

Agreement, case and locality in the nominal and verbal domains

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Chapter 1

An asymmetry in backward control: subject vs. object control

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In this paper we discuss an asymmetry in the distribution of backward control in Greek. Greek has been argued to have subject backward control, however, as we will show, the language lacks backward object control. We will account for this asymmetry by appealing to case conflicts of the type discussed in the context of free relatives.

1 Aims and goals

In this paper, we discuss backward control configurations, focusing on Greek, a language showing an asymmetry between backward subject control (BSC), which is fully productive, and backward object control (BOC), which is severely limited. This is a puzzling state of affairs if Greek indeed has backward control understood as movement and spell-out of the lower copy of the chain, as has been argued in the literature. Based on new evidence, we argue that the movement approach to Greek BSC is an illusion. The correct analysis involves the formation of a chain between the phi-features of the matrix T, the phi-features of the embedded T and those of the embedded subject, which is possible as long as the embedded subject does not intervene between the matrix and the embedded T. The formation of such chains is possible due to the fact that Greek has pronominal agreement, being a pro-drop language (Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998, Barbosa 2009). The formation of comparable chains is severely restricted in BOC



configurations, which are only possible if the full embedded subject is either a clitic-doubled experiencer bearing dative or accusative case or an emphatic nominative anaphoric pronoun. We will discuss potential reasons why this should be so from the perspective of current approaches to Agree.

The paper is structured as follows. We first briefly summarize the arguments in Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou, Iordachioaia & Marchis2010 that Greek has backward subject control (BSC), as well as more recent arguments, recently presented in Tsakali, Anagnostopoulou & Alexiadou2017, that this type of phenomenon does not involve scrambling and indeed instantiates agreement chains between a matrix T and an embedded subject. We then discuss the environments that have been argued to show object control in Greek and point out that there is an asymmetry between BSC (possible) as opposed to backward object control (BOC) (generally impossible) in Greek. We attribute the lack of BOC to the general unavailability of chain formation between a lower T and a higher Voice/vAPPL head, which can be overridden under certain conditions.

2 Introduction

As has been discussed in the work of Polinsky & Potsdam (2006; henceforth ‘P&P’), the movement analysis of control, put forth in Hornstein1999, coupled with the copy-and-delete theory of movement, predicts that next to canonical/forward control patterns, where the lower copy of the moved element is deleted, there should also exist backward control patterns, where the higher copy is deleted. A third possibility, which we do not consider in this section, is resumption, where both copies are pronounced, as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1: Typology of control and raising in P&P (2006)

Higher copy pronounced	Lower copy pronounced	Structure
✓	*	Forward Control (FC)
*	✓	Backward Control (BC)
✓	✓	Resumption

A lot of evidence has been provided in the literature for BC, which can be observed in several unrelated languages. For instance, BSC can be observed in several Nahk-Dagestanian languages, in Northwest Caucasian, in Malagasy, and in Korean; see e.g. Fukuda’s (2008) overview. The claim that BC exists in natural

language is the strongest argument brought by the movement analysis of control against the PRO-based approach; see e.g. **Landau1999** and subsequent work.

In Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou, Iordachioaia and Marchis (2010; henceforth ‘AAIM’), we addressed Landau’s (2007) objections to BSC. One of the objections raised in **Landau2007** concerned the rarity of the phenomenon in one of the languages in which BC has been argued to exist, namely Tsez: in Tsez, only **two** verbs display BC. In other languages, the numbers hardly exceed five. Most commonly, the BC verbs are aspectuals (*begin, continue, stop*), which also have a standard raising analysis. On the basis of Greek and Romanian control constructions, we argued that BC is real in these two languages, as it is exhibited by the same verbs that allow OC (hence the ‘rarity’ objection doesn’t hold for Greek and Romanian).

