

Francesco Costantini

Interface Perspectives  
on Clausal Complementation

The Case of Subjunctive Obviation

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The Case of Subjunctive Obviation*

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## Preface

This monograph is a completely revised version of my 2006 doctoral dissertation. Although many of the ideas presented here originate in the earlier work, major changes have been made both with respect to the topic and to the structure of the dissertation. In sections 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, I discuss new empirical data and in sections 6.2.2.2 and following I provide new analyses.

Many people have contributed to make this book as it is. First, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Prof. Alessandra Giorgi, who guided my studies during my years as a Ph.D. student. I thank her for believing in me, dedicating me much of her time, for the insightful discussions, for carefully reading my papers, for supporting and helping me. I am grateful to Prof. Guglielmo Cinque, who has always given me precious advice, and never failed to encourage and support me. I am indebted to Prof. James Higginbotham and Prof. Pier Marco Bertinetto for accepting to be part of my dissertation committee. I thank Prof. James Higginbotham for the stimulating discussions and his encouragement, and to Prof. Pier Marco Bertinetto for his thoughtful comments on my thesis. I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Tim Stowell for allowing me to visit the UCLA Linguistics Department. Materials from this book were presented at IGG 30 (Rome), ICLL 13 (Brussel), IGG 34 (Padua), as well as at the University of Venice, Padua and Geneva. I am thankful to the audiences of these conferences and seminars.

I dedicate this book to Elisa and Vesselina.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Preliminary remarks

In Italian and in the main Western Romance languages the subject of a superordinate clause and the subject of a subordinate clause cannot refer to the same individual.

- (1) Gianni vuole che \_ legga il libro.  
Gianni wants that reads.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book  
'Gianni wants him/her to read the book'.

Intuitively, in sentence (1), the null embedded subject cannot refer to Gianni.

Indicative and conditional embedded clauses behave differently. The matrix subject and the null embedded subject can refer to the same individual if the embedded verb is in the indicative or in the conditional:

- (2) a. Gianni ha detto che \_ leggerà il libro.  
Gianni has said that reads.IND.FUT.3SG the book  
'Gianni said he will read the book'.  
b. Gianni ha detto che \_ avrebbe letto il libro.  
Gianni has said that AUX.COND.3SG read the book  
'Gianni said he would read the book'.

Finally, infinitival clauses behave differently both from the subjunctive and from the indicative and conditional clauses, in that the matrix subject and the implicit subject of the infinitive *must* refer to the same individual:

- (3) Gianni vuole \_ leggere il libro.  
Gianni want read.INF.PRES il book  
'Gianni wants to read the book'.

In the contemporary approach to the study of language named Generative Grammar, the phenomenon illustrated in example (1) has been labeled ‘obviation’ (or ‘subjunctive obviation’), or ‘subject disjoint reference effect’. The two labels are equivalent. The former is inherited from the American Indian linguistics. The French term ‘obviatif’, from which the English words ‘obviative’ and ‘obviation’ stem, was coined by the French linguist J. A. Cuoq (*Etudes Philosophiques sur Quelques Langues Sauvages de l’Amérique*, 1866) to refer to a grammatical category of the Algonquian languages. In the Algonquian languages and in some other American Indian languages, ‘animate’ nouns, demonstratives, pronouns in the third person, and verbs can be categorized as ‘proximate’ or ‘obviative’ (alternative terms are ‘fourth person’ or ‘second third-personal form’). A constituent belonging to one of these categories is marked morphologically as proximate in a sentence if it refers to «the person from whose point of view events are described, the protagonist in narratives, the focus of the speaker’s empathy» or to the «discourse topic» (Mithun 1999). In the same sentence, all the others constituents belonging to the above categories are marked as obviative. The constituents marked as obviative and the constituent marked as proximate cannot refer to the very same individuals; they must be *referentially disjoint*.

In the theoretical framework of the Generative Grammar, the term ‘obviation’ was introduced by Chomsky (1981). In such a theoretical framework, indexes have been used as a standard notational device to indicate the reference of a nominal phrase. Thus, two phrases having the same index refer to the same entity, whereas two phrases having two different indexes refer to different entities. Chomsky defines the notion of ‘proximity’ and ‘obviation’ as follows:

We will call a pronoun [...] “proximate” when it is coindexed with an antecedent and “obviative” if it is not. (Chomsky 1981: 61)

And again:

Pronouns are “proximate” if they are coindexed with some other element and “obviative” if not coindexed with any other element (Chomsky 1981: 186)

In example (1), the implicit subject of the embedded clause is obligatorily obviative with respect to the matrix subject. Adopting the referential indexes, here represented by natural numbers, example (1) may be then represented as follows:

- (4) Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole che <sub>\_\*1</sub> legga il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that <sub>\_\*1</sub> reads.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants him<sub>\*1</sub>/her to read the book’.



The index preceded by an asterisk indicates that such an indexation gives rise to ungrammaticality.

The second term – ‘subject disjoint reference effect’ – refers exactly to the unavailability of coindexation in examples like (1). Formatives having different indexes are indeed called ‘referentially disjoint’ and such are the matrix and the embedded *subjects* in the example discussed.

