line and the person who sexually violated her, the shipping line agreed to have the individual analysed for HIV. The cruise line is responsible for having the rapist tested for HIV. In this case they agreed and by this agreement they proceeded to the actualization of the to-infinitive. (104) was penned by scientists concerned with the environment:

(104) Solutions must be community driven – it’s a mistake to promise projects in which locals have no part. Peru’s own successes with glacial lakes are testament to this – local communities putting pressure on the government until it conceded to have the problem managed. Still, we can
help: as scientists we should see ourselves as being at the service of the community, and not the other way around. (The local angle, 2011, http://www.mountain.org)

The example given is of Peru’s success with lakes having origins in a melted glacier. The people from that locale demanded action from their government until the latter agreed to have the situation regulated. *The government* is the subject of both *conceded* and *have the problem managed*. In this case the actualization of the matrix verb’s event led to the actualization of the management of the problem.

In the example below Frankfurter has put a suggestion on the table that Herb work less and Phil reluctantly gives his approval to this suggestion:

(105) Herb tells a story I love about my husband, Phil, taking him to the Supreme Court for lunch with Felix Frankfurter, for whom Phil had clerked the first year we were married. During the conversation in Frankfurter’s chambers, the matter of how much Herb was working came up. He was then still on a seven-day-a-week schedule, which he had started with my father, who had hired him. It was a demanding schedule, and Herb admitted to “chafing under this routine.” As he tells the story, “Phil put it to Frankfurter, who rendered a decision that was certainly agreeable to me. He said, 'There must be leisure for ideas to stroll into the mind,'” and Phil *conceded to having* Herb knock off a day a week. (Graham, 2009, https://books.google.ca/books)

*To* denotes the attaching of approval to a proposal here. Similarly in (106) below the speaker’s husband, who has already undergone a sleep apnea test, has proposed this test to his wife as well:

(106) I *conceded to having* a sleep study done, and went to my doctor yesterday to receive the report. (Cook, 2015, http://authornormacook.com)

*Concede* here denotes reluctantly giving one’s ok to the proposal, which naturally implies that the person has the study done. (107) is about an all female film cast and crew who after an extensive search found themselves in the unfortunate situation of being forced to hire a male chief electrician whom they thank for his expertise and passion:
(107) After exhaustive searching we **conceded to having** to employ a male gaffer and we thank him for his professionalism and enthusiasm. (Hanley, n.d., http://www.mamasgunfilm.com)

The state they were in was seen as negative because they originally wanted to hire a female. The state of obligation existed before they gave in to it; the controller of the gerund-participle is the same as the subject of the matrix. In (108) the executive management team agrees to do anything and everything required to balance their business budget for the year:

(108) The debate was over. Members of the senior leadership team **conceded to do** whatever was necessary to meet their operating expense goal for the year. And they did. (Connors & Smith, 2013, http://www.ozprinciple.org)

The team express their readiness to move to the actualization of meeting the goal in any way possible. The *to*-infinitive is used here to show that the action is in the future in regards to the agreement. The *to* + gerund-participle would construe conceding as reluctantly giving one’s approval to a proposal, a slightly less dynamic view of the situation. (109) refers to an attempt to break an addiction to the Internet:

(109) There were times I broke down and use the Internet, like to get directions, addresses, or bus schedules. Could I have called or asked someone? Yes. No excuses, I just didn’t feel like it. It’s just easier to look it up in 30 seconds than to take 10 minutes to do it. I also **conceded to do** my banking online. Again, taking a 10 minute phone call to do something I can do in 30 seconds online just seemed way counterproductive. (Applewhite, 2013, http://marctagonit.com)

In the passage quoted, the speaker admits to some occasions in which he has broken down and used the Internet. The verb *concede* is used here to evoke the breaking down and the *to*-infinitive is used because the breakdown leads to the actualization of doing banking online. Contrary to (109), (110) demonstrates that using *to* + gerund-participle places the actualization of this verb’s event at a moment in time prior to the actualization of the matrix verb:
Gagné, a three-time All-Star and 2003 National League (NL) Cy Young Award winner, **conceded to doing** five cycles of human growth hormone over a span of three years after being publicly exposed as a juicehead in the irresponsibly biased Mitchell Report. (Linneweber, 2012, http://sportsbycolin.com)

This sentence clearly implies that Gagné, the award-winning baseball player, admitted to having previously used an anabolic hormone. (111) illustrates the sense of ‘yield’:

(111) My 16 year old would love this. Since I don't buy meat anymore, I **conceded to doing** shrimp dishes for him at least a couple of times a week. I have a feeling I could veganize this and he would never know the difference. (Tammy, 2015, comment 4, http://www.gratefulprayerthankfulheart.com)

In spite of the fact that she has become a vegetarian, the speaker has agreed to making shrimp dishes for her 16-year-old son at least a few times per week. This is a case of a concession being made to something that the mother knows her son will like. The next example comes from a forum pertaining to all things audio, on which the speaker is discussing a problem he encountered with a turntable:

(112) Getting the tracking roller out of the carrier is no problem ... getting it back in isn't quite as easy. After trying for hours to get it back in without disassembling the tracking mechanism, I finally **conceded to doing** so. (Sunbird80, 2013, comment 11, http://www.audiokarma.org)

He tried for a long time to put the record player back together without taking apart the tracking mechanism but he finally gave in to taking it apart. Although **conceding** led to the actualization of disassembling the tracking mechanism, the disassembly is construed here as something that had been on the speaker’s mind for some time before as a possibility whose necessity became increasingly obvious, to the point where the speaker reluctantly had to give in to it.

4.6.1 Summary of the Verb Concede

The verb **concede** has much in common with **agree** and its synonyms and its usages follow a similar pattern. The senses of ‘agree’ and ‘admit’ are most
common and tend to conform to a positive vs. negative opposition, with ‘agree’
aligning with positive and ‘admit’ with negative. *Concede* evolved into a larger
section due to the results of the analysis which found the dichotomy between the
positive and negative senses of this verb. This complexity created the need for a
more exacting treatment, thus making this section significantly longer than some of
the others. Where ‘admit’ is the sense felt to be present in conjunction with the
gerund-participle as in (94), (95), (98) and (99), the gerund-participle is felt to
precede the matrix verb. In (100) and (101) the gerund-participle denotes a
temptation to which the subject succumbed. (105), (106) and (112) represent the
subject as giving approval to a suggestion or idea. No attestations of non-subject
control were found. The Canadian corpus and COCA were found to have examples
of both *to*-infinitive and *to* + gerund-participle. The *to*-infinitive was found relatively
more frequently in these corpora at 71.4% and 76.3% respectively. In the Internet
findings, the relative frequency was found to be 51.7% for the *to*-infinitive.

4.7 The Verb *Concur*

*Concur* is defined by the *Collins English Dictionary* online as ‘to agree; be of
the same mind; be in accord,’ and ‘to combine, act together, or cooperate,’ ‘to
occur simultaneously; coincide.’ Examples of *concur* + *to*-infinitive were found in
the COCA and the BNC but not in the Canadian corpus. No examples of *concur* +
to + gerund-participle were found in the corpora. In the following context, 120
elements are represented as combining to emphasize one essential feature - the
sole authority concerned with the authentication of the church being the Faculty of
Theology, as the sole control able to exert the double task of representing and
verifying theological questions:

(113) This sounds like rehashed conciliarism adapted to the needs of post-
Tridentine theology. As a matter of fact of these composite elements,
borrowed from different authorities of the Middle Ages, 120 *concurrent* to
stress one element: the magisterium of the Faculty of Theology, the only
authority able to exercise this twofold task of representation and verification.

(COCA, 1992, ACAD, TheologStud)
The 120 elements are inanimate objects and therefore must combine rather than
agree. The *to*-infinitive shows that the combination of these composite elements
leads to the actualization of stressing the one element representing the conclusion
drawn from their convergence. (114) is taken from the *Harvard Journal of Law and
Public Policy*:
(114) (n172) Justice Douglas concurred to criticize the Court’s methodology, sardonically noting that "the Court now says that the rule which the majority of the states have fashioned violates the 'decencies of civilized conduct.'" (COCA, 2010, ACAD, LawPublicPol)

Justice Douglas agreed with other opinions filed in the case in which the technical procedures of the court were criticized, derisively noting that the judicial system now asserts that the law that the preponderance of the states have created contravenes the civility of enlightened behaviour. This is a specialized usage of the verb concur. In a legal context, concurring is agreeing with another opinion, either of the other Justices you are currently working with or with a prior judgment. As a result of his concurring with the other opinions, Justice Douglas also ends up criticizing the Court’s methodology.

