Null-subject + case = *pro* and not PRO: Evidence from Greek

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In this paper I address the issue of the status of null-subjects of finite complement clauses in control environments by examining Greek. Greek lacks the category of infinitive and all complement clauses are finite in the sense that the verb form fully inflects for subject agreement (Holton et al. 2012). This entails that, if case assignment is the by-product of phi-feature checking (Chomsky 2001 et seq.), the subject of a complement clause in Greek is always assigned nominative case and control is unavailable (Philippaki-Warburton 1987 et seq.). However, Greek is referred to in the literature as exhibiting control with subjunctive complements, breaking thus this strong correlation (Terzi 1992, Iatridou 1993, Varlokosta 1994, Roussou 2001, a.o.). Theories of control have addressed this issue by suggesting that either (i) these complement clauses are defective and no case assignment takes place (Varlokosta 1994, Kapetangianni & Seely 2007) or (ii) the null-subject of these complement clauses is a case-marked PRO (Landau 2004 et seq.). I show that a careful examination of the relevant constructions in Greek reveals that (i) the null-subject of these clauses is always assigned case and (ii) no control is established, because this null-subject need not be bound by a local antecedent and it has the distribution of a pronominal.

Complementation in 'control' environments is typically expressed in Greek by a subjunctive clause the verb form of which fully inflects for subject agreement. Evidence that the null-subject of such a subjunctive clause is assigned nominative case comes from the following facts: (a) a predicative modifier, which in Greek always agrees in case with the element it modifies, appears in nominative when it modifies this null-subject (1); (b) the null-subject can be replaced by an overt DP resulting in obviation (2); (c) the null-subject can be replaced by an overt pronoun, which can pick up any antecedent in the matrix clause (not necessarily a c-commanding one) or from the context (3). The interpretation of such a null-subject shows that it cannot be a PRO or a trace, because (a) it can pick up a non-local (even non c-commanding) antecedent (4); it may have split antecedents (5); it may have augmented reference with respect to some (even non-local or non c-commanding) antecedent in the matrix clause (6); and it can have an impersonal/arbitrary reading. Based on this evidence, I claim that this null-subject is a *pro* and that Greek does not exhibit control (Philippaki-Warburton & Catsimali 1999, Spyropoulos 2007), reaffirming the strong correlation between case assignment and the distribution of control (contra Landau 2006).

However, there are some complement clauses which appear to have controlled null-subjects in Greek. These complement clauses do not have independent temporal properties and appear after: (i) aspectual verbs, e.g. *arxizo* 'I begin', (ii) knowledge/ability verbs, e.g. *ksero* 'I know', *boro* 'I can', and (iii) verbs denoting sense, e.g. *vlepo* 'I see'. The null-subject of these complement clauses must be locally bound and split antecedents and partial control are not allowed. Significantly, there is evidence that even in these clauses the null-subject has been assigned nominative case and that it is a null pronoun: (i) in object-control structures the predicative modifier of the embedded null-subject appears in the nominative and not in the accusative (7); (ii) the null-subject may be replaced by an overt pronoun (8) or by an overt DP (in the latter case either backward control or obviation is established). Such facts show that the controlled null-subject of these clauses cannot be a case-marked PRO or a trace, because these elements do not have the same distribution as overt pronouns and DPs. Thus, I argue that this null-subject is also a *pro* and that the control pattern is the by-product of the targeting of both the null-subject of the complement clause and the matrix controller by the same matrix probe (see also Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou, Iordachioaia & Marchis 2010). This is possible because the lack of temporal properties deprives such a clause from its phasal status, allowing for a matrix probe to target elements inside this transparent domain.

Finally, I will correlate these findings with the *Accusativus cum Infinitivo* construction in Ancient Greek, which has been argued to provide evidence for the existence of case-marked PRO (Landau 2008). In this construction the fact that predicative modifiers of the null-subject of an infinitival clause may appear in the accusative even if the case of the controller of this null-subject

is different reveals that the null-subject has been assigned accusative case (9) (Spyropoulos 2005, Sevdali 2013). I show that when the null-subject of an infinitive is assigned accusative case, it does not have the distribution and the interpretation of a PRO but those of a *pro*. Evidence comes from the following facts: (i) such a null-subject can be replaced by an overt pronoun or an overt DP, allowing for obviation (10-11) and (ii) this phenomenon does not occur with infinitives without independent temporal reference, in which only exhaustive control is established; significantly in these constructions predicative modifiers of the null-subject appear only in the case of the controller.

Examples

(1)   i   maria   epise   to niko na pai   monos   sto   parisi
      the Maria-NOM persuaded-3SG the Nikos SUBJ go-3SG alone-NOM in-the Paris
      'Mary persuaded John to go to Paris alone'

(2)   o ðiikitis   ðietakse   tus skopus   na min perasi   kanenas
      the commander-NOM ordered-3SG the guards-ACC SUBJ NEG pass-3SG no one-NOM
      'The commander ordered the guards that no one should pass'

(3)   [i aðelfi   [tu niku]$_i$]$_j$ epise   [ti maria]$_k$
      the sister-NOM the nikos-GEN persuaded the Mary
      na   pai   afti$_{j/k/l}$ /aftos$_{i/m}$ sti sinantisi
      SUBJ go-3SG she   /he   in the meeting
      'Nikos' sister persuaded Mary that he/she should go to the meeting'

(4)   [i aðelfi   [tu niku]$_i$]$_j$ epise   [ti maria]$_k$
      the sister-NOM the nikos-GEN persuaded the Mary
      na   pai   [ec]$_i$ monos tu$_i$ / [ec]$_{j/k}$ moni tis$_{j/k}$ sto parti
      SUBJ go-3sg   alone CL3-MSC.GEN /   alone CL3-F.GEN to-the party
      'Nikos' sister persuaded Mary that he / she should go to the party alone'

(5)   [o nikos]$_i$ epise   [ti maria]$_j$ na fiyun [ec]$_{i+j}$
      the Nikos-NOM persuaded-3SG the Mary-ACC SUBJ go-3PL
      'Nikos persuaded Mary that they should leave' (not necessarily together)

(6)   [i mitera   [mu]$_i$]$_j$ epise   [ti maria]$_k$ na   pame [ec]$_{i+}$
      the mother-NOM CL1-GEN persuaded-3SG the Mary   SUBJ go-1SG
      sto   parti xoris   afti$_k$
      to-the party without her
      'My mother persuaded Mary that we should go to the party without her'

(7)   iða   to niko   na erxete   monos
      saw-1SG the Nikos-ACC SUBJ come-3SG alone-NOM
      'I saw Nikos coming alone'

(8)   o nikos   arxise   na stelni   aftos   ta minimata
      the nikos-NOM started-3SG SUBJ send-3SG he-NOM the messages-acc
      'Nikos has started to send the messages (by himself)'

(9)   deomai hymo:n … iatro:s   genesthai
      beg-1SG you-PL.GEN doctors-ACC become-INF
      'I beg you to remedy… (lit. to become doctors)'

(10) pare:ggeile ta hopla   tithesthai tous helle:nas
      ordered-3SG the weapons-ACC put-INF   the Greeks-ACC
      'He gave the order that the Greeks should hand over the weapons'

(11) bouloime:n an eme tykhein   ho:n   boulomai
      want-OPT.1SG PRT I-ACC come.across-INF which-PL.GEN want-1SG
      'I would want to get whatever I want'