

Obviation in Russian and Polish Subjunctive Clauses

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Slavic and Romance languages exhibit a phenomenon with subjunctive clauses which is labelled ‘obviation’: The pronominal subject of the embedded clause cannot be coindexed with the subject of the matrix clause containing a volitional verb, cf. Russian (1a). This phenomenon sharply contrasts with infinitival embeddings with obligatory coindexation (subject control), cf. (1b).

In the GB tradition and in early minimalism, a prominent line of explanation for this phenomenon was to assume binding domain extension with subjunctives. Thus, being in the same binding domain coindexation of the subjects of the matrix and the subjunctive clauses violates Principle B. Hence, disjoint reference of the subjects is forced. In most cases, defectiveness/deficiency of temporal features have been taken to be the source for domain extension with subjunctives (cf. Picallo for Romance and Progovac 1993a, 1993b for Slavic among many others).

Avrutin & Babyonyshev (1997) observe that domain extension analyses run into empirical problems. Among others, they cannot account for the fact that objects within matrix clauses may be coindexed with embedded subjects, cf. (2a), and that dative NPs occupying the highest position in the subordinate clause *can* be coindexed with the matrix subject, cf. (2b). Their alternative relies on LF movement of an operator contained in subjunctive C to the matrix clause in order to take scope over both events which are subsequently temporally ordered. The ungrammaticality is attributed to the fact that the verbal functional categories have to move to the matrix clause as well and that, as a result, pronominal AGRs of the matrix clause illicitly c-commands pronominal AGRs of the subordinate clause. This analysis relies on two unmotivated stipulations: (i) verbal functional categories may be pronominal, e.g. AGR_s, or not, e.g. AGR_o (which is not independently motivated); (ii) subjunctive C as an operator does not have to move with all matrix verb classes (epistemic verbs marginally occurring with subjunctives do not exhibit obviation, cf. (3)).

This paper reconciles both approaches by employing the idea of feature sharing (cf. Pesetsky & Torrego 2006, 2007). I take subjunctive C-T-complexes to contain deficient temporal features (in North Slavic marked by *by*) which value nominative case on the embedded subject. Additionally, volitional matrix verbs contain an open, unvalued T-feature slot which is subsequently identified with the deficient T-feature of the embedded, subjunctive C-T-complex. This accounts for the phenomenon of temporal ordering with volitional verbs and subjunctives observed by Avrutin & Babyonyshev (1997). Epistemic matrix verbs lack this T-feature slot and, hence, do not exhibit temporal ordering (cf. Avrutin & Babyonyshev 1997). With non-volitional verbs, deficient T-features within the subordinate clause get an independent, but ambiguous interpretation, cf. (5).

With volitional verbs, the unvalued T-feature shared by matrix V and the embedded C-T-complex is ultimately valued by indicative matrix T forming a long distance feature chain. So, several instances of the same feature occurrence are spread across two clauses. Following Pesetsky & Torrego (2006, 2007), I assume that nominative and accusative are T-features of T and *v*, respectively. Consequently, the matrix subject and the embedded subject also share the same T-feature, since matrix and embedded T participate in the cross-clausal feature chain. This, ultimately, violates Principle B, since feature dependencies create local domains for construal. Crucially, this is not the case with objects within the matrix clause whose case is licensed by *v* (cf. (2a)). Pronouns within the subjunctive clause whose case is not valued by embedded T also do not share relevant features with matrix

T. Thus, coindexation with the matrix subject doesn't violate Principle B, cf. (2b) and (4) with an object pronoun in the embedded clause. Thus, the present account gives the right results for the coindexation patterns with subjunctive clauses.

- (1) a Volodja_i xočet čtoby on_{*i/j} poceloval Nadju. [Ru]
 Volodja wants that_{SBJV} he kissed Nadja
 'Volodja wants him to kiss Nadja.'
- b. Volodja_i xočet PRO_i pocelovat' Nadju.
 Volodja wants PRO kiss Nadja
 'Volodja wants to kiss Nadja.'
- (2) a. Volodja ugovoril Nadju_i čtoby ona_i poexala v Evropu. [Ru]
 Volodja persuaded Nadja that_{SBJV} she went to Europe
 'Volodja persuaded Nadja to go to Europe.'
- b. Volodja_i xočet čtoby emu_i byl-o veselo.
 Volodja wants that_{SBJV} him_{DAT} was_{SG:NTR} fun
 'Volodja wants to be having fun.'
- (3) Nadja_i somnevaetsja čtoby ona_i vyšla zamuž za Feliksa. [Ru]
 Nadja doubts that_{SBJV} she married for Feliks
 'Nadja doubts that she would marry Feliks.'
- (4) Volodja_i xočet čtoby Nadja pocelovala ego_{i/j}. [Ru]
 Volodja wants that_{SBJV} Nadja kissed him
 'Volodja wants Nadja to kiss him.'
- (5) Adam_i mówi, že pro_i požyczyłby ci książkę. [Po]
 Adam says that pro lent_{3:SG-SBJV} you book
 'Adam says that he would lend you a book.'
 'Adam says that he would have lent you a book.'

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