To complete the survey, samples from the Internet were searched for using the strings ‘concurred’ and ‘to be/being,’ ‘to do/doing’ and ‘to have/having.’ (115) recounts an unusual event, in which an Air Force service man and his friend saw what seemed to be a humanoid likeness hovering above the community church:

(115) 'I have a friend who will remain un-named that is a Service man on Edwards Air force Base, who encountered what him and his partner recognized to be a human shaped silhouette floating above the local church, while driving towards the church they both looked at it in awe, attempting to figure out what they both concurred to be seeing. (Free_spirit, 2007, para 1, http://www.abovetopsecret .com)

The subjects both perceive an object and we can imagine the tentative questions they ask each other to make sure the other person is seeing the same thing that they see so as not to be considered crazy. They then agree that they are seeing the same thing. The agreement leads to the affirmation of the fact that they are both seeing the same thing. (116) is a much more straightforward example:
Mr. M. Sethu, CEO, Syndicate Exports Pvt. Ltd, Coimbatore has affably concurred to be the Chief Guest. (Entrepreneurial Skill Development, 2011, http://www.snsce.ac)

Mr. Sethu has been asked to be the Chief Guest of an event. He has convivially agreed to do so. In this case the agreement leads to the actualization of the to-infinitive’s event by the matrix verb’s subject. In (117), Fenninger is the subject of both the main verb and the to + gerund-participle:

(117) Fenninger concurred to being "very nervous" in her opening run.
(http://sportsblognews.com/mikaela-shiffrin-sharing-win-in-world-cup-giant-slalom/)

The simple past is used for the main verb, indicating that it is actualized. The to + gerund-participle is also actualized as her opening run is now over. However, being very nervous was actualized before concurred; being very nervous is a state which existed prior to Fenninger admitting that it was the case. (118) is taken from the minutes of a small town council meeting:

(118) After much deliberation, Council concurred to have the box painted white with red trim. (Farmersville City Council, 2015, p. 30, http://www.farmersvilletx.com)

Subsequent to careful consideration, the town assembly agree to have the box coloured white with red trim. The agreement opens the way for the actualization of having the paint job done. (119) is the blog of a film writer, who is relating a story about speaking with his mentor and describing a particular instance in which he finally felt he was understanding the workings of story-writing as a force:

(119) “He concurred to having a similar moment many years ago at a Robert McKee seminar.” (Madsen, 2012, para. 6, http://lukemadsen.com)

His mentor agreed to having had a similar experience some time in the past at a story-writing conference. In essence, he agreed that he had had a similar experience. The experience precedes the agreement by many years. In example (120), the person referred to by he said the name of a town and the speaker agreed to the fact of having stayed there:
(120) He mentioned the town and I **concurred to having** visited there.


*I* is the subject of both the matrix verb and the *to + gerund-participle*. Having stayed there was far in the past in regards to the speaker's assent to the statement that he had been there. The agreement does not bring about the actualization of having stayed there. (121) is another example taken from a town meeting, this time in Australia, in which the members of the council, deeming the number of parking spaces to be sufficient, agreed to bide their time and keep an eye on the situation during the summer season:

(121) The number of parallel parking spaces are significant in this location, therefore members **concurred to do** nothing at this stage and monitor the site over the summer months. (Manly council, 2010, p. 9 para. 3, www.manly.nsw.gov.au)

In this case the agreement by the members leads to the actualization of the plan of action, which is to do nothing.

### 4.7.1 Summary of the Verb *Concur*

*Concur + to-infinitive* works in the same way as *agree + to-infinitive*. There is a relationship of subsequence between the agreement and the actualization of the *to-infinitive*. *Concur* occurs with an inanimate subject in (113), which makes this verb somewhat unique. The sense of the verb changes slightly from 'agree' to 'converge,' when this occurs. *Concur + to + gerund-participle* has been seen to allow for the actualization of the gerund-participle's event to be prior to that expressed by the matrix verb in (117), (119) and (120). Non-subject control was not found with this matrix verb. This verb, not being very common in usage, was not found in the corpora in examples of both *concur + to-infinitive* and *concur + to + gerund-participle*. The Internet searches resulted in a relative frequency of usage of 89.7% for the *to-infinitive*.

### 4.8 The Verb *Conform*

According to *The Collins Canadian English Dictionary*, *conform* is defined as 'comply with accepted standards, rules or customs; be like or in accordance with.' As the fifth definition, *Dictionary.com* online states '(transitive) to bring (oneself, ideas, etc.) into harmony or agreement' with the note: ‘takes a direct object.’ This particular verb, particularly with the sense of ‘agree’ is not very frequent, as can be
apprised by the small number of examples found in the corpora. *Conform* + *to-*infinitive was found once in the COCA. No examples were found in the BNC or the Canadian corpus. *Conform* + *to* + gerund-participle was not attested to at all in any of the three corpora. Here is the lone example of the infinitive from the COCA.

(122) demonstrates the application of the sense described above to an inanimate object:

(122) Because he brought his work home. The face he wore in the men's room. He couldn't take it off. His skull **conformed to fit** it. This expression or rather lack of expression. Attendant and no more. Alert but absent. (COCA, 1998, MAG, HarpersMag)

Because a skull cannot agree, it is understood to comply or become like the person’s face: his skull **conformed to fit** the face he wore at work, adapted itself in order to bring about the actualization of fitting with the face. The subject, *his skull*, is the same for both verbs.

The Internet was used as a means of ascertaining whether this particular structure is attested outside of the corpora examined. Examples were found of all of the structures; however, the *to* + gerund-participle was found in significantly lower numbers. The following sentences are from the Internet following the search protocol 'conformed to be' and 'conformed to being.' (123) is very similar to (122):

(123) But, according to Jennifer Smith, times have changed. Apparel **has conformed to be** more comforting and flexible for women athletes. (Hard hits, n.d., http://www.123helpme.com)

An inanimate object is seen as adapting itself: here sporting attire has adapted itself so as to be more soothing and yielding for female persons involved in sports. The subject, *apparel*, has adapted itself so that it has led to the achievement of the state of being more comforting and flexible. (124) contains an animate subject, Coronation Street star, Danny Dyer, who comments that if he had adapted himself so as to be ‘one of the lads,’ he would not be seated in the studio conversing with the host at that time:
(124) I used to go to these after school clubs and I’d be the only boy there. It was all girls and I’d get a lot of grief from my mates, but I didn’t give a fuck because I loved it and I’m so glad I stuck at that now. If I’d conformed to be ‘one of the lads,’ I wouldn’t be sat here talking to you now. I don’t know what I would be doing.” (Tallon, n.d., para. 7, http://xpressofficial.com)

In this conditional phrase, Danny says that the act of conforming would have led to the actualization of being like his friends, which in turn would have meant he would not have become successful in the way he has. (125) below deviates from what we have seen so far with conform in two respects: 1) it is paired with to + gerund-participle and 2) it shows a case in which conform does not lead to being a New Englander:

(125) There is only one bowling alley in our area that has what I would call "regular" bowling! Candlepin is the norm up here - the pins are super skinny and the ball is smaller. You also get three tries each time you bowl! It's definitely fun, but it was so strange when I saw it the first time. I have decided I like it better than "regular" bowling, but shh don’t tell anyone - people are already telling me I've conformed to being a New Englander! ;) (Albrecht, 2014, para. 7, http://www.magnoliastreetblog.com)

Here being a New Englander is the state she is now in and she has come to terms with or accepted this reality. If the to-infinitive were to be used in this context, the sense of the phrase would change from the subject already being a New Englander and coming to accept it, to one of the subject having changed to become a New Englander. In (126), from a scientific paper, bacterial types that complied with the characteristics for being classified E. coli were reserved in a glycerol suspension at the very low temperature of J70°C:

(126) Strains which conformed to being E. coli were stored frozen in 45% glycerol at J70°C. (Beutin et al., 2003, p. 3996, para. 5. http://iai.asm.org)

The characteristics were already present in the E. coli, being inherent properties. The confirmation that they complied with these characteristics was attested to subsequently; the matrix verb’s event is therefore subsequent to the gerund-participle’s. In example (127) the author concedes that he has complied with the
characteristics for being classified as an individual who blends in to the extent feasible:

(127) So true. I have to admit I **have conformed to being** a person who "blends in" as much as possible. (Kblood, 2008, para. 9, http://forum.davidicke.com)

Although there are similarities between (127) and (126), particularly in that the characteristics for classification have been met, (127) shows volition on the part of the subject which is not possible with E. coli in (126). The recognition of the characteristics in (126) was done by someone other than the subject. The subject of (127) demonstrates self-recognition of the fact that he belongs to a certain category. The subject in (127), *I*, is the same for both the matrix verb and the *to + gerund-participle*. The fact that volition is involved in the process may explain why there is ambiguity as to whether the matrix leads to the actualization of the *to + gerund-participle* or whether it is just a fact that the person has always been someone who ‘blends in as much as possible’ before he recognized this fact.

