

FINITENESS AND CONTROL IN GREEK*

1. INTRODUCTION

Finiteness has been considered to be the most prominent syntactic property of clauses because it determines whether certain syntactic operations can apply across a clause boundary. More specifically, finiteness has been used as a cover term for the ability of a clause to check nominative case on its subject. In such a way, finiteness regulates the distribution of a nominative subject, either an overt DP-subject or a null subject *pro*. In a finite clause, the subject is able to check its nominative case and thus becomes inaccessible to further computation, whereas in a nonfinite clause the subject cannot check its nominative case, and can either be a PRO resulting in control structures or be targeted by a higher probe in raising constructions. According to standard approaches to finiteness within the Principles & Parameters and early Minimalist frameworks (Chomsky 1981, 1993, 1995), nominative case is checked by a finite T (= INFL)¹ functional category; T is able to check (nominative) case (i.e. it is finite) when it is fully specified for Tense and Agreement. In the most recent minimalist approaches (Chomsky 2000, 2001a, b), nominative case checking is considered to be the by-product of subject-agreement valuation in T. Such an approach implies that finiteness is a property of agreement.

However, the correlation between finiteness and control breaks down, when we consider languages that exhibit control with finite clauses,² such as Greek.³ Greek lacks the verbal category of infinitive,⁴ so complement clauses involve either an indicative or a subjunctive verb form. Control constructions in Greek typically involve a subjunctive complement clause. Crucially, Greek subjunctive employs the same verb form as the indicative, which fully inflects for tense and subject agreement. Thus, morphologically speaking, subjunctive is as finite as the indicative. If control is a property of a syntactic category PRO (Chomsky and Lasnik 1993; Martin 1996, 2001; Landau 2000) or the by-product of multiple theta-role assignment/checking in a movement/Agree operation (Hornstein 1999, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2005a, b, forthcoming⁵; Manzini and Roussou 2000), how is control licensed in finite environments such as Greek subjunctive complement clauses?

There are three possible approaches to the aforementioned issue: (a) maintain the strict association between control and nonfiniteness and assume that subjunctives in control environments are syntactically nonfinite, because they involve a defective T, and that they, thus, license a PRO subject or a movement/Agree operation (Terzi 1992, 1997; Iatridou 1993; Varlokosta 1993, 1994; Roussou 2001; Kapetangianni and

Seely 2003, this volume); (b) maintain the finiteness of the subjunctive and assume that control can be established with other null or overt elements as well, such as *pro*, overt pronouns, or even DPs, under special syntactic, semantic, or even pragmatic requirements (Joseph 1992; Philippaki-Warbuton 1987; Philippaki-Warbuton and Catsimali 1999; Spyropoulos and Philippaki-Warbuton 2001); or (c) maintain both the finiteness of the subjunctive and the strict association between control and PRO and assume that PRO can be case-marked⁶ and that its distribution with respect to *pro* and overt DP-subjects derives from the referential properties of both the PRO and the subjunctive C and T heads (Landau 2004a, 2006).

The evaluation of these approaches boils down to the following question: Is control solely a property of specific syntactic devices such as the category PRO or the multiple theta-role assignment/checking in a movement/Agree operation? That is, what kind of syntactic elements are allowed to be controlled? In this paper, we argue that Greek subjunctive clauses are always finite, so they check nominative case on their subjects even in obligatory control (OC) constructions. We show that control can be attested in constructions where no PRO (or its movement/Agree equivalent) can be licensed, such as control over an overt pronoun or a DP-subject, or even over an object clitic. We also argue that the control pattern is mainly determined by the licensing of the temporal properties of the subjunctive complement and also by the semantic requirements of the main predicate. Thus, we put forward the hypothesis that, in order to account for cases of finite control, the devices that give rise to control should be enriched with other syntactic dependencies or even semantic and pragmatic requirements, which crucially do not require the nonfiniteness of the embedded clause (see also Roussou 2005, in preparation).

2. GREEK SUBJUNCTIVES: STRUCTURE, DISTRIBUTION, AND TEMPORAL PROPERTIES

In Greek, the indicative vs. subjunctive distinction is not marked on the verbal inflection. Indicative and subjunctive share the same verb forms. This indicates that both moods involve a functional category T in their clause structure with the same feature specification to which the verb form moves overtly. Subjunctive is marked by the subjunctive particle *na/as* which occupies a M(ood) functional category. In addition, indicative and subjunctive select for different negation particles (*ðe* for the indicative – *mi* for the subjunctive) and subjunctive is incompatible with the future particle *tha* (1). We adopt the morphosyntactic structure illustrated in (2):⁷

- (1) a. *indicative*
 (ðe) (θa) erθis
 NEG FUT come-2SG
- b. *subjunctive*
 na (min) erθis
 SUBJ NEG come-2SG