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A SURVEY OF MEDIEVAL CONCEPTS OF CONGRUITY AND COMPLETENESS *AD SENSUM* AND *AD INTELLECTUM*

As far as the subject of this paper is concerned, early medieval grammarians started with the definition of a sentence — *oratio* — proposed by Priscian (6th c. AD):

Oratio est ordinatio dictionum congrua perfectam sententiam demonstrans. (Priscianus 1855: 53, 2.15)

A sentence is a congruous ordering of words which expresses a complete thought.

Clearly, the crucial parts of this definition are *congruitas* — congruence, and *perfectio* — completeness.[1] Apart from *oratio*, an important role in medieval grammar was played by the notion of construction — *constructio*. This concept was also taken from Priscian's *Institutiones Grammaticae*, even though the Roman grammarian did not elaborate on it systematically. Many grammarians employed the terms *constructio* and *oratio* as synonyms, which applies especially to the early medieval grammarians (11th—12th c.), as well as to various later, more didactically inclined writers. By contrast, the *modistae* gradually developed a definition of construction that sharply distinguishes it from the definition of sentence cited above. A standard example comes from Thomas of Erfurt:

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[1] *Congruitas*, *perfectio* — gr. *katallelotes*, *autoteles logos* in the grammar of Apollonius Discolus; cf. Kneepkens 1985: 116, 118.

> The construction is a combination of constructibles, made up of the modes of signifying, created by the intellect, and devised for the purpose of expressing a compound concept of the mind.[2] (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 279, 46.90)

One of the early authors whose definition of construction refers to Priscian's definition of sentence was Peter Helias, a twelfth-century grammarian who became, for the next generations of grammarians, an authority cited on par with Priscian (Petrus Helias 1978: 1):

Constructio est ordinatio dictionum congrua.

 A construction is a congruous ordering of words.

In contrast to his predecessors, commentators on Priscian (the authors of so called *Glossulae*), who completely equated both notions,[3] Peter Helias only uses the first part of the phrase cited above and proceeds to the problem of kinds of congruity (*congruitas*) pertaining to construction. Namely, construction could be congruent *secundum vocem* and *secundum sensum*:

> "Congruous" should be understood both with respect to terms [*voce*] and with respect to sense [*sensu*]. An ordering of words is congruent in respect of terms if the accidents of words are combined coherently, for instance, masculine gender with masculine, feminine one with feminine, neuter with neuter, plural with plural. [...] An ordering of words is congruous in respect of sense when — on the basis of words ordered according to the above-mentioned example — the hearer is able to grasp rationally something true or false, e.g. when it is said "A man runs" or "Socrates is a stone". For, although the latter sentence is false, the hearer rationally grasps something.[4] (Petrus Helias 1978: 1)

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[2] "Constructio est constructibilium unio, ex modis significandi, et intellectus causata, ad exprimendum mentis conceptum compositum finaliter adinventa." (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 279, 46.90). Polish translation can be found in Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 177.

[3] "Est autem perfecta oratio sive constructio, in qua plures dictiones positae insimul faciunt perfectum sensum."; cited after Kneepkens 1990: 146—147; cf. Kelly 2002: 167.

[4] The distinction *congruitas ad vocem / ad sensum* could be translated simply as 'syntactic / semantic correctness'. In the English-language literature it is rendered, depending on the author's theoretical predilections, as 'grammaticality / meaningfulness', 'grammaticality / semantic well-formedness', or 'cohesion / coherence'.

The example of a sentence congruous *ad vocem* but not *ad sensum* is "Socrates has hypothetical sandals with categorical straps" (Petrus Helias 1978: 1), in which elements of language and metalanguage are mixed. Similarly, we can compare "a categorical eye" to "a white man" (Petrus Helias 1978: 2). The former is congruent only with respect to terms, the latter — both in respect of terms and sense. In Helias's view, discrepancy *secundum sensum* makes the words "useless for a hearer that would like to rationally understand something"; which is the purpose of construction, in compliance with the authority of Priscian:

> He [i.e. Priscian] says: "each construction, called *syntaxis* by the Greeks, must relate to understanding [*intellectus vocis*]", because it will not be a construction unless it generates some intellectual comprehension in the hearer. (Petrus Helias 1978: 51; cf. Priscianus 1859: 201, 18.155)

Peter's was one of the earliest voices in the discussion that can be traced in grammar texts throughout the Middle Ages. In general, the discussion concerns the problem of whether and, if so, to what degree a grammarian should care about the semantic component of expressions. This issue was connected to the question of how to draw a clear line of demarcation between grammar and logic.