Following the standard notation introduced by Chomsky (1982), the null subject in pro-drop languages will be labeled as *pro* (‘small’ or little ‘*pro*’), a phonetically unrealized pronoun that can be assigned Nominative Case. Sentence (1) can accordingly be represented as follows:

- (5) Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole che *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> legga il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> reads.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants him\*<sub>1</sub>/her to read the book’.

## 1.2 Theoretical relevance of the phenomenon

The phenomenon of obviation raised interest in the mid-1980s as it appeared to challenge the Binding Theory. The Binding Theory rules the distribution of nominal constituents: full NPs (‘referential expressions’), pronouns, and anaphors. As for pronouns, the Binding Theory Principle B states that a pronoun must be free in its binding domain, where ‘free’ means not bound, and bound means coindexed with a c-commanding constituent. A clause may be provisionally taken as a binding domain. In other words, a pronoun cannot be coindexed with a c-commanding nominal expression occurring within its clause.

The unavailability of coindexation between the matrix subject and *pro* in sentences like (1) appeared surprising in the light of Binding Theory Principle B. *Pro* was indeed expected to be optionally coindexed, exactly as it is in sentences like (2). The fact that it cannot be so, suggested the hypothesis that the matrix subject and *pro* occur in the same binding domain, in spite of the clause boundary existing between the two constituents.

Since the mood of the embedded verb distinguishes the sentence in (1) from the sentences in (2), subjunctive mood was claimed to be responsible for the interpretative properties of *pro* at once: indicative (and conditional) clauses constitute ‘closed’ (‘opaque’) binding domains, subjunctive clauses do not constitute closed domains, so that a binding domain for *pro* in (1) is the entire sentence, and not only the embedded clause.

Theoretically, this is a step of great importance in at least two respects: first, mood appears to interact with Binding Theory; second, despite Binding Theory Principle B rules the distribution of pronominals in view of their *interpretation*, it is a *syntactic* module, as it is standardly assumed. Subjunctive

tive clauses must then be *syntactically* different from indicative (and conditional) clauses.

Theoretical linguistics within the generative approach of Government and Binding Theory inaugurated by Chomsky (1981) and within the following minimalist framework (Chomsky 1995) has struggled to cope with these facts, which did not appear to be entirely syntactic *or* entirely semantic, but seemed to mingle syntactic and semantic aspects. Thus, subjunctive obviation appeared to be a privileged field of investigation on what has been dubbed as the *syntax-semantics interface*, the subcomponent of the computational system of language that maps syntax into semantics (Logical Form).

The theoretical interest of studying obviation has survived until today. This is due to various circumstances. First, descriptively, only a core set of data on obviation has been analyzed, while less obvious aspects of the phenomenon have been generally left outside the scope of inquiry. Moreover, theoretically, many aspects of the problem, even relevant ones, are not well understood. Finally, an increasing number of proposals concerning subjunctive mood from a syntactic, semantic, and an interface viewpoint, suggests that the problem of obviation may be tackled taking full advantage of the new ideas on subjunctive complementation.

This study is an attempt to fill at least some of these gaps.

### 1.3 Outline of the study

This book is organized in six chapters (including the present introduction). I will present here a summary of the content of every chapter.

Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to the empirical framework of the phenomenon at issue. In chapter 2 I will discuss the core data concerning subjunctive obviation in Italian and in the other main Western Romance languages. Following Schlenker (2005), I will reformulate the notion of obviation getting rid of the referential indexes (which nonetheless will be kept as a notational device) and defining obviation as the unavailability of the *de se* interpretation (in the sense of Lewis 1979).

In chapter 3 I will develop a more fine-grained analysis of the phenomenon in order to make an inventory of all the syntactic environments where obviation appears to be affected. Such an analysis will take into account at least the following variables:

a) matrix verb: i. it may belong to a class of predicates that select for subjunctive clauses (in Italian, volitional, desiderative, epistemic, emotive-factive, psych-verb, etc.) or to a class of predicates that do not subcategorize for subjunctive clauses. In this case a polarity item, negation or interrogative force, can instantiate the subjunctive verb in the embedded clause; ii. tense; iii. person (agreeing with the matrix subject);

b) matrix argument DP: i. it can be external or internal (depending on the lexical class of the main verb); ii. person;

c) subjunctive clause: i. the subjunctive clause can be an argument of the matrix predicate – external or internal (dependently on the lexical class of the matrix verb); ii. the subjunctive clause can be an adjunct clause – rationale clause, concessive clause, *before*-clause, etc.; ii. structural position: the subjunctive clause can be *in situ* or left-dislocated;

d) subjunctive verb: i. type of verb: it can be a lexical or a modal predicate; ii. type of subjunctive (dependent on the matrix verb): it can be intensional (directly selected by the main predicate) or triggered by a polarity item (negative or interrogative operator); iii. tense agreement (dependent on matrix tense); iv. tense: it can be a simple or a perfect tense; v. voice: active or passive; vi. person (dependent on the matrix subject);

f) embedded subject: i. theta-role assigned to it; ii. it can be phonetically realized (as a strong pronoun) or null (*pro*) (in French, clitic); iii. person;

g) additional factors: topics within a subjunctive clause, coordination.