Recently, a re-evaluation of the empirical picture was put forth in Tsakali, Anagnostopoulou & Alexiadou (2017; henceforth ‘TAA’) that can be summarized as follows: what has been analyzed as BSC in Greek, Romanian and Spanish is an illusion. In Spanish, it involves complex predicate formation, while in Greek/Romanian it involves co-reference with an embedded subject. Specifically, BC in Greek is a side-effect of the availability of an agreement chain between a null main subject and an overt embedded subject in all types of subjunctives (*na*-clauses) and, to a certain extent, in indicatives (*that*-clauses). While backward coreference is allowed in both types of clauses if the order is VSO or VOS, embedded SVO orders, which are available in indicatives, lead to a robust Principle C effect. TAA thus propose that what has been analysed as BC actually reflects φ -agreement between matrix T, embedded T and the overt S(ubject), licit only if the S doesn’t intervene between the two T heads, as in (1a):

- (1) a. $[T\varphi_k [_{TP/CP} T\varphi_k DP\varphi_k]]$
 b. $**[T\varphi_k [_{TP/CP} DP\varphi_k T\varphi_k]]$

In what follows, we summarize both aspects of this discussion. Nevertheless, as we will show in §3, such co-reference is not available in the case of object control.

3 BSC in Greek: An epiphenomenon

In Greek, control is instantiated in a subset of subjunctive complement clauses, as the language lacks infinitives; see e.g. **Varlokosta1994** and references therein. These subjunctive complement clauses are introduced by the subjunctive marker

na (2). The embedded verb, similarly to the matrix verb, shows agreement in number and person with the matrix subject.¹

- (2) Greek ()O Petros/ego kser-i/-o na koliba-i/-o
 the Peter.NOM/I know-3SG/-1SG SBJV swim-3SG/-1SG
 ‘Peter/I knows/know how to swim.’

The literature on Greek control recognizes two main types of subjunctive complements (but cf. **Spyropoulos2007a** and **Roussou2009** for refinements): Obligatory Control (OC) ones and non-OC ones (NOC) (or *C(ontrolled)-subjunctives* and *F(ree)-subjunctives* in Landau’s (2004) terminology).

1. **OC/C-subjunctives** are found as complements of verbs such as *ksero* ‘know how’, *tolmo* ‘dare’, *herome* ‘be happy’, *ksehno* ‘forget’, *thimame* ‘remember’, *ma-theno* ‘learn’, *dokimazo* ‘try’, aspectual verbs such as *arhizo* ‘start/begin’, *sinehizo* ‘continue’.

- (3) a. *o Petros kseri na kolimbao
 the Peter.NOM knows SBJV swim.1SG
 Lit. ‘Peter knows how I swim.’
 b. *o Petros kseri na kolimbai I Maria
 the Peter.NOM knows SBJV swim.3SG the Mary.NOM
 Lit. ‘Peter knows how Mary swims.’

2. **NOC/F-subjunctives** are found with e.g. volitional/future-referring predicates:

- (4) a. O Petros perimeni na erthun
 the Peter.NOM expects SBJV come.3PL
 ‘Peter expects that they come.’
 b. o Petros elpizi na figi i Maria
 the Peter.NOM hopes SBJV go.3SG the Mary.NOM
 ‘Peter hopes that Mary goes.’

AAIM (2010) present evidence that **all** OC verbs in Greek allow BC. In fact, the subject DP can appear in a number of positions (here Greek differs from Tsez).

¹Na has been analyzed as a subjunctive mood marker (cf. Philippaki-Warbuton & Veloudis1984), a subjunctive complementizer (Tsoulas1993, Aggouraki1991) or a device to check EPP (Roussou2009). Here we side with the first view.

Preverbal subjects are considered to be in a left-dislocated position, while post-verbal subjects are located within the vP; see Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998 for discussion. VSO and VOS orders have different information structure properties; see Alexiadou (1999, 2000) for discussion. Generally, the DP in the subjunctive complement agrees with both the low and the matrix verb in person and number:

- (5) (O **Janis**) emathe (o **Janis**) na pezi (o
 the John.NOM learned.3SG the John.NOM SBJV play.3SG the John.NOM
 Janis) kithara (o **Janis**)
 guitar the John.NOM
 ‘John learned to play the guitar.’