Namely, dialecticians often blended the concepts of truth (*veritas*) and congruity (*congruitas*). In this regard, a significant distinction was drawn before Peter Helias by Peter Abelard — between grammaticality and truth. Truth lies in an actual state of affairs and not in the utterance itself, even if we regard it as meaningful. This is proved by the fact that we can produce such meaningful and comprehensible sentences as "A man is a stone". Expressions like this were called *congrua ad sensum* by Abelard; their comprehensibility consists in intersubjectivity, since it is uttered in order to share a thought (*ad manifestandum intellectum*). Peter Helias believes that truth and falsity are characteristics of sentences, so he does not endorse Abelard's view which ascribed truth to states of affairs. He does use, however, his conceptual apparatus. As has been pointed out, it is grammarian's task, according to Helias, to relate an expression to understanding (*intellectus*), and therefore to evaluate it with respect to *congruitas sensu*, which, in the case of sentences, constitutes a necessary condition for ascribing a truth value. Yet the result of fixing the value is important only for a logician, not for a grammarian.

For Peter Helias and Peter of Spain — a grammarian from the late 12th century, the author of the *Summa "Absoluta ciuislibet"*[5] — meaningfulness of an expression (which, in the case of sentences, amounts to the possibility of

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[5] Not to be confused with other figures of the same name: Peter of Spain, the author of famous *Summulae logicales* (*Tractatus*), and Peter of Spain, the later Pope John XXI (traditionally identified with the former).

ascribing a truth value) is a precondition of grammarian's endeavour. Thus only an expression which is congruous *ad sensum* could be 'grammatical'. Nevertheless, Radulf of Beauvais (2nd half of the 12th c.) and immediate students of Peter Helias held that grammatically correct expressions should be characterized at least by congruence *secundum vocem* (Kneepkens 1985: 117—118).

Already in the beginning of the discussion of construction, another problem came up which absorbed grammarians — the problem of figurative expressions. Such expressions are intelligible, so they satisfy the condition of "generating some intellectual comprehension in the soul". However, they do not meet the *congruitas secundum vocem* criterion. One example is Ovid's *turba ruunt* (*Heroides* 12.143), "the mob are rushing":

> Note that sometimes there is an arrangement of words congruous in sense but incongruous when it comes to terms. For, when one says "the mob are rushing", the words are not coherently conjoined with respect to accidents. The arrangement is incongruent because "mob" is singular and "are rushing" — plural. Wherever the sense is sound, even though the terms do not agree, we deal with a 'figure'; and such a construction is acceptable to grammarians. (Petrus Helias 1978: 1; cf. Priscianus 1859: 184, 17.156)

While considering constructions congruous *secundum sensum* Peter Helias does not use examples of 'ordinary' syntactic mistake — he is only interested with figures present in poetic texts or in the works of 'authorities', which are used in a justified manner.[6]

The second part of Priscian's definition of *oratio*, as has been seen above, employs the concept of completeness — *perfectio*. As Helias asserts, completeness requires that an expression have a subject and a predicate (Petrus Helias 1978: 15).[7] Thus a complete construction is a sentence in which "something is said of something" (*dicitur aliquid de aliquo*) and whose purpose, as Abelard would put it, is to constitute an understanding (*intellectus*) in the mind of the hearer. "A running man" is a congruous expression but not a complete one, since it keeps the hearer's mind in suspense, expecting a continuation. "A man runs" meets this expectation (Kelly 2002: 192). Here, as well as for other grammarians and

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[6] In medieval grammar, it is said that there is a *ratio excusans*, an idea that comes from Priscian; see our remarks on complete and incomplete constructions below.