In chapter 3 I will investigate whether these variables affect the disjoined reference effect and I will reach the empirical generalization that in Western Romance languages *pro* (or the subject clitic in French) is obligatorily obviative when the subjunctive morphology is attached to the verbal root. Examples of such a type constitute the core set of data on obviation, the set of environments in which obviation occurs consistently and without intralinguistic variability.

In the other cases, the embedded subject *may* be generally coindexed with an argument of the matrix clause (with the *caveat* that intralinguistic variability has been recorded as to the availability of coindexation).

Moreover, the phenomenon appears to be sensitive to other syntactic and semantic properties: information structure factors (strong pronouns may be coindexed with a c-commanding noun phrase; topicalized constituents within the embedded clause makes it easier to get a coreferential interpretation; the dislocation of the subjunctive clause also appears to facilitate the possibility of coindexation); the class of the matrix verb: volitional verbs appear to be more rigid in not allowing coindexation than any other class even in the environments that seemingly allow coindexation. The phenomenon of subjunctive obviation is then not so black and white as it has often been assumed. Thus, all things considered, a sentence like the following appears to be fully acceptable:

- (6) Che domani *pro*<sub>1</sub> riesca a superare l'esame, Gianni<sub>1</sub> lo spera proprio.  
That tomorrow *pro*<sub>1</sub> succeed.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to pass the exam,  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> it.CL hope really.  
'That he<sub>1</sub> succeeds to pass the exam tomorrow, Gianni<sub>1</sub> really hopes so'.

In sentence (6) obviation does not arise. The matrix and the embedded subject refer to the same individual, in spite of the subjunctive verb.

The literature on subjunctive obviation has focused mainly on the ‘core’ set of data, contrasted with the indicative and infinitival clauses. Some sporadic reference has also been made to examples involving a tense auxiliary or a modal in the subjunctive, in which coindexation is allowed. This is by and large the empirical base that the existing theories of obviation attempted to explain. A theory on subjunctive obviation should also be able to predict the cases in which obviation does *not* occur in spite of the presence of a subjunctive verb. Chapter 4 addresses the existing theories on obviation and illustrates their pros and cons.

There are two main lines of investigation on subjunctive obviation. The first, which has been supported in most of the literature on obviation, claims that the subjunctive disjoint reference effect is a consequence of the interaction between the interpretative properties of the subjunctive mood and the Binding Theory. According to Picallo’s (1985) seminal theory, for instance, the binding domain of the subject pronoun in a subjunctive clause is supposed to stretch over the matrix clause, due to the ‘anaphoric’ nature of subjunctive tense. Binding Theory Principle B rules out coindexation between the matrix subject and the embedded subject *pro*. Other theories based on the Binding Theory (Avrutin 1994, Avrutin and Babyonyshev 1997, Kempchinsky 1987, 1997, Manzini 2000, Progovac 1993, 1994, Rizzi 2000, Tsoulas 1996), though involving different linguistic devices are able to explain the same set of data – basically the ‘core’ set.

The second line of investigation is based on the observation that in Western Romance languages, subjunctive clauses and infinitival clauses are complementary in that subjunctive clauses do not allow coindexation between the matrix and the embedded subject, while infinitival clauses obligatorily require it. Bouchard (1984) proposes that such a contrast results from Chomsky’s (1981) Elsewhere Principle, which states that a pronoun is unavailable for coindexation with a c-commanding constituent, if an anaphor is available. Proposals in the same spirit, yet exploiting different principles of mood ‘competition’, have been worked out by Farkas (1992) and by Schlenker (2005).

Both Binding Theory-based and ‘competition’ approaches are able to account for the ‘core’ set of data. A *desideratum* for a theory of obviation, is however that it should be able to account for the ‘core’ set of data *and* for the ‘peripheral’ data. Chapter 5 is intended to prepare the ground for such a theory.

To start with, the interface properties of subjunctive clauses will be illustrated within the theoretical framework developed by Giorgi and Pianesi (2001). They maintain that subjunctive ‘anaphoricity’ can be reformulated stating that the temporal coordinates of the attitude episode (the matrix even-

tuality) are obligatorily represented in an embedded clause, whereas the utterance time, ‘now’, is syntactically represented only in the environments in which a Double Access Reading (‘DAR’, for short) obtains. Embedded clauses having no utterance coordinates are temporally interpreted only with respect to the matrix eventuality, whereas embedded clauses containing the utterance coordinates are temporally interpreted both with respect to the matrix eventuality *and* with respect to the utterance time – they display a DAR. Only the former clauses are temporally ‘anaphoric’. Subjunctive clauses belong to this type of clause. Indicative clauses, on the other hand, display DAR. Thus, they must contain both the matrix eventuality coordinates *and* the utterance time.