The following sentences were also gleaned from the Internet using the search requirements ‘**conformed to have**’ and ‘**conformed to having**’.

(128) In accordance with modern fast-paced society, she **conformed to have** one installed that required nothing more than a flick of a light switch. (Lecter, 2001, para. 1, https://www.fanfiction.net)

This example is from a work of fanfiction based on *The Silence of the Lambs*. In keeping with the quickly moving contemporary world, *she*, the female protagonist of the story, agreed to have a gas log fireplace put in that necessitated only the touching of a light switch in order to light the fire in it. *She* is the subject of the matrix verb *conformed* and of the gerund-participle. *Conform* means ‘agree’ and the agreeing leads to the actualization of having someone install the gas fire. (129) is taken from a parent newsletter of Hispanic parents in New York City:

(129) The years went by and soon I found myself settling for the status of our family as it was, **conformed to having** Gabriel to be an only child as I had been. (Scrivano, 2002, para. 3, http://www.lapa.com)
The author is speaking of her family unit and about her coming to grips with the state of her family as it was, i.e. accepting having Gabriel to be an only child as she had been. In this context the matrix verb *conformed* has the sense of ‘come to terms with (a state),’ (similar to (125) where the subject came to terms with being a New Englander) and the reality of this state already existed before she accepted it.

The last several examples were obtained by a Google search for the sequences ‘conformed to do’ and ‘conformed to doing.’

(130) I was a perfect child because I always **conformed to do** what I was told. (Lovely, 2014, para. 23, http://chainsoflight.blogspot.ca)

In this example the writer of the blog states that she was a flawless offspring due to the fact that she adapted herself so as to do that which she was told. The person has always adapted herself to parental expectations and by doing has brought about the actualization of the *to*-infinitive’s event. The writer of (131) states that it was politically correct in that time and place to not provide assistance to Kitty Genovese and so the community adapted itself to this standard of behavior and did nothing:

(131) Ever hear of Kitty Genovese? 38 people watched as she was murdered, the act itself taking 30 minutes. Not one person called the police, no one came down to help. It was socially acceptable in that situation to NOT help her, and so people **conformed to do** nothing. (PvPLegend, 2012, para. 11, https://www.lotro.com)

As a group, these people did something similar to the child in (130). Whereas the child modified her behavior so as to do what she was told, the people in (131) altered their individual behavior so as to comply with the group dynamic which led them to do nothing. By conforming to a certain standard, this then led to the actualization of the *to*-infinitive, *to do nothing*. The next example is from a ‘contemporary art and technology’ site, and is a comment from one reader to another on the accessibility of the iPod and iPhone as new art media platforms:

(132) and it might not be THAT easy, but it's easier than before. once you actually **conformed to doing** it the Apple way, then you'll find that there's a
reason why the system is "closed, hermetic" as you say. (Poochareon, 2009, comment 2, http://rhizome.org)

The writer says that once you really accept doing it with Apple technology, then you will discover that there is a logic as to why the structure is closed. It is necessary to come to terms with the situation, similar to (129) where the mother came to terms with having an only child; here the artist must come to terms with doing it the Apple way, a protocol that exists prior to the person being converted to this way of working. (133) is found in a research paper concerned with people having autism spectrum disorder:

(133) Over the course of his life he gradually **conformed to doing** statistical research. (de Jonge, 2009, para 27, https://www.illc.uva.nl)

This particular passage describes an individual who progressively found his place and accepted doing numerical analysis. The subject had an aptitude for working with numbers and gradually came to terms with this gift and accepted that this would be his work. Thus the gerund-participle’s event predates the matrix verb’s in this context.

4.8.1 Summary of the Verb Conform

This particular verb was not found to be very widely used. There was only one documented usage of the verb *conform* + *to*-infinitive in the three corpora examined. Notwithstanding, the verb *conform* has been seen to behave in similar ways to other verbs of agreement. *Conform* + *to*-infinitive represents conforming as leading to the actualization of the *to*-infinitive, as seen in (122) and (123), with an inanimate subject and (124), (128), (130) and (131) with animate subjects. In contrast, the structure *conform* + *to* + gerund-participle can represent the gerund-participle’s event as something that exists prior to the matrix verb as in (125), (126), (127) and (129). There is some overlap between the two constructions, as in cases like (130) and (131), where the acceptance of a certain activity or way of doing things also implies that the conformer does engage in the activity and adopt that way of doing things. Similar to *accede, accept, concede* and *concur, conform* was attested only with subject control. Like *concur, conform* was not found with both *to*-infinitive and *to* + gerund-participle forms in the corpora. A relative frequency of usage was found to be 73.5% for the *to*-infinitive in the Internet search.
4.9 The Verb *Consent*

‘To give assent or permission (to do something),’ ‘agree,’ and ‘accede,’ are the definitions of this verb according to the *Collins English Dictionary* online. ‘To give permission’ is the primary sense observed with this verb when used with a noun. However, according to the *Oxford Dictionaries* online, when this verb is used with the infinitive it has the sense ‘agree to do something.’ Examples (134) to (138) treat the type *consent + to-infinitive.*

(134) The assumption that the Palestinians had consented to accept Israel as a Jewish state was based on a letter that the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat sent to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin just prior to the signing of the Oslo accords. (COCA, 2011, ACAD, ForeignAffairs)

In (134), there were high hopes that the Palestinian leadership would finally enter into a lasting peace agreement with Israel. The expectation that the Palestinians had agreed to acknowledge Israel as a Jewish nation was founded on a piece of correspondence that Yasir Arafat transmitted to Yitzhak Rabin immediately before the endorsement of the Oslo accords. The Americans were the backers of the Oslo process and had put the requirements of both sides into a series of accords for the two parties to agree to. The acceptance of Israel by the Palestinians was a major event. It was assumed that the Palestinians had agreed to accept the state of Israel. The actualization of the matrix verb leads to the actualization of the to-infinitive here, the to-infinitive being future with respect to the consent (agreement). Example (135) considers the high achievement of the English painter Constable:

(135) His Romanticism is as fully on display in "Salisbury Cathedral From the Meadows," which Constable consented to hang in the 1831 Royal Academy exhibition in London close enough to Turner's "Caligula's Palace and Bridge" to invite comparison. (COCA, 1991, NEWS, NYTimes)

His supremacy of the romantic style is perfectly exhibited in the painting ‘Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows,’ which the painter agreed to have hung in the 1831 Royal Academy presentation in London conveniently situated near Turner’s ‘Caligula’s Palace and Bridge’ to encourage comparison. After Constable agreed with the representative from the 1831 Royal Academy exhibition, the to-infinitive
could then be actualized: the first action led to the second. Although Constable is not the person who physically hung the painting in the exhibition, he had it hung there through a proxy, and is therefore construed as responsible for the action carried out by the exhibition representative. In (136) although the jungle allowed itself to be pointed out yesterday, today, it is no longer exposing anything of itself to the viewer:

(136) Whereas yesterday the jungle consented to be pointed out, to illustrate itself, to follow obediently the contour of the trail offering characteristic samples of its species and habits, like Persian vendors displaying their wares on a roadside—today, right now, it is no longer illustrating anything. (COCA, 1997, FIC, Salmagundi)

The jungle is depicted or personified here as a conscious entity that can consent. The observer wants to see and understand the jungle and the jungle allows itself to be viewed by the observer. The matrix verb consented is crucial to the actualization of the to-infinitive, which in this sentence is construed in the passive, so that the jungle’s consent leads to its undergoing the action of being pointed out. The description in (137) presents the matrix verb as a gerund-participle whose subject, although implicit, is understood to be the same for both verbs:

(137) Consenting to have one’s mail opened by another, to be visited without prior arrangement, and to have another arrange aspects of one’s plans or activities without prior consultation (e.g. accepting invitations in one’s name) may or may not be justified by their instrumental value, but in any case they are taken in our culture as expressing the existence of certain attitudes, as in part constituting those attitudes. (BNC, ANH, W_ac_humanities_arts)

Agreeing to have someone else open your letters, to be dropped in on socially without notice and to be subject to someone else’s planning without previous discussion is possibly condoned by their assessed worth but in any situation in our culture they are understood to articulate the presence of certain mind-sets, in part incorporating these very same dispositions. As seen in other instances where the verb have is followed by a past participle, the action that is being done is that of
passively undergoing an action. Therefore the actualization of the matrix verb leads to the actualization of the to-infinitive by the matrix verb subject. (138) is a farcical look at what the modern-day reaction to Lady Godiva riding naked through the streets might be from a bureaucratic standpoint:

(138) The Health Department would be terribly concerned also about the little piles of pollution said horse would leave along the way and the sanitary engineers would have to be paid time and a half and the union would have to consent to remove same. (Canadian, 1989, NEWS, Montreal Gazette)

The Health Department would be highly anxious as well about the excrement that the aforementioned equine would drop on the way and the waste management engineer would have to be recompensed extra and the union would have to agree to discard the aforementioned material. (138) uses the hypothetical because of the context – Lady Godiva having a ride through town in the present day. Both subsequence and subject control are observed here: the union would have to agree to dispose of the horse droppings.