[7] „Words have been invented due to a need of complete sense, which is achieved only through a complete utterance. A complete utterance cannot exist without a name and a verb, although it can dispense with any other part of speech. It is apparent in any utterance containing almost every part of speech. The utterance will remain complete after subtracting all parts of speech other than a name and a verb. But if you remove a name or a verb, the utterance will turn out to be incomplete."

logicians in the 12th century, considerations of completeness have its origin not only in commentaries on Priscian but also in Boethius's commentary on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* (3, 16b20), which implies that an expression is complete when it lets the hearer's soul rest and does not make him look for the sense outside of the expression (cf. Rosier 1994: 24).

Again, the following distinction dates back to Peter Helias: a construction can be complete with respect to the terms and with respect to the sense. He says:

> For there are two kinds of sentences. Some are sentences in respect of terms and sense, namely, when the words are conjoined appropriately so that they form some intellectual apprehension, like "Socrates is reading". Others are sentences with respect to sense, but not to terms, when one word has a meaning of a complete sentence, as is the case with imperative words and those in vocative case, e.g. "Virgil!". For, by it, the hearer understands the sense of a complete sentence, namely "I call you". The same applies to the first and second persons of the present indicative, e.g. "am reading" [*lego*] — the sense of the complete sentence is apparent. (Petrus Helias 1978: 13)

To conclude the remarks on the early conception of congruity and completeness, let us stress once more that, in accordance with Priscian's idea, congruence and completeness with respect to the sense serve to produce and communicate a certain intellectual apprehension (*intellectus*) connected with the meaningful layer of expressions.

Medieval grammarians associated Priscian's postulate concerning the effective way of transmitting a complete sense (*perfectam sententiam demonstrans*) with the general purpose of language. This purpose, expressed by a quote from *Timaios* (47C—D) in Chalcidius's translation: "We have been given speech (*sermo*) in order to transmit to each other signs of our wills" (Plato 1962: 44—45),[8] was formulated in the 13th century in the following way:

> But speech was invented to express to others what is in us. The purpose, then, of a sentence is to generate understanding in the mind of the hearer. Therefore the sentence which attains that end is said to be perfect.[9]

This aim was frequently achieved by ungrammatical or non-semantic utterances, most clearly represented by figures of construction and figures of speech.

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[8] "ad hoc nobis est datus sermo ut mutuae voluntatis presto fiant indicia."

[9] Pseudo-Albertus Magnus 1977: 84: "Sed sermones sunt inventi ut exprimamus aliis quod apud nos est. Finis ergo sermonis est generare intellectum in animo auditoris. Sermo ergo qui potest in illum finem dicitur perfectus."

Which of them could be defended as congruous and complete expressions in the grammatical framework? In the 13th century the answer depended on the sort of justification or reason (*ratio*) that a given group of grammarians was inclined to adopt. Some regarded as justified such incomplete and faulty constructions that could be reconstructed *de virtute sermonis*, i.e. on the basis of the elements present in the expression.[10] Others — called intentionalists today[11] — justified, by appealing to speaker's intention (*intentio proferentis*), the acceptability of expressions that were not included in the set of tools used by people speaking in an 'ordinary way' (*instrumentum communiter loquentium*). This way of thinking led in the first half of the 13th century to the theory of the so called double *intellectus*. Elements of the theory can be found in Roger Bacon, Master Jordanus,[12] and Robert Kliwardby. In their view, a figurative construction is defective (*vitium*) but justifiable.

Let us begin with the way of justifying the incongruence of a construction. It is 'simply' (*simpliciter*) incongruous and, at the same time, 'relatively' (*secundum quid*) congruous, that is, it articulates speaker's intention in a sufficiently clear way. Incongruity *simpliciter* is realized at the syntactic level and is equivalent to Helias's *incongruitas voce*. Where Helias spoke of accidents of terms, the thirteenth-century authors employed the notion of modes of signifying.[13] Thus congruence *simpliciter* consists in concordance of *modi significandi*.