Giorgi and Pianesi claim that the absence of the utterance coordinates is responsible for a bunch of properties that distinguish subjunctive from indicative embedded clauses: Sequence of Tenses (SOT for short), Complementizer Deletion (CD), Long-Distance Anaphor (LDA) Binding. I will pursue the hypothesis that subjunctive obviation also follows from the ‘anaphoric’ nature of the subjunctive mood as understood by Giorgi and Pianesi.

A theory of obviation in the spirit of Giorgi and Pianesi is worked out in chapter 6. Following Giorgi’s (2004, 2006, 2007) hypothesis (discussed in chapter 5) that in an environment devoid of the utterance coordinates, a *de se* reading can only be achieved via theta-identification of an unsatisfied position (that is, an unassigned theta-role), spelled-out as a LDA, with the agent of the context, I will attempt to account in the very same way both for examples exhibiting obviation and for subjunctive clauses that do not exhibit obviation. The hypothesis will be investigated that in the latter, but not in the former environments, an unsatisfied position occurs, possibly associated with the non-finite form of the lexical verb, instantiating the *de se* reading. I will discuss the theory framed on such hypothesis vis-à-vis the empirical framework discussed in chapters 2 and 3 and I will show that it appears to be empirically adequate, opening promising perspective on our understanding of the interactions between thematic roles and pragmatic roles.

## 2 Subjunctive obviation: preliminary remarks

### 2.1 Introduction

In the present chapter I will discuss the basic properties of subjunctive obviation. I will show how the subject disjoint reference effect is sensitive to the mood of an embedded clause in Italian and in the other main Western Romance languages (Catalan, French, Portuguese, and Spanish), as it obtains in subjunctive clauses, though not in indicative, conditional, and infinitival clauses.

In the last section, I will reformulate the notion of obviation as a condition of unavailability of the *de se* reading.

### 2.2 Obviation and mood in Italian

In Italian, the pronominal subject of a complement clause in the subjunctive cannot corefer with the matrix subject (it is obviative):

- (1) Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> legga il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book.  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants him\*<sub>1/2</sub>/her to read the book?'

Obviation is sensitive to the mood of the embedded clause. The possibility of coindexation between the embedded and the matrix subject distinguishes subjunctive clauses, which do not allow for coindexation, from indicative clauses:

- (2) Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> leggerà il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> read.IND.FUT.3SG the book  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> said he<sub>1/2</sub>/her will read the book?'

Moreover, coindexation is allowed when the embedded verb is in the conditional mood:

- (3) Gianni<sub>1</sub> aveva detto che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> sarebbe partito il giorno dopo.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> had said that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.COND.3SG left on the following day  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> said he<sub>1/2</sub>/she would have left on the following day’.

Finally, coindexation is obligatory when the embedded verb is an obligatory control infinitive:

- (4) Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole *PRO*<sub>1/\*2</sub> leggere il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants *PRO*<sub>1/\*2</sub> to read the book.  
 ‘Gianni wants to read the book’.

In Italian, obviation occurs only within subjunctive clauses, no matter what the typology of the subjunctive clause is. Subjunctive clauses have often been distinguished into two categories, called ‘intensional’ and ‘polarity’ subjunctive (Stowell 1993, Quer 1997), depending on whether the subjunctive verb is triggered by an intensional verb, or by some operator, like the negative operator, the interrogative operator, or by left dislocation.

As for the first class, the predicate selecting for a subjunctive argument can be volitional, epistemic (or dubitative), or emotive-factive (or thematic)<sup>1</sup>. No difference in coindexation occurs dependently on the matrix predicate:

- (5) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> legga molti libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG many books  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she reads many books’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> teme che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> faccia molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> fears that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> make.SUBJ.PRES.3SG many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is afraid he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she will make many mistakes’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammarica che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> legga pochi libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG few books  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she reads few books’.

To the above class of predicates, one may add interrogative predicates. Indirect questions also trigger obviation:

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<sup>1</sup> I follow here Wandruszka’s (1991) classification.

- (6) Gianni<sub>1</sub> si chiede quale libro *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> legga.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> wonders which book *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wonders which books he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she is reading’.

When the subjunctive is instantiated by the matrix predicate, obviation appear to be strictly linked to the subjunctive mood. The fact that when a verb can select either a subjunctive complement clause or an indicative argument, obviation occurs only within the subjunctive complement clause, enforces the conclusion that descriptively, obviation depends on the embedded mood.

- (7) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> legga il libro presto.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book soon  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she will read the book soon’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> leggerà il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> read.IND.FUT.3SG the book  
 ‘Gianni thinks that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she will read the book’.

As for polarity subjunctive, although it has sometimes been claimed that it does not instantiate obviation (Kempchinsky 1987, Quer 1997), evidence from Italian appears to support the opposite claim. Take for instance the verb *sapere* ‘to know’. This verb generally selects for indicative or conditional clausal arguments:

- (8) Gianni sapeva che Maria era/sarebbe/\*fosse partita.  
 Gianni knew that Maria AUX.IND/COND/\*SUBJ.PRES.3SG partita.  
 ‘Gianni knew that Maria had left/would leave’.

However, if the embedded clause occurs under the scope of an operator or if it is left dislocated, it may take a subjunctive argument clause. In this case, the embedded subject is obviative.