The following examples (139) to (143) employ the verb consent followed by to + gerund-participle.

(139) In 1998, after extensive lobbying by Dr. Stefansson, the parliament of Iceland passed a law selling his company the exclusive right for 12 years to collect and analyze all the medical records of the entire population. This law, the first of its kind, presumes that Icelanders consent to giving their medical records to Decode unless they request in writing to be excluded. (COCA, 2001, SPOK, CBS_Sixty)

In (139) the precedent-setting Icelandic law supposes that Icelanders agree to giving their medical documentation to a company called Decode except if they apply in writing for an exemption. The Icelanders are the subject of both the matrix verb consent and the gerund-participle giving. From the context it is clear that the giving of the medical records is future with respect to the consent. The to-infinitive is possible here with the same future reference. The gerund-participle could imply that consent is being given to a hypothetical action that might never actually take
place. In (140) consent is not a prerequisite to the realization of the event denoted by the gerund-participle:

(140) The racial childhood (n55) of these Caribbean and Pacific-Islander populations had already been identified by Senator George E Hoar's public remarks on the Senate floor (during the July 5, 1898 debate on the status of Hawai'i) when he argued that consulting the "natives" of those islands on whether they consented to being annexed "would be as reasonable as to take the vote of children in an orphan asylum or an idiot school." (COCA, 1999, ACAD, AmerStudies)

The patriarchal attitude towards the Caribbean and Pacific-Islanders had already been determined by Senator George E Hoar's commentary on the Senate floor when he contended that seeking the opinion of the inhabitants of those islands on whether they agreed to being appropriated “would be as reasonable as to take the vote of children in an orphan asylum or an idiot school.” The to-infinitive is possible in this context and would give the impression that annexation depended on the natives’ agreement. Example (141) concerns Locke’s political philosophy on consent in the political domain:

(141) Is it really the case that consent is not required from non-property-owners? Locke’s defenders are unwilling to admit that this might be so. On the other hand, it seems implausible that most male English adults readily consented to having no political rights, as would seem to be the implication of Locke's arguing that England was a country with government by consent. (BNC, EVP, W_ac_polit_law_edu)

The author is of the opinion that it seems farfetched that the majority of English men agreed without demur to having no constitutional claims, as would seem to be the conclusion following from Locke’s contention that at that time England was a country with law by implicit assent. Here adult English males are conceived as having no political rights, whether they agreed to the situation or not. In this case, the socio-political situation was set up so that only property owners were considered able to consent by accepting their inheritance. Thus, those with nothing to inherit were either not required to consent or not able to, and their situation
remained the same with or without consent. The to + gerund-participle represents the state of having no rights as contemporaneous to the consenting and as having started to exist before the consent was given. The subject is the same for both verbs. (142) discusses the life of British mixed-race boxer Randolph Turpin, whose professional life sank to an embarrassing low when he took on ‘boxer v. wrestler’ competitive fights and even agreed to staging a full return to boxing at a promotion in Peterborough:

(142) His career plunged to humiliating depths when he engaged in ‘boxer v. wrestler’ bouts and even consented to making a fully fledged comeback in a boxing promotion at Peterborough (which was not licensed by the BBBC) at the age of 35 (Birtley, 1976, p.133). (BNC, CL1, W_non_ac_soc_science)

The matrix verb and the to + gerund-participle are both controlled by the same noun: Turpin consented before he made his comeback. The to-infinitive and the to + gerund-participle are both possible here with a similar sense. The gerund-participle however places greater focus on what the comeback would involve: the pain of practice to a 35-year-old body, the touring, the crowds, the pressure. In the context of (143) 1500 Swedes agreed to donating a blood sample to be used for future research regarding the heart and blood vessels and diabetes:

(143) For example, in a 1990 study, approximately 1500 Swedes consented to giving a blood sample for future research on cardiovascular disease and diabetes. (Canadian, 2004, ACAD, Health Law Journal)

The same subject is understood for both the matrix verb and the gerund-participle. It possible to use the to-infinitive in this case. The to + gerund-participle differs slightly from the to-infinitive construction in making it less clear that the consenters are actually going to give a blood sample – it may have been a merely theoretical question as to whether they would give their consent to such a request, similar to the impression observed in (57) and (139).

Although no cases of non-subject control were observed in our corpus data, a search for consented + to + killing on the Internet turned up the following attestation of this possibility:
(144) A number of US generals, including Lt General Omar Bradley, tacitly **consented to killing** German prisoners in retaliation. (Fitzpatrick, 2015, para. 20, www.irishexaminer.com)

This example is taken from a review of a new book on the Second World War. In reprisal for a number of reprehensible acts committed by the German Army, several American generals quietly allowed the killing of German soldiers who had been taken captive. Although the US generals consented to the killing, they were not the ones actually doing it; the regular soldiers were. Thus non-subject control is understood here.

4.9.1 Summary of the Verb **Consent**

*Consent* is a verb that follows the same pattern as most of the other verbs of agreement when construed with the *to*-infinitive. It may be that the permission sense of the verb + *to* + noun construction colours its other uses. As expected, all *to*-infinitive constructions were seen to construe the matrix verb’s event as leading to the actualization of the *to*-infinitive’s event. With respect to the *to* + gerund-participle construction, the relationships were similar to those seen with other verbs. The possibility of differing subjects is attested with this form, as exemplified by (144) above. The possibility of the actualization of the *to* + gerund-participle being prior to the matrix verb was also observed with this verb, as in (141). In terms of relative frequency, *consent* + *to*-infinitive was found 86.6% in the BNC, 86.3% in COCA and 93.1% in the Canadian corpus. The Internet examples were significantly different in that the relative frequency of *consented* + *to*-infinitive was found to be 51.6%, similar to that of *conceded* + *to*-infinitive.

4.10 The Verb **Subscribe**

*Subscribe* is a synonym of *agree* that is not used as generally as some of the other equivalents seen. The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* online gives ‘to assent to’ and ‘to feel favourably disposed’ among its definitions. ‘Express or feel agreement with (an idea or proposal)’ is proposed as a definition of this verb by the *Oxford Dictionaries* online. The most common manifestation of this verb with this sense is V + *to* + Noun and/or noun phrase as in *I subscribe to the theory that when it comes to dating: you attract what you are.* (Mack Major, March 14, para. 1, Facebook). The usage shows an inclination towards ideas, theories and other intangible entities as what is assented to, agreed to or felt favourably disposed towards. The dearth of examples from the corpora testifies to the low frequency of
use of this verb, particularly when accompanying the to-infinitive and to + gerund-participle. The corpora provided only two examples, both of which were subscribe to having, one from the COCA and the other from the BNC:

(145) WILLIAMS: Well what about a partition? Now Tony Blair said this morning he's opposed to having a partition or may be necessary. How would you handle that matter? Would you subscribe to having American-NATO forces act as a protection force inside of Kosovo? NICKLES: First place, when I said an international police keeping force, I don't think it has to be an American-led NATO force. (COCA, 1999, SPOK, Fox_Sunday)

This first example refers to the conflict in Yugoslavia that culminated in the Kosovo War and the ultimate intervention of NATO forces. In this interview Williams asks Nickles if he would agree with having an American-led NATO force function as a security military organization inside Kosovo. In this particular context the to-infinitive would also be possible because of the hypothetical would. With both the infinitive and the gerund-participle, the modal verb would represent the event as being in the future. This allows us to hypothesize that the reason why the to + gerund-participle is used is similar to that found in (73) where the subject would have liked a vegetarian wedding but acquiesced to having meat options, i.e. accepted an existing option. The question then is ‘would you be in favour of this particular situation?’ (146) seems similar to (145):

(146) In November 1990, her colleague Katherine Howe nominated Beverley for the Cosmopolitan /Clairol Achievement Awards. In the event, Beverley won not only the Science and Technology Section but was named outright winner, receiving a prize of 5,000. No doubt Cosmopolitan' s young woman readers will be impressed by Beverley's achievements and she is happy to fulfil that role.' I'm not one to fuss about women's rights. Mine's a pragmatic view. I subscribe to having as much information as possible available at any given time. If what the Award achieves is that women know that these options are open to them, then it's a good thing.' I was lucky. I won a scholarship to one of the Day School Trust schools and we were able
to study what we wanted. It was a girls' school so there was no 'the boys are going to do this, the girls are going to do that.' (BNC, H45, W_pop_lore)
The subject is in favour of being in possession of as great a quantity of data as is available at all times.