The three authors discuss the problem of *perfectio* and invoke two levels of *intellectus*, willing to endorse the aforementioned Priscian's principle (that every construction must be referred to understanding, *intellectus vocis*), so that it should really apply to all constructions, including the figurative ones.[14] Presence

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[10] Completeness reconstructed 'in virtue of speech' may be understood in the Middle Ages both as grammatical and contextual completeness; cf. e.g. Lyons 1968: 174—175.

[11] They attributed a greater role to the intention of the speaker (*intentio proferentis*) than to formal conditions of forming a grammatically correct utterance, which in turn will be much more important for the *modistae* (belonging to the younger generation).

[12] Formerly identified with Jordanus of Saxony, another Parisian scholar of the same name.

[13] Differences in theoretical assumptions and solutions between intentionalists and the later *modistae* is not inconsistent with the fact that the former use the term *modi significandi* known since the 12th century and describing the grammatical forms of a term regarded as accidental. Construction receives its syntactical correctness due to the correspondence of some of the modes. The three above-mentioned authors have been occasionally called 'premodists'. Polish discussions of the *modistae* include Pelc 1979: 34—36 and Krauze-Błachowicz 2000, 2002.

[14] Bacon speaks of the first and second intellect only with respect to *completeness*, Jordanus introduces the division at the level of *congruity*, while Kilwardby discusses both (Kneepkens 1985: 124, 127).

of a subject and a predicate is the essential prerequisite for completeness. To refer a construction to *intellectus* as 'understanding', 'intellectual apprehension', etc. is to refer to the meaning of the expression; which has two levels. The first level — *intellectus primus* — corresponds to the lexical layer of a sentence. It is the level of understanding the expression with respect to full concordance of *modi significandi*.[15] Completeness at this level (*perfectio intellectus primi*) presupposes the presence of the 'verbal completeness', or the 'completeness with respect to terms' (*perfectio vocis*). *Perfectio vocis* and *perfectio intellectus primi* are concomitant.

The second level of meaning includes denoted objects (*significata*).[16] This level is called *intellectus secundus* or *secundarius*.[17] A sentence is complete by virtue of *perfectio intellectus secundi*. Nevertheless, it is required that it be complete also with respect to the primary meaning. This condition can be revoked in special circumstances: speech that would be complete only in respect of the secondary meaning can be used by poets and sages (Kneepkens 1985: 124). Therefore not every syntactically incorrect utterance qualifies as a sentence complete with respect to the secondary meaning — only those qualify whose intentional usage is justified in poetry, the Bible, the writings of the Fathers of the Church. A lack of the primary completeness of a figurative expression requires giving a reason (*ratio*), to avoid counting as grammatical all utterances which are simply mistaken or ungrammatical but remain comprehensible. A frequently used example of this sort, also employed by Bacon, was the incorrect expression *dominum venit*. Everyone readily recognizes that what was meant was *dominus venit*. Although such a common mistake (*solecism*) does not impede possibility of understanding the speaker, it fails to receive any justification (Kneepkens 1985: 124).

Furthermore, Kilwardby and several other thirteenth-century grammarians who displayed intentionalist tendencies introduced a distinction between primary and secondary completeness (*perfectio prima* and *secunda*).[18] *Perfectio prima* is a completeness of form by virtue of which a sentence reaches its *esse*, while the secondary perfection, added to the primary one, ensures that the sentence

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[15] Robert Kilwardby, *In Priscianum Minorem*, cited after Sirridge 1990: 336, n. 30: "Primus intellectus est qui prius cadit in apprehensionem, scilicet qui consistit ex modis significandi dictionum." ("First meaning is the one that is understood at the outset, namely, which consists of modes of signifying belonging to the words.").

[16] I have borrowed this translation of *significatum* [Polish *przedmiot oznaczany*] from Marciszewski 1971: 118.

[17] Robert Kilwardby, *In Priscianum Minorem*, cited after Sirridge 1990: 336, n. 31: "Secundus est qui secundo comprehenditur, scilicet qui consistit ex significatis dictionum." ("The second is understood secondarily, that is it consists of the objects denoted by words.").