- (9) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> non sapeva dove *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> andasse.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> not knew where *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> go.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> didn’t knew where he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she was going’.
- b. \*Dici che tu parta?  
 Say(2ps) that you leave.SUBJ?
- c. Che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> partisse il giorno dopo, Gianni<sub>1</sub> lo sapeva già.  
 That *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the following day, Gianni<sub>1</sub> it knew already  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> already knew that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she was leaving on the following day’.



In sentence (9)a the subjunctive is triggered by the negation, in (9)b by the interrogative force, in (9)c by movement to the left periphery of the embedded clause. All three sentences display obviation.

## 2.3 Obviation comparatively

### 2.3.1 Catalan

Obviation occurs in subjunctive, but not in indicative clauses (examples from Picallo 1985):

- (10) a. [En Jordi]<sub>1</sub> espera que *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> vingui.  
 [The Jordi]<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> come.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Jordi<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she will come’.
- b. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> ha decidit que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> telefonarà al Pere.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> has decided that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> call.IND.FUT.3SG to-the Pere  
 ‘Joan has decided that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she will call Pere’.

The co-indexation between the matrix and the embedded subject is available when the embedded clause is in the indicative, whereas it is not when the embedded clause is in the subjunctive.

Quer (1997) observes that in Catalan the intensional subjunctive triggers obviation, whereas the polarity subjunctive does not:

- (11) *Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> no crec que *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> la convidi.  
*Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> not think(1sg) that *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> her invite.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘I don’t think I will invite her’.

However, he also observes that there are some cases in which polarity subjunctive does trigger obviation<sup>2</sup>:

- (12) \*Creus que la convidis?  
 Believe.IND.PRES.2SG that her invite SUBJ.PRES.2SG?

Lexically selected subjunctive clauses also contrast with infinitival clauses, in which PRO is controlled by the matrix subject and accordingly corefers with it:

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<sup>2</sup> See Quer (1997), p. 38, n. 25.

- (13) [En Jordi]<sub>1</sub> espera *PRO*<sub>1</sub> venir. (Picallo 1985)  
 [The Jordi]<sub>1</sub> hopes *PRO*<sub>1</sub> come(inf).  
 ‘Jordi hopes to come’.

### 2.3.2 French

In French obviation is also sensitive to mood. The subjunctive mood triggers obviation, whereas the indicative does not.

- (14) a. Pierre<sub>1</sub> veut qu’il<sub>\*1/2</sub> parte. (Farkas 1992)  
 Pierre<sub>1</sub> wants that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Pierre<sub>1</sub> wants him<sub>\*1/2</sub> to leave’.
- b. Pierre<sub>1</sub> a promis qu’il<sub>1/2</sub> partira. (Farkas 1992)  
 Pierre<sub>1</sub> has promised that he<sub>1/2</sub> leave.IND.FUT.3SG  
 ‘Pierre<sub>1</sub> promised that he<sub>1/2</sub> to leave’.

In infinitival clauses the embedded subject corefers obligatorily with the matrix subject:

- (15) Pierre<sub>1</sub> veut *PRO*<sub>1</sub> partir.  
 Pierre<sub>1</sub> wants *PRO*<sub>1</sub> to leave  
 ‘Pierre wants to leave’.

### 2.3.3 Portuguese

In Portuguese obviation depends on the mood of the embedded predicate, in the same way as in Italian, Catalan and French (examples from Raposo 1985):

- (16) a. [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> deseja que *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> leia mais livros.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> wishes that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG more books  
 ‘Manel<sub>1</sub> wishes that he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she reads more books’.
- b. [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> pensa que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> lê bastantes livros.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> read.IND.PRES.3SG enough books  
 ‘Manel<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she reads enough books’.
- c. [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> deseja *PRO*<sub>1</sub> ganhar a corrida.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> wishes *PRO*<sub>1</sub> to win the race  
 ‘Manel wishes to win the race’.

### 2.3.4 Spanish

Kempchinsky (1987) claims that in Spanish not all subjunctive argument clauses instantiate the disjoint reference effect. Only the *volitional* and *desiderative* subjunctives do, whereas the (negative) epistemic subjunctives and the emotive-factive subjunctives do not:

- (17) a. Paco<sub>1</sub> quiere que *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> estudie latín.  
 Paco<sub>1</sub> wants that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> studie.SUBJ.PRES.3SG Latin.  
 ‘Paco<sub>1</sub> wants him\*<sub>1/2</sub>/her to study Latin’.
- b. Ana<sub>1</sub> duda que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> sea la persona más apta para el puesto.  
 Ana<sub>1</sub> doubts that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> be.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the person most fit for  
 the job  
 ‘Ana<sub>1</sub> doubts that she<sub>1/2</sub>/he is the fittest person for the job’.
- c. Ana<sub>1</sub> no creía que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> fuera la mejor candidata.  
 Ana<sub>1</sub> not believed that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> be.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the best candi-  
 date  
 ‘Ana didn’t think she<sub>1/2</sub>/he was the best candidate’.
- d. Ana<sub>1</sub> lamenta que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> tenga tanto trabajo.  
 Ana<sub>1</sub> regrets that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> have.SUBJ.PRES.3SG so-much work  
 ‘Ana regrets that she<sub>1/2</sub>/he has so much work’.