The pattern in which the DP resides in the complement clause qualifies as a case of BC on the basis of P & P’s argumentation. First, these constructions are bi-clausal (contra Roussou 2009), as can be shown on the basis of evidence from *negation* and *event modification*.

- *Two separate negations* are possible:

- (6) a. **Den** emathe na magirevi o Janis
 not learned.3SG SBJV cook.3SG the John.NOM
 ‘John didn’t learn to cook.’
 b. Emathe na **min** magirevi o Janis
 learned.3SG SBJV not cook.3SG the John.NOM
 ‘John learned not to cook (i.e. ‘John got into the habit of not cooking’).’
 c. **Den** emathe na **min** magirevi o Janis
 not learned.3SG SBJV not cook.3SG the John.NOM
 ‘John didn’t learn not to cook (i.e. ‘John still has the habit of cooking’).’

- The *event of each clause can be modified independently*:

- (7) a. Fetos tolmise **tesseris fores** na pirovolisi o Janis
 this.year dared.3SG four times SBJV shoot.3SG the
 John.NOM
 ‘This year there were four times that John dared to shoot.’

- b. Fetos tolmise na pirovolisi tesseriis fores o Janis
 this.year dared.3SG SBJV shoot.3SG four times the

John.NOM

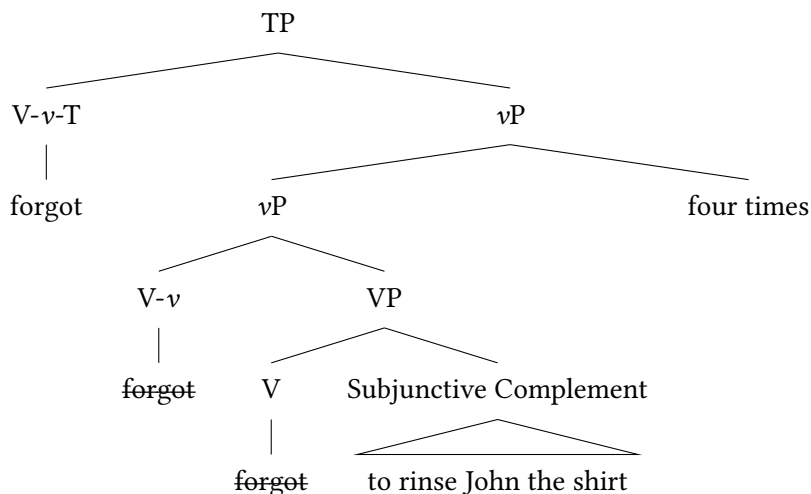
‘This year John dared to shoot four times (in a row).’

The subject is truly embedded, as it precedes both *embedded objects* and *embedded VP-modifiers*. Clause-final event adverbials have the potential of modifying either the matrix verb or the embedded one, depending on where they are situated:

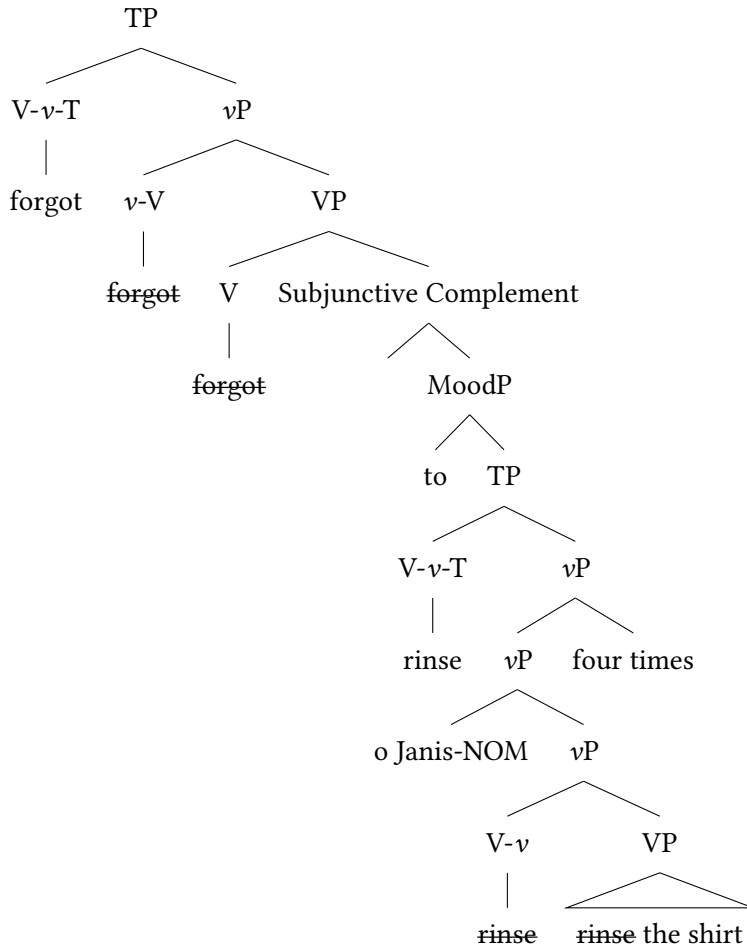
- (8) a. ksehas na ksevgali o Janis to pukamiso tseris fores
 forgot SBJV rinse the John.NOM the shirt four times
 ‘John forgot to rinse the shirt four times.’ (*four rinsings/forgettings*)
 b. ksehas tseris fores na ksevgali o Janis to pukamiso
 forgot four times SBJV rinse the John.NOM the shirt
 ‘John forgot four times to rinse the shirt.’ (*four forgettings*)

This difference in interpretation depends on the adjunction site of the adverb. When it modifies the matrix verb, it (right-)adjoins to the matrix vP or TP (10a). When it modifies the embedded verb, it adjoins to the embedded vP or TP (10b):

- (9) a. High reading



- b. Low reading



Evidence from *negative concord* potentially suggests that in BC the subject does **not** belong to the higher clause and surface to the right of the embedded verb as a result of rightward scrambling. Negative quantifiers in Greek, a negative concord language, must be either in the clause containing sentential negation (11a) or in the c-command domain of a higher sentential negation (11b). They cannot be licensed by a negation in a lower clause (11c) (see Giannakidou1997):

- (10) a. O Petros dietakse *na min* apolithi kanis
 the Peter.NOM ordered SBJV not was.fired nobody.NOM
 ‘Peter ordered that nobody was fired.’

- b. O Petros **den** dietakse *na* apolithi **kanis**
 the Peter.NOM not ordered SBJV was.fired nobody.NOM
 ‘Peter did not order that anybody was fired.’
- c. * **Kanis** dietakse *na* **min** apolithi o Petros
 nobody.NOM ordered SBJV not fired.NACT the Peter.NOM

The same pattern is found in OC contexts:

- (11) a. **Kanis** **den** tolmise *na* fai to tiri
 nobody.NOM not dared.3SG SBJV eat.3SG the cheese.ACC
 ‘Nobody dared to eat the cheese.’
- b. **Den** tolmise *na* fai **kanis** to tiri
 not dared.3SG SBJV eat.3SG nobody the cheese
 ‘Nobody dared to eat the cheese.’
- c. * **Kanis** tolmise *na* **min** fai to tiri
 nobody dared.3SG SBJV not eat.3SG the cheese

If the subject in BC constructions were part of the main clause, we would expect BC sentences with a low negation to have exactly the same status as (12c), which contains a negative matrix subject and an embedded sentential negation. This is not what we find. There is a clear difference in status between (12c) and its BC counterpart:

- (11) d. % Tolmise *na* **min** fai **kanis** to tiri
 dared.3SG SBJV not eat nobody the cheese

Even though (11d) is not perfect, it is much better than (12c). AAIM (2010) take this to be evidence that the subject in BC resides in the embedded clause.