[18] Master Johannes, the author of *Sicut dicit Remigius*, Pseudo-Johannes le Rus, the author of *Sophismata*; cf. Rosier 1994: 26, n. 7.

achieves its communicative purpose. The sentence owes to the *secunda perfectio* its own *bene esse* or perfection consisting in a specific activity (*propria operatio*).[19] Primary completeness calls for a subject and a predicate, and the secondary one presupposes the primary one. Kilwardby writes that by virtue of the primary completeness *suppositum* and *appositum* bear a correct grammatical relation to each other, while by virtue of the secondary one the expression correctly moves an intellect (Sirridge 1990: 328). "Socrates is reading" has both perfections, but "am reading" lacks the primary one. Yet the expression is comprehensible for a hearer. The primary perfection is easily reconstructed from the sole "am reading" which implicitly contains "I". Thus "am reading" has primary completeness *ad intellectum*, which in turn leads to generating the secondary perfection. In "I am reading" and "Socrates is reading", the primary completeness was expressed to the senses (*ad sensum*).

Apparently, the opposition previously described as *voce / sensu*, or *secundum sensum / secundum intellectum*, reappears here as the *ad sensum / ad intellectum* distinction. In Kilwardby, we find an explanation that *perfectio vocis* used to be called completeness to the senses (*ad sensum*). For, by referring to the verbal layer, a speaker or a hearer only refers to what is apprehensible by senses. *Perfectio ad intellectum* involves understanding (Sirridge 1990: 336, n. 26).

Also *perfectio secunda* has its *ad sensum* and *ad intellectum* types. The example of non-semantic phrase "Meadows laugh", which is flawless with respect to the primary completeness, turns out to be deficient as far as the secondary perfection is concerned. However, it can be reconstructed in the mind as "Meadows flower". The reconstruction requires some effort on the part of the hearer. It can be regarded as an *ad intellectum* reconstruction. Another type of *ad intellectum* reconstruction of secondary completeness deals with redundancy. If we say too much, e.g. "She spoke with mouth" (*ore locuta est*), it is the secondary completeness that allows us to understand that a simpler meaning was meant ("She spoke").[20]

The preserved texts do not allow us to draw a straightforward parallel between the division of *perfectio* into *prima* and *secunda* on the one hand, and the *perfectio*

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[19] Two sorts of completeness in grammar originate in the Aristotelian notion of first and second act (*perfectio prima* and *secunda*). A particularly striking resemblance can be found in the *Summa* by Alexander of Hales: "Est perfectio quae est a forma et est perfectio quae est a [FB01?]ne. Iterum est perfectio primi esse et secundi esse; perfectio primi esse est a forma substantiali, perfectio secundi esse est a [FB01?]ne, quia esse ordinis a [FB01?]ne per[FB01?]citur ad quem est. Item est perfectio disponens, et est perfectio complens. Perfectio complens est dignior perfectibili, et non disponens." Cited after Kelly 2002: 192; cf. Rosier 1994: 25.

[20] "*Congruitas* and *perfectio prima* are both necessary reasons for constructing words in a sentence, but a pronoun subject is added to a [FB01?]rst-person verb (*ego vivo*) for certainty, elegance or perhaps metre, which are all factors in *perfectio secunda*." (Kelly 2002: 194).

intellectus primi / secundi distinction on the other. Even Kilwardby introduced them in mutually independent writings (the former in *Sophismata*, the latter in the *Commentary on Priscian Minor*).