Luján (1999) shows however that examples involving an emotive-factive subjunctive do determine obviation:

- (18) \*(Tú) lamentas que (tú) vengas.  
 (You) regrets that (you) come.SUBJ.PRES.2SG

Hence, it seems that the claim that in Spanish only the volitional subjunctive triggers obviation must be reconsidered. We will see in chapter 3 that Kempchinsky’s examples involve some of the factors that weaken obviation, which may explain the availability of coindexation.

In infinitival clauses, finally, the co-referential reading is not only possible, but obligatory (example from Kampchinsky 1987):

- (19) Paco<sub>1</sub> quiere *PRO*<sub>1</sub> estudiar latín.  
 Paco<sub>1</sub> wants *PRO*<sub>1</sub> study.INF.PRES Latin.  
 ‘Paco wants to study Latin’.

### 2.3.5 Summary

From the above data concerning the Western Romance languages, it seems that cross-linguistically, there is a strict relation between the disjoint reference effect and the subjunctive mood. Since the class of predicates that selects for a subjunctive clause most uniformly across Romance languages is the class of volitional and desiderative predicates, obviation occurs mainly in volitional contexts. However, in Italian the entire class of intensional subjunctive, including volitional and desiderative, epistemic and emotive-factive subjunctive, trigger obviation. This seems to be true of the other Romance languages as well – verbs lexically selecting for subjunctive clauses trigger obviation. As for polarity subjunctive, it appears that it does instantiate obviation as well, though not as rigidly and as uniformly as ‘intensional’ subjunctive does.

### 2.3.6 An aside on Latin

In Latin, obviation seems to occur in a limited set of contexts, mainly in subjunctive clauses selected by volitional and desiderative verbs (‘*verba voluntatis*’).

In Catalan, French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish, volitional verbs can select for two types of clausal arguments: the infinitival clause, and the subjunctive clause. In the second type of clause the obviative interpretation of the subject generally obtains.

Latin *verba voluntatis* (*volo*, ‘I want’, *nolo*, ‘I do not want’, *malo*, ‘I prefer’, *cupio*, ‘I desire’, etc.) can select three types of clausal complements: the infinitival clause (also called ‘infinitival complement’), the structure called ‘accusativus cum infinitivo’ (AcI), and the subjunctive clause<sup>3</sup>:

- (20) a. *Volo esse liber.* (Plaut. *Trin.* 440)  
 Want.IND.PRES.1SG be.INF free  
 ‘I want to be free’.

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<sup>3</sup> A subjunctive clause occurs more often when the matrix verb is in the optative subjunctive (*vellem*, ‘I would like’, *nollem*, ‘I would not like’, *mallet*, ‘I had rather’, ecc.). This embedded clause may be introduced by the subjunctive complementizer *ut*, but more frequently it is not. Compare, for instance, sentence (20)c, where the argument clause is introduced by the subordinating conjunction, with the following example, where the complementizer is omitted:  
 (i) *tu vellem ego vel cuperem adesses* (Cic. Att. 2,18,4)

You.NOM want.SUBJ.IMPF.1SG I.NOM or desire.SUBJ.IMPF.1SG come.SUBJ.IMPF.2SG  
 ‘I wish – I desire you to come here’.

- b. *Senatus te voluit mihi nummos, me tibi frumentum dare.* (Cic. *II Verr.* 3,197)  
 Senate you wanted me.DAT money, me.ACC you.DAT wheat give.INF  
 ‘The senate wanted you to give me money, and me to give you the wheat’.
- c. *Volo ut mihi respondeas tu.* (Cic. *Vatin.* 14)  
 Want.IND.PRES.1SG that me.DAT answer.SUBJ.PRES.2SG you.NOM  
 ‘I want you to answer me!’.

In the ‘infinitival complement’ the understood subject of the embedded clause is obligatorily interpreted as coreferential to the matrix subject. In the ‘infinitival proposition’ the subject optionally corefers with the matrix subject. Finally, in a subjunctive clause the embedded subject is generally obviative with respect to the matrix subject<sup>4</sup>.

It seems that the volitional subjunctive is the only type of subjunctive triggering obviation. The epistemic subjunctive do not trigger obviation:

- (21) *Metuo ne sero veniam* (Plaut. *Men.* 989)  
 ‘I am afraid I will come late’.

Indirect questions do not trigger obviation, as well:

- (22) *Homo quid ageret, taceret responderet, nesciebat* (Cic. *Verr.* II, 3, 62)  
 ‘That poor man]<sub>1</sub> didn’t know what he<sub>1/2</sub>/she had to do, whether he<sub>1/2</sub>/she had to keep quiet or to answer’.