The following examples are all taken from the Internet resulting from Google searches for ‘subscribed to have /to having’, ‘to do/to doing’, and ‘to be/to being.’ The results were interesting in that no to-infinitives using the verbs to have and to be with the definition ‘assent’ were found. The phrase subscribed to have was only found in use within the context of services provided in print or online such as newspapers or newsletters and subscribed to be in the context of signing up for these services. For example: ActiveCampaign’s email marketing service requires that all of your contacts be opted-in, meaning they willingly subscribed to be on your email list, and are expecting to receive mass emails from you. (http://www.activecampaign.com/help/how-do-i-opt-in-my-old-customer-or-member-list/)

Examples (147), (148) and (149) below are characteristic of the sequence found on the Internet, in that subscribe is often seen with the main verb in the present perfect form accompanied by an adverb, generally always or never.

(147) This year I am starting my 21st year of homeschooling! I’ve never subscribed to having a curriculum for all the subjects, or that all the subjects have to be covered with curriculum every year! (NLHS, 2013, para. 5, http://newlifehomeschool.com)

In this particular context the subject is a longtime homeschool mother who has never been in favour of having an educational program for all the subjects. This is a special case in which she is describing a possible option that she has not chosen. (148) is taken from a British forum about car tires:

(148) Hi Kevin
Point well taken, I have always subscribed to having a full set the same even for my everyday barge.
Having searched among the older threads it seems that the following appear to be the better choices, Goodyear Excellence, Bridgestone Turanza ER300 and Vredestein Sportrac 2.


The subject states that he has always been in favour of being in the situation of having a full set of the same type of tires even for his lowly work vehicle. This situation can in no way be actualized by the mere fact of being in agreement with it. It is an ideal that the speaker believes to be the best-case scenario. Example (149) is from a comment board discussing the small size of environmentally friendly homes:

(149) It's not really that much smaller than my apartment. Not that I'm complaining-- I'm a single guy, and I've never subscribed to having a lot of possessions. (LanternWaste, 2008, para. 90, http://www.democraticunderground.com)

The subject states that he has never been in favour of owning many things. He has an idealized situation in mind in which he does not have many possessions. It is this situation that he is in favour of. As in (148) above, the situation cannot be actualized by merely subscribing to it. (150) and (151) represent the only infinitives found in the Google searches.

(150) For most of my adult life, I've subscribed to do what others thought was “right for me.” My mom wanted me to become a doctor. My dad had plans for me to take over the family business. My sister thought I should “follow my passion” and become a professional musician. (Krummenacher, 2012, para. 3, http://www.karlkrummenacher.com)

In (150) the author of the blog states that for most of his grown-up years, he has submitted to the opinion of others and done what they felt was suitable for him. In this case the subject subscribed to the ideas of what the others thought he should do and by submitting to the ideas of others, this led to the actualization of the to-infinitive, so that he in fact did these things. (151) is taken from a Christian spiritual
devotion website, in which the author explains a New Testament passage and its Old Testament reference:

(151) In Galatians 3:10 Paul quotes Deuteronomy 27:26 and declares that all who are of the law are under a curse: they **have subscribed to do** the law but have actually not kept the law. (Longhenry, 2012, para. 13, http://www.spiritual manna.info)

*They*, the subject, have made a commitment to do the law (of Moses) but have not literally observed it. Here **subscribe** evokes a solemn commitment, but to something they were never actually able to do. In (152) once again the plural subject, (medical doctors) is subscribing to an idea or philosophy.

(152) Since the time of Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.), the Father of Medicine, physicians **have** traditionally **subscribed to doing** no harm and prescribed what is in the best interest of their individual patients; in other words, putting their patients first. This concept is known as individual-based ethics. (Faria, 2012, para. 3, http://www.haciendapub.com)

From the time of Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, until now, doctors have generally adhered to the philosophy of doing no injury and stipulated the healing action to be taken that has the most benefit for the well-being of each patient. The philosophy does not become actualized due to the subject subscribing to it. In fact, the philosophy existed before the group of people adhered to it. Example (153) is part of a discussion on strategy of how to win a battle in *Clash of Clans* online game, in which the subject states that he has never been in favour of the strategy of carrying out attacks on equally ranked opponents:

(153) This is part of it. I've **never subscribed to doing** mirror attacks. Plenty will say it works, plenty will tell you its garbage. I think it works for some, maybe new or lower clans- but as you grow clan wise and start getting matched up with stronger, better clans- its a flawed strategy. (Cnaff11, 2015, para. 3, http://forum.supercell.net)

It is not clear if the subject himself has ever used this strategy but the strategy clearly exists. It is not dependent for its existence on someone subscribing to it: subscribing does not lead to the actualization of doing. In (154) a homeschool
strategy is discussed, and the speaker says she was invariably in favour of the idea of completing the most difficult things first thing in the day and then gliding along for the remainder of the time:

(154) I always subscribed to doing the “hard” stuff first, and then coasting the rest of the day. For 3 years we have done math and handwriting first, then followed by reading and other stuff. (Contreras, 2011, para. 26, http://ourmilk andhoneymeadows.com)

As seen with other examples featuring to + gerund-participle, the idea of doing the “hard” stuff first existed as an option before this homeschooler subscribed to the idea. Therefore, the actualization of the matrix verb did not lead to the actualization of the to + gerund-participle. Examples (155), (156) and (157) feature the to + gerund-participle being. (155) is a comment on a forum for the online game series Shadowrun Universe in which the subject states that he has always been in favour of the strategy of having the ability to escape on foot when things take a turn for the worse:

(155) For skills I put 3 in acting and close combat (unarmed and other weapons? Yes please) and 2 in athletics (I've always subscribed to being able to run when things go bad) and firearms although maybe I can scrap athletics and put in individual skills for firearms (the problem here is I don't know what weapons are common in SR) I also took negotiation (I read it is important for faces) etiquette (helped in my first game) and electronic warfare and computer among other things splashed around. (Omnitricks, 2015, para. 7, http://shadowrun.com)

The strategy is something that preexists, as a possible option, with respect to the subscribing to it. Additionally, the subject's subscribing to the strategy does not lead to its actualization. It is possible to subscribe to a strategy and never be in a position to use it: the strategy would continue to exist and the subject continue to view it with favour. Example (156) is from a blog post about the actor Paul Newman, who the blogger states never gave in to the idea of being ordinary:

(156) In a vapid, pointless society like Hollywood, where it seems weight and fashion matter more than anything, Newman never subscribed to
**being** ordinary. He had a Porsche 356 engine put into his VW Bug, for god’s sake. He wore a beer bottle opener as a necklace. (Cameron, 2008, para. 3, http://cuntinglinguist.com)

Similarly to (155), the idea of being ordinary existed as a possible mode of behaviour before it was or was not given in to. To believe in the idea does not actualize the idea; not believing in the idea does not make the idea disappear. The last example featuring *being* (157) is on a memorial page for the chief of police who died while on duty:

(157) As a recruit 5 weeks into the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department Academy Class #403, I will be honored to serve my community in law enforcement much in the same way that Chief Pimentel devoted his time and energy towards his career. My greatest wish is to be the type of leader and man that Chief Pimentel **subscribed to being** each day of his extraordinary life. (Proctor, 2014, para. 5, http://www.odmp.org)

The subject says here that his most heartfelt aspiration is to be the kind of officer and fellow human being that Chief Pimentel staked his name on being. Once again the concept of an ideal is present in this example. The ideal aspired to is not made real however by the belief in it, and so the matrix verb’s event does not lead to the actualization of the *to* + gerund-participle. Example (158) was specifically searched for using the string ‘subscribed to killing’ in order to verify whether there were any attested uses demonstrating non-subject control:

(158) Many humans have been sacrificed to fix the eclipse events. Throughout history, the killing of people to placate the gods when the moon eclipses the sun shows us clearly that humans respond to any astronomical event with greatest fear and fury. This is also why the Christian popes **subscribed to killing** astronomers who rationally worked out the truth. Astronomy was mostly supported by governments and religions only if these observations serviced whatever belief system that existed at that time. That is, the status quo has to be protected. (Supkis, 2009, para. 23, https://emsnews.wordpress.com)

This passage represents Christian popes as being in favour of having cosmologists
who worked out explanations of eclipses killed. Non-subject control is observed here: the popes were ultimately responsible for the killings but were not the ones who performed the acts.