The second group of grammarians, mentioned above as supporters of reconstructing the complete sense *de virtute sermonis*, i.e. exclusively on the basis of elements present in a given expression, were the *modistae*. Before we move to the issue of construction which is congruous and complete *ad intellectum* and would be a subject of the *de virtute sermonis* reconstruction, we need to discuss a number of general principles of congruity and completeness laid down by the *modistae*. The principles, as we have already emphasized at the beginning, were established during the heated discussions about the boundary between grammar and logic, as well as about the purpose of grammar. Already since Peter Helias, medieval grammar tended to become a tool serving to distinguish syntactically correct sentences from the incorrect ones, the meaningful from the meaningless, which in turn would lead to separating true sentences from false ones. The majority of grammarians, however, did not agree with these postulates, claiming instead that the aim of grammar was to ensure syntactic correctness of expressions; other tasks would require dealing with content and thus with the objects denoted by expressions (*significata*). The latter concern should be left to logicians. Surprisingly, this principle was also followed by some intentionalists (Pseudo-Albertus Magnus 1977: XXII; Kneepkens 1985: 123). On the other hand, the belief that utterances appealing to grammarians serve as a tool for effective communication required in their view that a grammarian consider the meaning (*intellectus vocis*). Therefore the idea of secondary intellect formed a way to avoid the contradiction: the goal of grammar would be fulfilled if we submitted that what Priscian meant was the comprehensibility or meaning (*intellectus*) at the level of appropriate connection of the modes of signifying. This is the proper notion of comprehensibility from the point of view of grammar. Both the concern with denoted objects (*significata*), referred to by the secondary intellect, and with utterances that are congruent *secundum quid* but incongruous *simpliciter*, needs some extra justification.[21]

The *modistae* joined the discussion when intentionalist conceptions had already been present in the academic circles of Paris. This would explain why some early *modistae* believed that the modes of signifying (*modi significandi*) are the cause of congruence while the modes of understanding (*modi intelligendi*), as coming directly from the intellect (*intellectus*), bring about completeness.[22] Martinus Dacus, the earliest *modista*, knew, and critically commented on, the conception of

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[21] This is the view of Master Jordanus; cf. Kneepkens 1985: 124.

[22] Vincentius Heremitus 1969: 15; cf. Kelly 2002: 195. This view will be undermined only by the third and final generation of the *modistae*, who claimed that their predecessors mistook mode of understanding for 'conceived mode of signifying' (*modus significandi intellectus*); see below.

double intellect and the arguments offered by Kilwardby for regarding figures of speech as complete sentences (Martinus Dacus 1961: 112, 114—115). Admittedly, however, two of the leading *modistae* of the earlier generation insisted that a denoted object constitutes a material cause of construction, while most of the *modistae* eliminate the concept of *significatum* from the definition of construction.[23]

A concise account of congruity and completeness can be found in *Speculative Grammar* by Thomas of Erfurt. Among the conditions of congruence there is a requirement of the right connection between the elements of construction. Thomas begins his exposition of this condition by distinguishing two sorts of appropriate combinations. One sort consists in the correlation between the meanings of elements constituting the construction and thus in the correlation of objects denoted by these elements. The second kind of connection depends on syntactic coherence generated by mutual correspondence (conformity) of the modes of signifying proper to those elements. Thomas stresses that it is a mistake to call the correspondence of meanings 'congruity'. A sentence in which the meanings of particular elements match each other can be deemed correct or 'proper' (*proprius sermo*), but *congruitas* is a technical term of grammar reserved for the syntactical coherence.[24] It follows then that "a construction, such as: *cappa nigra* [a black coat], is congruous and proper, and a construction, such as: *cappa categorica* [a categorical coat], is improper, but like the other one, is congruous." (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 309, 53.111; Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 190).[25] According to another condition, one must take into account every mode of signifying that might be relevant to the rise of a given construction. Yet another constraint involves an appropriate correlation between modes of signifying. For some modes of signifying

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[23] Namely, Joannes Dacus and Pseudo-Albertus Magnus; cf. Covington 1984: 34.

[24] Thomas Erfordiensis (1972: 308—309, 53.111): "Hence it is clear, that congruity is in and of itself to be considered by the grammarian. The symmetry or contradiction of special meanings is not of itself considered by the grammarian but rather by the logician; therefore congruity or incongruity are not caused by these in the sentence. It can therefore be said that congruity and incongruity are created by the similarity or dissimilarity of the modes od signifying which are in and of themselves considered by the grammarian. However, the propriety or impropriety of a sentence is caused by the symmetry or contradiction of the special meanings." ("Unde patet, quod congruitas sit de consideratione grammatici per se. Sed convenientia vel repugnantia significatorum specialium a grammatico per se non consideratur, sed magis a logico; ergo congruitas vel incongruitas in sermone ab his non causatur. Dicendum est ergo, quod congruitas et incongruitas causantur ex conformitate vel disconformitate modorum significandi, quae per se sunt de consideratione grammatici. Tamen proprietas vel improprietas sermonis causatur ex convenientia vel repugnantia significatorum specialium."). Cf. Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 189.