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<sup>4</sup> A limited series of exceptions will be considered below. Notice that both in AcI structures and in the subjunctive clause, the embedded subject can be obviative with respect to the matrix subject. It is not clear, however, what the exact difference is between the two type of constructions. Moreover, the alternance between AcI and subjunctive was remarked by the Latin grammarians Priscianus and Macrobius: «sciendum tamen, quod in hoc sensu frequenter invenimus pro infinito verbo subiunctivum poni, ut ‘iubeo facias; iubeo dicas; impero venias; hortor legas’, in quibus deest ‘ut’, quod licet vel addere vel non» (Priscianus, *Institutionum grammaticarum libri*, 18, 45 – «it must be known, however, that in this sense we often find that the subjunctive mood can be put in spite of the infinitive, as ‘iubeo facias; iubeo dicas; impero venias; hortor legas’, where ‘ut’, which can be adjoined or not, is omitted»). «[Latini] aliquotiens [infinitum] pro coniunctivo ponunt: Cicero pro Sestio ‘rei publicae dignitas me ad se rapit et haec minora relinquere hortatur’ pro ‘hortatur ut relinquam’, Vergilius ‘hortor amare focos’ pro ‘hortor ut ament’» (Macrobius, *Excerpta de differentiis et societatis greci latinique verbi*, 164 – «Latins sometimes put the infinitive in spite of the subjunctive: Cicero pro Sestio ‘rei publicae dignitas me ad se rapit et haec minora delinquere hortatur’ in spite of ‘hortatur ut relinquam’, Vergilius ‘hortor amare focos’ in spite of ‘hortor ut ament’»).

Furthermore, emotive-factive predicates generally do not trigger obviation:

- (23) [Haec urbs] mihi laetari videtur, quod tantam pestem evomuerit  
(Cic. *Cat.* 2, 2)  
'It seems to me that [this town]<sub>1</sub> rejoices that he/she/it<sub>1/2</sub> rejected such a great disaster'.

Thus, again, the class of volitional predicates appears to be the only one that requires disjointedness rigidly.

## 2.4 Obviation and *de se*

### 2.4.1 Castañeda's examples

We have seen that obviation can be defined as a disjointedness condition between two arguments. This definition can be reformulated in terms of unavailability of 'first-person' interpretation, a notion originally discussed by Castañeda (1966, 1968), or '*de se*' interpretation, following Lewis's (1979) terminology.

A *de se* attitude may be defined as a subject's attitude that is consciously directed toward a proposition involving the subject herself. To illustrate, consider the following scenario (see Castañeda 1966, Higginbotham 1992). A certain war hero suffers from amnesia and does not remember any of his deeds in wartime. Suppose that this unfortunate person reads a book about the war he fought in. He also reads about a soldier's heroic exploits. The soldier the unfortunate is reading about, is actually himself, but he is amnesiac and does not realize that it is himself the war hero. He finally comes to have some belief about the soldier he is reading about and may say: 'That soldier is a hero' – without realizing that the soldier he is talking about is himself.

In such a scenario, sentence (24)a can be considered true, whereas sentences (24)b and (24)c cannot:

- (24) a. The unfortunate man believes he is a hero.  
b. The unfortunate man believes that he himself is a hero.  
c. The unfortunate man believes himself to be a hero.

Sentences (24)b and (24)c are infelicitous in the above scenario because the anaphor *himself* introduces the presupposition that the attitude expressed by the matrix verb is *de se* – that is, it is a conscious attitude about the author of the attitude himself.

In a different scenario, say, one in which the war hero is *not* amnesiac (he is quite aware about who he is and about his own past experience in the war-time, and he may say ‘I am a war hero’), sentences (24)b and (24)c would be felicitous. Sentence (24)a might also be appropriate. In such a scenario all three sentences might express that the unfortunate is consciously speaking about himself (*de se*).

Higginbotham (1992) notices that the null subject of infinitival clauses, PRO, typically introduces a *de se* interpretation. Thus, imagine that in the above scenario, while still reading about the deeds of the soldier, the unfortunate comes to get some expectations and says: ‘This soldier will turn out to be a war hero’. We may report the unfortunate’s sentence through (25)a, but not through (25)b or c:

- (25) a. The unfortunate expects he will turn out to be a war hero.  
 b. The unfortunate expects PRO to turn out to be a war hero.  
 c. The unfortunate expects himself to turn out to be a war hero.

Sentence (25)a can express a non-*de se* attitude, thus being compatible with the described scenario, whereas sentence (25)b and c expresses a *de se* attitude, and are infelicitous under the described circumstances. Thus, sentence (25)a can be considered true in the given scenario. Sentences (25)b and (7)c, cannot.

Moreover, sentence (25)a is ambiguous between the *de se* interpretation and the non-*de se* interpretation, whereas sentences (25)b and c are unambiguously *de se*.

#### 2.4.2 Subjunctive clauses and the *de se* reading

Schlenker (2005) was the first, as far as I know, who defined obviation in terms of unavailability of *de se* reading. He discusses some examples reporting an attitude involving subjunctive clauses and claims that a sentence having a subjunctive clausal complement may be felicitous only when it expresses a non-*de se* attitude:

- (26) George<sub>1</sub> voudrait qu'il<sub>1</sub> soit élu.  
 George<sub>1</sub> want.COND.PRES.3SG that he<sub>1</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG elected  
 ‘George<sub>1</sub> wishes that he<sub>1</sub> is elected’.