4.10.1 Summary of the Verb *Subscribe*

*Subscribe*, in the agreement sense, is a little-used verb as attested by the insubstantial findings in the corpora and the Internet search. Furthermore, it is a verb that does not frequently take a *to*-infinitive. Its dictionary definition of ‘assent,’ ‘be in favour of’ seems to evoke the notion of an abstract, sometimes quasi-philosophical ideal, theory, or concept. When construed with the *to*-infinitive, as in (150) and (151), one understands that by adhering to a particular philosophy, the subject feels compelled to accomplish some action based on this system of thinking. The *to* + gerund-participle is the more frequent complement of this verb, in spite of the misleading figures in Appendix B, because of the antecedence of a theory’s existence to a subject’s adherence to it. Usually the agreement with a philosophical stance does not lead to any actualization. As with *accede, acquiesce* and *assert, subscribe* + *to*-infinitive and *subscribe* + *to* + gerund-participle is represented only in COCA where the relative frequency of the *to*-infinitive form is 94.8%. The Internet search yielded a relative frequency of 77.5% for the *to*-infinitive form (see Appendix B notes).

4.11 The Verb *Yield*

*Yield*, like *subscribe*, is an infrequently used form in the sense of ‘concede’ (*Oxford Dictionaries.com* online), as attested by the fact that there are no *yield* + *to*-infinitive examples from the corpora and just two examples of *yield* + *to* + gerund-participle, both found in the COCA. As has been noted, concede gives the impression of giving in or capitulating to someone or something. *Dictionary.com* online, *Dictionary.cambridge.org* online, *Oxforddictionaries.com* online, *The Collins Canadian English Dictionary*, *Merriam-webster.com* online were consulted, but did not give examples or usages that included either the *to*-infinitive or the *to* + gerund-participle as possibilities following the verb *yield*. We will begin with examples of the infinitive.

(159) It is clear from their asking their way that these enquirers were *teachable*. They not only *yielded to be* instructed, but they were eager to be taught; and therefore they asked for information. It is a hopeful sign when children ask questions; if we can get them to desire knowledge, the desire
will be more valuable than the knowledge itself. (Spurgeon, 2015, para. 21, https://answersingenesis.org)

This example is taken from a sermon by Charles Spurgeon discussing a passage from the Old Testament in which the Israelites are returning from captivity in a foreign land and have questions for their priests concerning their traditional religious heritage. The Israelites are depicted as not only allowing themselves to be educated but being impatient to receive instruction. Here the actualization of the matrix verb leads to the actualization of the to-infinitive: they could not be instructed until they allowed themselves to be, therefore we know that they yielded and were instructed and due to the phrase not only. A similar impression is observed in the example below:

(160) The crowds kept surging until Friday evening, when the idol was finally lifted by the puja samiti workers for immersion. A huge procession was taken out, much larger than Durga immersions usually command, under police protection after the Goddess finally yielded to be moved! (Pandey, 2013, para. 6, http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com)

This text describes the end of the 6-day Durga Puja Hindu festival in East India when the image of Durga is taken to the river to be submerged in a ritualized return to her husband. A large cortege was led out, after Durga finally allowed herself to be transported. Because the goddess is endowed with human characteristics, yield is felt to imply a certain agency here. As in (159), the actualization of the matrix verb yielded leads to the actualization of the to-infinitive + past participle, to be moved. (161) is taken from the blog of a conspiracy theorist Christian who discusses getting rid of possessions that may be encumbering and states that he realized that he was also taking this direction when he agreed to carry out anything the Almighty demanded of him:

(161) They found liberty in dispossessing themselves of these things. As the one man stated, he sold or gave away 80% of what he owned. I found myself following a similar path when I yielded to do whatever my heavenly Father required of me. (Herrin, 2014, para. 30, http://parablesblog.blogspot.ca)
Yielded to do in this context behaves in canonical manner: both verbs are controlled by the same subject and the actualization of the matrix verb is necessary before the to-infinitive can be actualized. (162) describes how the grunge band Pearl Jam reluctantly agreed to make a music video a cartoon adaptation built by "Spawn" genius creator Todd McFarlane:

(162) After that Pearl Jam stopped making music videos. They release three multi-platinum albums without any support from MTV and were arguably more happy for it. Fast forward to Yield, and the song Do the Evolution. The boys 'yielded' to do a video this time as an animated piece put together by "Spawn" comic-book mastermind Todd McFarlane. The video tells the raw and visceral history of mankind, starting with the very beginning of life, in a manner not unlike Fantasia on acid. (McD, 2003, para. 6, http://everything2.com)

The scare quotes around the verb yielded indicate that the yielding was not really all that reluctant. In this context, the (reluctant) agreement leads to the actualization of doing the video.

Some attestations were also found with the gerund-participle. The usage below is reminiscent of the uses of concede in (100) and (101), in which the idea is that of consenting to a temptation:

(163) In 1969 and 1973, Newman made two films for director George Roy Hill with Robert Redford: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, and The Sting. They were very well made, highly entertaining, but as daft as The Silver Chalice. They were also just about the only times Newman really yielded to being adorable - though hindsight suggests that he swallowed the drug far less than his co-star Robert Redford, for whom Sundance became a beguiling but misleading Camelot. (Thomson, 2008, para 8, http://www.theguardian.com)

Subject control is observed here, and yielding is understood as preceding Newman’s being adorable. Example (164) is from a paper written about how gifted
children fare when confronting a system that does not challenge them or differentiate among academic abilities:

(164) Unfortunately no achievement also convinced a few that they were “stupid” rather than highly intelligent. Instead of finding satisfaction in achievement when facing compulsory school teaching, they were so bored with school that they gave up trying almost immediately and yielded to doing nothing, a passive attitude that sometimes lasted from school year 1 to year 12. Several participants reported that they did not do a single assignment for the entire duration of their school years. (Persson, 2010, p. 547, http://www.diva-portal.org)

Rather than enjoying accomplishment when confronting obligatory education, the students were so disinterested by school that they abandoned making any effort virtually at once and gave in to the temptation of giving up, adopting an indifferent stance that frequently persisted for the entire elementary and secondary educational period. In (165), in the absence of a back-up plan for reaching his journey’s end, the speaker accepts being stranded in the airport for the night:

(165) Without an alternative means of getting to my destination, I yielded to being stuck in the airport overnight. (Thompson, 2008, para. 6, http://www.beatbots.com)

Here the situation is out of the control of the subject, who is accepting the inevitable. The matrix verb denotes the acceptance of the state he finds himself in: the state preexists its acceptance and continues to exist after the latter. In this example, taken from a novel called Michael, Brother of Jerry by Jack London, Michael is a dog who did not resist the action of being thrown into the washtub:

(166) Michael yielded to being flung into the tub. He recognized that baths were necessary and compulsory, although they were administered in much better fashion at Cedarwild, while Kwaque and Steward had made a sort of love function of it when they bathed him. (London, 1919, para 28, http://www.jacklondons.net)

The two actions are simultaneous: he was being flung into the tub and he yielded to this being done to him. Example (167) is taken from a blog written by a Royal
Malaysian Air Force pilot who struggled with aquaphobia during Helicopter Underwater Escape Training:

(167) I was okay underwater once I yielded to being there. Save for one minor panic attack during which I took down a caboodle of water in the second escape, I managed every egress, and clung fast to the simulator once I had surfaced. (Hobbit1964, 2011, para 15, http://hobbit1964.blogspot.ca)

As the speaker says, he was all right under the water's surface as soon as he accepted being underwater at that time. This resembles the previous example (166) in that the action of yielding denoted by the matrix verb is simultaneous with that of being underwater: the person was already under the water and relaxed into the moment at the same time. (168) comes from a personal blog in which the author is describing his mother who has recently passed:

(168) But as I was writing I realised that part of my mums enduring charm and spirit was that she never truly grew up. She could, of course, act grown up when convention dictated. But she never yielded to having to fully grow up. She still did the things that she wanted to do, the way she wanted to do them, no matter if they seemed childish or even a little foolish to others. (Noble, 2014, para. 4, http://davidnobleblog.com)