[25] "Unde haec est congrua et propria, *cappa nigra*; et haec est impropria, *cappa categorica*: tamen utraque istarum est congrua." (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 308, 53.111).

are mutually proportionate,[26] others — similar.[27] Eventually, the definition of congruity runs as follows:

> Congruity is nothing else than the proper union of parts of the sentence in addition to the conformity of the modes of signifying required for any type of construction.[28] (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 313, 53.114; Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 191)

According to Thomas of Erfurt, completeness of construction calls for (1) presence of a subject and predicate, and for (2) correspondence (*conformitas*) of all modes of signifying, that is congruity.

Each construction, in light of the modistic theory, comprises two constructional elements making up the following structure: dependent element (*dependens*) — determining element (*determinans*). The structure of dependence has its counterpart at the level of modes of signifying. Accordingly, the correspondence between modes of signifying is equivalent to the existence of dependence between the elements of construction. The next condition that must be met by a complete construction is related to the notion of dependence. The requirement runs as follows: (3) a construction should not include any dependence that would demand some determining factor external to that construction.[29] In the context of the discussion with intentionalists, (2) was a crucial condition.[30]

According to the *modistae*, both the congruous construction and the complete one can appear in *ad sensum* and *ad intellectum* versions. The explication of the term *ad sensum* resembles Kilwardby's. Both constructional elements of a twofold construction are visible or audible. *Ad intellectum* involves "intellect" or "understanding", but to a very small degree, compared to the ideas of intentionalists: one of two elements of a construction is a default. The example given by Thomas of Erfurt, "read" / "I read", falls into the intentionalist category

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[26] Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 310—311, 53.113; Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 190. Today we would call the syntax arising from these modes the syntax of government, cf. Bursill-Hall 1971: 305.

[27] Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 310—311, 53.113; Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 190. Today we would say that they are responsible for the syntax of agreement, cf. Bursill-Hall 1971: 305.

[28] "Congruitas nihil aliud est, quam partium sermonis debita unio, ex modorum significandi conformitate ad aliquam speciem constructionis requisitorum derelicta." (Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 312, 53.114).

[29] Examples failing to satisfy the condition, given by Thomas of Erfurt and Radulphus Brito, include expressions like "if Socrates runs", "that I say", and so on; Thomas Erfordiensis 1972: 316—317, 54.118; Tomasz z Erfurtu 1999: 193, Radulphus Brito 1980: 343; cf. Bursill-Hall 1971: 309, n. 108.

[30] Martinus Dacus 1961: 166: "Principia perfectionis praesupponunt principia congruitatis, et ideo perfectio congruitatem praesupponit."

of primary completeness *ad intellectum*. Supplying the missing element of the sentence involves the notion of dependence (*dependentia*) (Radulphus Brito 1980: 180; Rosier 1994: 38). In the present example, "I" is added to "read", dependent on "I". The relation of dependence entails, according to the *modistae*, mutually corresponding grammatical properties, so that filling a slot boils down to finding an element with apposite modes of signifying. Due to this approach, the *modistae* are not interested in the role of emphasis in the Latin counterpart of "I read". For them, Latin "I read" is entirely equivalent to Latin "read". By contrast, intentionalists would claim that, in Latin, saying "read" is natural, whereas "I read", by virtue of the secondary completeness *ad intellectum*, involves the intention of emphasis. It is irrelevant for the *modistae* how determinate are the subjects of expressions like "[I] am running", "[he] runs", "[it] thunders". For it is not a matter of grammar. Thus, if "[it] thunders" is complete *ad intellectum*, "[he] runs" is complete as well, due to the same modes of signifying (Boethius Dacus 1969: 46).[31] Intentionalists, to the contrary, maintain that although "[he] runs" and "[it] thunders" can be completed, since their subjects are known, the subject of "runs" is indefinite and completing it *de virtute sermonis* is impossible, as it turns on the speaker's intention.