Negative concord points to the existence of a higher copy in BC. If such a copy wasn’t present, (12d) should be fully acceptable. Further evidence in support of this comes from the observation that in Greek, *nominal secondary predicates and predicative modifiers* like ‘alone’ agree in gender and number with the c-commanding DP they modify:

(12) Greek ()

Greek

- a. O **Janis** efige **panikovlitos**/*-i
 the John-NOM left panicking-MS/*-FEM
 lit. ‘John left in panic.’

- b. O Janis irthe monos tu/*moni tis
 the John-NOM came alone-MS/*alone-FEM
 ‘John came alone.’

In BC constructions, such modifiers can be licensed in the matrix clause, while the DP they modify resides in the embedded clause; see AAIM 2010: 103-104, examples (36)-(38). Hence, a silent copy must be present in the higher clause.

On the basis of these and similar arguments, AAIM (2010) thus conclude that Greek has BC. Unlike Tsez, BC in Greek is optional (FC is also permitted). Crucially, all OC verbs in Greek and Romanian allow BC, providing a stronger argument for BC.

TAA (2017) re-evaluate the empirical picture, using extensive questionnaires, by focusing on the following configurations with OC/NOC verbs favoring co-reference and NOC verbs that do not favor coreference:

- (13) a. V *na* V Subj Obj
 b. V *na* V Obj Subj

Their results suggest the following:

1. OC verbs show obligatory co-reference which can be analyzed as BC.
2. There is no clear contrast between OC and NOC verbs as far as Principle C effects are concerned (contra AAIM). A significant number of speakers allow co-reference with NOC verbs.

Note that, as well as examples like (6) where the embedded subject is nominative, native speakers were also asked to evaluate examples like (15) below involving BC between an embedded dative/genitive or accusative experiencer and a matrix null (nominative) subject.

- (14) OC verb (verb of knowing)

- a. Emathe siga siga na tis aresun i operes
 learned-3SG gradually subj CL-DAT/GEN like-3PL the opera-NOM-PL
 otan gnorise to Jiani
 when met-3SG the Jiani-ACC
 ‘She learned gradually to like opera, when she met John.’
 Try/manage verbs (strongly favoring coreference)

- b. Prospathi na min tin stenahori i ikonomiki
try-3SG SBJV NEG CL-ACC make-3SG sad the financial
krisi
crisis-NOM
'She tries not to feel sad about the financial crisis.'
- c. Katafere na min tin apasholi i ikonomiki krisi
manage-3SG SBJV NEG CL-ACC worry-3SG the financial crisis-NOM
'She managed not to feel anxious about the financial crisis.'
Future referring verb NOC (not favoring coreference)
- d. Apofasise na min tin katavali i asthenia
decided-3SG SBJV NEG CL-ACC put-3SG down the illness-NOM
'She decided not to become depressed by the illness.'
- e. Iposhethike na min tin stenahori pia i
promised-3SG SBJV NEG CL-ACC feel-3SG sad anymore the
siberifora tu jiu tis
behavior-NOM the son-GEN CL-POSS
'She promised not to feel sad about her son's behavior.'

The majority of the speakers these authors asked accept examples of the type in (15), and the rate of ungrammaticality ranges from 1.9–11.1%.

3. The comparison between VSO and VOS order in *na*-clauses shows that the preference for the disjoint reading is stronger in VSO orders than in VOS orders, but co-reference is still possible for many speakers, who do not have a significant contrast between VOS and VSO.

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Agreement, case and locality in the nominal and verbal domains

This book explores the Agree operation and its morphological realisations (agreement and case), specifically focusing on the connection between Agree and other syntactic dependencies such as movement, binding and control. The chapters in this volume examine a diverse set of cross-linguistic phenomena involving agreement and case from a variety of theoretical perspectives, with a view to elucidating the nature of the abstract operations that underlie them. The phenomena discussed include backward control, passivisation, progressive aspectual constructions, extraction from nominals, possessives, relative clauses and the phasal status of PPs.