He describes the things he has in common with his mother, what she passed down to him that he is sharing with his own children. But he recalls that she never found it necessary to give in entirely to being an adult. The necessity of growing up is construed here as a normal requirement of human life that she resisted. Although involving the gerund-participle having as in (168), the sense of the example below is quite different:

(169) The tension between the missionaries and their leader unsettled Grant. He slept fitfully four nights in the middle of November, and he admitted to friends back in Utah that, while he seldom was attacked with "the blues," he could "almost get up an attack this morning and not half try." With Ensign and Taylor increasingly restive and even demanding, Grant finally yielded to having the missionaries learn the language among the
people, though the decision went against his better judgment. (Walker, 2004, p. 241, https://ojs.lib.byu.edu)

In this description of Heber J. Grant and his experiences doing business and Mormon missionary work in Japan, Grant is depicted as wanting the team to learn literary Japanese so they could interact with upper-class Japanese people, while the other missionaries pushed for learning the everyday dialect of ordinary people by living with them. As Ensign and Taylor were becoming progressively more impatient, Grant finally permitted the missionaries to acquire the Japanese language among the native population, even though he thought this choice was wrong. Grant yielded (gave in to the pressure put on him by the two others) to letting them learn Japanese their way. The gerund-participle gives the impression here that having the missionaries learn the language among the people was a method that was being pushed by more and more people until Grant finally caved in to the pressure and had them adopt this method.

The last example contains to + doing:
(170) So far, they have not yielded to doing the correct thing. Rather, they have sought to justify their error and have continued to politicize the situation unnecessarily, thereby playing with the investment of this magnitude by people who have the interest of our country and the people of Aba at heart. (Nnaji, 2015, para. 4, http://serifoundation.org)

The website where (170) was found is that of the Seri Foundation, which advocates social, economic and political equity in Nigeria. This article discusses the serious issues that came to light when the Aba Integrated Power Project was wrested from the hands of the investors in the end stages of development and not completed so that the population was still without consistent and efficient electricity and the investors were out millions of dollars of investment. The realization of this project would be the right thing to do, but up to this point, the Bureau of Public Enterprises has not given in to acting in the best interests of the people: although the BPE is under pressure from investors and the Seri Foundation to regularize the situation, they have not yielded to the pressure to enact the correct measures. If
the matrix verb were actualized here, this would lead to the actualization of the $to +$ gerund-participle.

4.11.1 Summary of the Verb *Yield*

The sequences *yield* + $to$-infinitive and *yield* + $to$ + gerund-participle are quite rare, but evidence of these forms can be found on the Internet. The examples *yield* + $to$-infinitive appears to be fairly typical in the way that it both presents the antecedence of the matrix verb with respect to the $to$-infinitive in all the examples found and implies subject control. The $to$ + gerund-participle shows variable behaviour, in that it shows a significant propensity to simultaneous existence with the matrix verb’s event, as in (164), (165), (166) and (167), and sometimes preexistence, as in (168). As with *concur* and *conform*, *yield*, not being very common in usage, was not found in the corpora in examples of both *yield* + $to$-infinitive and *yield* + $to$ + gerund-participle. The Internet searches resulted in a relative frequency of usage of 73.5% for the $to$-infinitive.
CHAPTER 5.
CONCLUSION
5.1 General Remarks

The problems of control and temporality regarding the to + gerund-participle vs. to-infinitive constructions have not received much attention in the literature. The data gathered in this study represents the first systematic investigation into to + infinitive vs. to + gerund-participles with verbs expressing the notion of agreement. It shows that the V + to-infinitive follows a regular pattern of subject control and a temporal sequence of events (cf. Duffley, 2006), whereas there are examples that depart from this pattern with V + to + gerund-participle. The following six questions emerged as a result of the explanatory gaps in the present analytical systems:

1. Is the meaning of the class of verbs of agreement a determining factor in the use of to + gerund-participle?

2. What is the role of to with respect to the gerund-participle? Can this be generalized or is it different for different gerund-participles?

3. Do all verbs of agreement follow this pattern? If not, which verbs of agreement do not and why?

4. What role does to have in relation to control with the verbs of agreement?

5. Why is temporal variation found with verbs of agreement followed by to + gerund-participle in spite of the presence of to?

6. What is the difference in meaning between the bare infinitive and the gerund-participle and how is this distinction related to the difference in temporal and control interpretations found with these two types of constructions?

The adoption of a two-level semantico-pragmatic approach, based on both lexical and grammatical meaning in addition to pragmatics (the way in which context contributes to meaning), is essential to understanding both control and temporality in the constructions that have been examined in this study. Agree can be used as a template to which the other verbs of agreement can be compared. In terms of control, agree + to-infinitive was observed to always occur with the same subject for both the matrix verb and the accompanying to-infinitive. All of the other
ten verbs of agreement examined followed this pattern. Temporality was also as predicted, with the matrix verb’s event preceding the actualization of the to-infinitive’s in time. The verb subscribe, however, was seen to resist use with the to-infinitive, no examples being found in our corpus and only a few on the Internet. This is due to its meaning of ‘adherence to or agreement with an idea.’ In one instance (150), it is used in the sense of ‘adhere to the opinion of others and therefore act in a particular manner.’ Here the to-infinitive is possible because subscribing is construed as actually leading to the realization of the infinitive’s event. In another instance, the idea conveyed is that of ‘solemn commitment made to act in a certain way’ (151). It is noteworthy that the only instance of subsequence found with subscribe + to + gerund-participle (145) is used with the modal verb would conjuring a hypothetical situation. The meaning discussed in all other instances involves ‘adherence’ to a notion already in existence and not the adherence leading to the actualization of the gerund-participle’s event.

The agree + to + gerund-participle structure was found in most cases to follow the same pattern of temporality and control as the to-infinitive. This is because one generally gives one’s agreement to an action before it is performed, and because one is generally asked for one’s agreement concerning an action that one is being asked to perform oneself. However, non-subject control was encountered with the to + gerund-participle construction, as was contemporaneous and anterior temporality. Non-subject control was observed with agree in (51) where agreement was given to a procedure to be carried out by someone else. This same type of control was seen with the verbs acquiesce (75), assent (87), consent (144) and subscribe (158). In (75) acquiesce is used in the sense of ‘agree,’ and the subject gives his agreement to an action which is to be performed both by him and his partner. In (87) and (144) the idea is that of giving one’s OK to actions carried out by someone else. Similarly, in (158) subscribe’s sense of ‘be in favour of’ allows a construal in which the subject approves of executions carried out by other agents.
The possibility of non-subject control with verbs of agreement is connected to the construing of agreeing as associating agreement (51), acquiescence (75), assent (87) or consent (144) to some action performed by another agent, or, in the case of *subscribe* (158), as giving one's endorsement to such an action. With a verb like *accede*, on the other hand, one does not conceive of 'accession' as something that can be given to an action to be carried out by someone else. Nor does one give concession, conformity or concurrence to something being done by someone else.

Subsequence is very frequent with *agree* + *to* + gerund-participle, with the agreement taking place first and leading to the actualization of the *to* + gerund-participle, as in (42) – (46). All of the other verbs of agreement except one were observed to demonstrate this form of temporality. *Subscribe*, however, the one verb with which this sequence was not found, was seen exclusively to be an endorsement of an idea or philosophy. Here by definition the idea or philosophy has to preexist the adherence to it, and so *subscribe* does not lead to the actualization of the *to* + gerund-participle’s event. *Agree* + *to* + gerund-participle also allows for an interpretation in which the gerund-participle’s event is understood to be prior to that denoted by the matrix. All of the other ten verbs of agreement examined allowed for a comparable understanding of temporality with the gerund-participle.

5.2 Findings

The answers to the six questions posed above are therefore as follows.

1. Is the meaning of the class of verbs of agreement a determining factor in the use of *to* + gerund-participle?

   Yes. The class of verbs of agreement all involve the idea of a something, whether it be an idea, an opinion, a philosophy or an action, to which agreement, approbation, consent or assent can be associated. Because of this, the *to* +
gerund-participle construction makes sense with all of them, with to evoking a movement of association of agreement to some action.

2. What is the role of to with respect to the gerund-participle? Can this be generalized or is it different for different gerund-participles?

As noted by Duffley (2014) the to accompanying the infinitive denotes a possible or actual movement towards the complete actualization of the infinitive's event. With the gerund-participle, on the other hand, to denotes a movement of association by which agreement is given to an action or state. If the gerund-participle is presented as a state or a philosophy, it can be conceived as being in existence simultaneously with the matrix verb’s event or as having been actualized at an earlier time. The to was also seen to associate approval to an idea or philosophy, as well as to an event. This can likely be generalized across different gerund-participles when used to convey these same types of ideas, philosophies and states. Not all gerund-participles denote states or philosophies, however, and therefore the gerund-participle is not felt to be prior to the matrix verb with these other senses.