The *modistae* regarded utterance as the subject of grammar, and the modes of signifying as the fundaments (*causae*, *principia*) of an utterance. The modes of understanding are tackled by grammarians accidentally. If one accepts the assumption, approved by some thinkers,[32] that restoration of a congruent and complete construction *ad intellectum* happens by virtue of the modes of *understanding*, it should be conceded that these constructions fall outside the scope of grammar. Radulphus Brito, one of the last classics of speculative grammar, justifies dealing with this issue in the field of grammar (Radulphus Brito 1980: 179—180). His line of defence rests on the assumption that a construction *ad intellectum* is restored as complete by means of modes of signifying. A grammarian who is supposed to supply the missing element of construction searches for the mode of signifying of the missing element, which conforms with the mode of signifying of the present constituent. The required mode of signifying is called 'conceived mode of signifying' (*modus significandi intellectus*). To consider it is one of grammarian's tasks, since mode of signifying, as a subject of grammar, i.e. a discipline consisting in an intellectual disposition (*habitus intellectualis*), is an object knowable intellectually (*aliquid intelligibile*) (Radulphus Brito 1980: 179—181). Therefore a grammarian, as a researcher who basically deals with modes of signifying, can regard conceived modes as his subjects as well. Which leads to the following conclusion: grammar is a discipline suitable for considering

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[31] The *modistae* allude to Priscian who stated that "[it] thunders" is complete and "[he] runs" — incomplete.

[32] See above, n. Error: Reference source not found.

problems connected to congruity and completeness *ad intellectum*. The view that accounting for construction *ad intellectum* involves modes of understanding rests on a misunderstanding. Intellectually apprehended, i.e. conceived, mode of signifying (*modus significandi intellectus*) of a word cannot be identified with the mode of understanding (*modus intelligendi*) of a thing. *Modus intelligendi* constitutes a cause of a mode of signifying and not its mental representation.

The present survey of select medieval views on congruity and completeness of construction did not pretend to put forward an interpretation of historical discussions about grammaticality, meaningfulness, and acceptability of expressions in the light of modern theories. It would not be a fruitful project, since, as it has already been noted by historians, medieval grammarians differed from each other to no less degree than the contemporary grammarians (Kneepkens 1985: 138).[33] Accordingly, we have focused on presenting ideas and explicating assumptions accepted by medieval grammarians. Examples taken from ordinary language did not preoccupy them. Most of the linguistic material had been drawn from Priscian and Donatus, as well as from formulas present in authoritative theological texts. The force of these authorities underpinned the intentionalist conviction that reconstructing complete sense of authoritative utterances is reasonable.

However, the notion of intention justified by the authority of a sage or a poet was extended in the Middle Ages to a whole variety of examples of elliptical usage of expressions. Due to the need to draw a line between particular disciplines and to construct them in accordance with the Aristotelian paradigm of theoretical sciences, the notion of *congruitas* employed by logicians and used in similar contexts by grammarians was redefined and in the case of the *modistae* narrowed and separated from the concept of (semantic) correctness. The modistic opposition between *congruitas ad sensum / ad intellectum*, could not be adequately expressed in terms of the *voce / sensu* opposition introduced 150 years earlier by Peter Helias. For, in their theoretical assumptions, the *modistae* went to much greater lengths in dividing grammar from logic than their predecessors. Namely, they tried to account for every phenomenon related to the notion of construction in syntactical terms. Brilliant analysis proposed by Radulphus Brito makes us believe that restoring the whole construction — which used to be called *ad intellectum*, because, despite some faults of the expression, it was possible to retrieve its sense — is only a matter of the appropriate choice of a mode of signifying. Understanding (*intelligere*) an expression is equivalent to conceiving its syntactic structure.

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[33] A critical survey of reconstructions in terms of modern theories can be found in Lambertini 1989.

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