3. Do all verbs of agreement follow this pattern? If not, which verbs of agreement do not and why?

All of the verbs of agreement investigated demonstrated subject control and temporal subsequence with the to-infinitive (subscribe being an outlier here in being very rare in this construction) and variable control and temporal interpretations with the to + gerund-participle. As is to be expected, the meaning of the matrix verb is the key factor here.

4. What role does to have in relation to control with the verbs of agreement?
When used with an infinitival complement, the preposition *to* denotes a movement leading to the realization of the infinitive’s event. With verbs of agreement, the act of agreeing commits the agreer to move to the actualization of the infinitive’s future event. When an event is represented by the *to* + gerund-participle construction, the gerund-participle’s event is construed as an entity to which agreement is given. This allows the possibility that agreement is given to an action carried out by someone else.

5. Why is temporal variation found with verbs of agreement followed by *to* + gerund-participle in spite of the presence of *to*?

The *to* + gerund-participle construction associates agreement with the event depicted by the gerund-participle. If the event is a state or idea, it can be in existence prior to the event of agreeing, thereby not manifesting the forward linear trajectory characteristic of the *V* + *to*-infinitive structure. With the infinitive, *to* is construed as a movement towards actualization, which necessarily situates the actuality of the infinitive’s event at the end of the movement signified by the preposition, and implies a subsequent position of the infinitive’s event with respect to that of the matrix.

6. What is the difference in meaning between the bare infinitive and the gerund-participle and how is this distinction related to the difference in temporal and control interpretations found with these two types of constructions?

The bare infinitive *kill* in (7) *Cotroni agrees to kill Rizzuto* represents killing as an integral actualization, which makes *to* a movement towards actualization. The gerund-participle *killing* as in (8) *Cotroni agrees to killing Rizzuto*, is like a noun signifying ‘the assassination of Rizzuto.’ This makes *to* a mere movement associating Cotroni’s agreement with the action of killing Rizzuto. The approval can therefore be construed as attached to an event that has already been
accomplished. In addition, the gerund-participle structure does not necessarily entail that the action agreed to is performed by the person who agrees to it.

This study is another example of how control is determined by semantics and pragmatics and not by merely syntactic rules. More specifically, it has demonstrated the importance of the meaning of to (cf. Duffley, 1992). As mentioned in the introduction, a more practical explanation of these elements of language will greatly help second language teachers to improve the explanations that are given to second language learners.

5.3 Future Prospects and Limitations of the Present Study

Passive phrases involving verbs of agreement could shed light on the usage with verbs of agreement, as could the modal structures which are more complex. Verbs of yielding were only briefly touched on here and warrant further study. As well, verbs of compliance may yield some intriguing insights into the way the meaning of the verbs bleed into one another in certain contexts. A larger study including a wider use of Internet examples as well as intensive documentation as to example origin might be better able to ascertain if there is any real difference in usage between American and British English. Our study is inconclusive in this regard.

As can be seen from this study, some verbs had few attestations in the corpus and we could not address all the possibilities on the Internet but had to limit the data to frequent –ing forms + infinitives so as to get enough examples of comparable data from each verb. The difficulty in determining the ‘best’ complement to use with the verbs of agreement in the context of the online searches may have led to somewhat misleading results, in that the possibility of non-subject control with V + to + gerund-participle may have been underestimated by only searching for the verbs be, do and have. Research involving other verbal lexemes would be necessary to complete the picture here, but time and space do not permit it.
APPENDIX A (Part 1 – to-infinitive)

Percentages of total number of samples coming from each corpus consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>term + to-infinitive</th>
<th>BNC</th>
<th>COCA</th>
<th>Canadian Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accede</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accept</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiesce</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>32.6% *</td>
<td>33.4% *</td>
<td>34% *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assent</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<td>60%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
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<td>75%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>conform</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consent</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subscribe</td>
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<td>No matches</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yield</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Because of the large number of examples available, an approximately even number of examples was taken from each of the corpora.
APPENDIX A (Part 2 – to + gerund-participle)

Percentages of total number of samples coming from each corpus consulted

<table>
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<th>COCA</th>
<th>Canadian Corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
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<td>accept</td>
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<td>conform</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consent</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subscribe</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>No matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yield</td>
<td>No matches</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Relative Frequency of the Constructions V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle (Part 1 – in the Corpora)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construction</th>
<th>BNC</th>
<th>COCA</th>
<th>Canadian corpus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>accede + to-infinitive</td>
<td>1 (n=1)</td>
<td>0.714 (n=5)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accede + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.286 (n=2)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accept + to-infinitive</td>
<td>1 (n=38)</td>
<td>1 (n=155)</td>
<td>0.958 (n=23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accept + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.042 (n=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiesce + to-infinitive</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.286 (n=4)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiesce + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.714 (n=10)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree + to-infinitive</td>
<td>0.994 (n=3,253)</td>
<td>0.996 (n=13,309)</td>
<td>0.994 (n=1,370)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree + to + g-p</td>
<td>0.006 (n=21)</td>
<td>0.004 (n=58)</td>
<td>0.006 (n=8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assent + to-infinitive</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.800 (n=12)</td>
<td>1 (n=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assent + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.200 (n=3)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concede + to-infinitive</td>
<td>1 (n=6)</td>
<td>0.763 (n=29)</td>
<td>0.714 (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concede + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.184 (n=7)</td>
<td>0.286 (n=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concur + to-infinitive</td>
<td>1 (n=1)</td>
<td>1 (n=3)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concur + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conform + to-infinitive</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>1 (n=38)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conform + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consent + to-infinitive</td>
<td>0.866 (n=103)</td>
<td>0.863 (n=365)</td>
<td>0.931 (n=67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consent + to + g-p</td>
<td>0.134 (n=16)</td>
<td>0.137 (n=58)</td>
<td>0.069 (n=5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subscribe + to-infinitive</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>0.948 (n=55)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>subscribe + to + g-p</td>
<td>1 (n=1)</td>
<td>0.052 (n=3)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yield + to-infinitive</td>
<td>1 (n=11)</td>
<td>1 (n=37)</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yield + to + g-p</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
<td>ø</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A possibility of error, possibly significant, exists due to search results of the corpus finding a sequence that matches the search requirements but upon close reading turns out to be either the wrong form (noun instead of infinitive verb, or noun instead of matrix verb) or a passive form of matrix verb, or a sense which is not a synonym of agree.

ø indicates no match to the search criteria was found.
APPENDIX B

Relative Frequency of the Constructions V + to-infinitive and V + to + gerund-participle (Part 2 – from the Internet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb Phrase</th>
<th>Google search raw numbers</th>
<th>Google search with “similar results omitted”</th>
<th>Relative frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>acceded to do</td>
<td>577,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.833</td>
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<tr>
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<td>41,200</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.167</td>
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<td>acceded to be</td>
<td>1,120,000</td>
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<td>0.650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceded to being</td>
<td>149,000</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceded to have</td>
<td>566,000</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceded to having</td>
<td>75,600</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.417</td>
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<tr>
<td>accepted to do</td>
<td>6,410,000</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>0.937</td>
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<tr>
<td>accepted to doing</td>
<td>127,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.063</td>
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<td>6,770,000</td>
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<td>0.585</td>
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<td>0.415</td>
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<td>0.776</td>
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<td>314,000</td>
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<td>0.224</td>
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<td>0.452</td>
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<td>0.263</td>
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<td>0.941</td>
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<td>0.112</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>yielded to having</strong></td>
<td>122,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.322</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The possibility of error is higher than that in the corpora due to the lack of specificity in the search engine. Using inverted commas (" " ) will induce the search engine to look for results with those specific words in sequence, however, the words can be interspersed with punctuation. In addition to this issue, the matrix verb may be in the passive form or may have a sense other than that of a synonym of agree.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Subject control</th>
<th>Non-subject control</th>
<th>agreement</th>
<th>to-infinitive</th>
<th>to-gerund-participle</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>acquiesce</td>
<td>v</td>
<td></td>
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<td>v</td>
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<tr>
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<td>yield</td>
<td>v</td>
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</table>
REFERENCES


Canadian Corpus: Corpus of Canadian English (Strathy). http://corpus.byu.edu/can/


COCA: Corpus of contemporary English. http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/


Dictionaries and Thesauri


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