Sentence (26) is appropriate in a scenario in which George expresses the wish ‘This candidate should be elected’, though not if George’s wish has the form ‘I wish to be elected’.

Let us consider the Italian translation of Schlenker’s example:

- (27) Gianni<sub>1</sub> vorrebbe che *pro*<sub>1</sub> sia eletto.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> want.COND.PRES.3SG that he<sub>1</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG elected  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wishes that he<sub>1</sub> is elected’.

Sentence (27) is interpreted as non-*de se*, thus being appropriate in a scenario in which Gianni has a wish of the form ‘This candidate should be elected’ – where the candidate is in fact Gianni himself, though he does not realize it. However, a *de se* interpretation for sentence (27) is not completely ruled out. To show this, consider the following sentences:

- (28) a. Maria spera che Gianni sia eletto.  
 Maria hopes that Gianni is.SUBJ.PRES.3SG elected  
 ‘Maria hopes that Gianni will be elected’.
- b. E anche Gianni spera che sia eletto.  
 And also Gianni hopes that is.SUBJ.PRES.3SG elected  
 ‘And Gianni hopes that he is elected too’

Intuitively, sentence (28)b can be an appropriate continuation of sentence (28)a. Thus, although the preferred reading for (28)b is non-*de se*, especially if assessed out of the blue, the *de se* reading does not seem to be completely excluded and sentence (28)b appears to be ambiguous between the two readings.

As it will be shown in chapter 3 sentence (27) (and (28)b) shows peculiar properties. There are indeed some environments that enforce obviation rigidly, and environments that do not. Subjunctive clauses having a voice auxiliary belong to the latter class. Environments triggering strict obviation, appear to behave differently as for the *de se* interpretation.

Let us imagine a scenario in which the unfortunate reads on the newspaper that a certain war hero, who is he himself, will be soon awarded a medal by the president in person. Thus, he may come to think: ‘This war hero will meet the president’. The unfortunate’s wife knows that her husband will soon meet the president. She also knows that the meeting will probably take place, say, in May. She may say ‘I think my husband will meet the president in May’. Then we may report the unfortunate’s wife’s attitudes as follows:

- (29) Lo moglie dello sfortunato crede che suo marito incontri il presidente a maggio.  
 The unfortunate’s wife thinks that her husband meet.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the president in May  
 ‘The unfortunate’s wife thinks her husband will meet the president in May’.



A possible continuation for sentence (29) may be (30):

- (30) E anche lo sfortunato crede che incontri il presidente in maggio.  
 And also the unfortunate thinks that meet.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the president in May  
 ‘And the unfortunate also thinks he will meet the president in May’.

Sentence (30) is clearly non-*de se* and appear to be appropriate in the described scenario. Imagine however that the unfortunate recovers from his amnesia. He becomes aware that the war hero is in fact himself and that he will meet the president, probably in May. Then sentence (30) would not be an appropriate continuation for sentence (29) anymore and an indicative would be appropriate instead<sup>5</sup>:

- (31) E anche lo sfortunato crede che incontrerà il presidente in maggio.  
 And also the unfortunate thinks that meet.IND.FUT.3SG the president in May  
 ‘And the unfortunate also thinks he will meet the president in May’.

Thus, sentence (30) cannot be *de se*, contrasting with the subjunctive clauses in (27)a and (28)b, which in an appropriate context can be *de se*. The subjunctive clause in (30) contrasts also with the indicative clause in (31) which can be *de se*, but it can also be non-*de se*. Thus, the difference between the two sentences is that the subjunctive clause in (30) is unambiguously non-*de se*, whereas the indicative clause is ambiguous between the *de se* and the non-*de se* reading.

## 2.5 Conclusion

In the present chapter I have provided a general characterization of the phenomenon at issue. I have shown that in Italian obviation between the matrix and the embedded subject obtains in subjunctive, but not in indicative, conditional and in infinitival clauses, no matter what the type of predicate triggering the subjunctive is involved – will, wish, epistemic, emotive-factive, question verbs all instantiate obviation. Also, both intensional and polarity subjunctive appear to instantiate obviation.

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<sup>5</sup> An infinitival clause would also be odd, but we assume this is irrelevant for the present discussion. We assume that infinitival complements of verbs like *credere* ‘believe’, *pensare* ‘think, believe’ are incompatible with eventive predicates, which rules out an alternative in the infinitive for sentence (30)

In the other main Western Romance languages – Catalan, French, Portuguese, Spanish – the domain of occurrence of obviation appears to overlap with the one in Italian: obviation obtains in subjunctive clauses, although some examples from Romance languages apparently challenge the descriptive generalization that polarity subjunctive instantiate obviation. We will see in the following chapter that such examples involve in fact factors that appear to ‘weaken’ obviation even in Italian.

Finally, following Schlenker (2005), I have provided a semantic characterization of obviation in terms of unavailability of the *de se* interpretation.

## 3 Environments weakening subjunctive obviation

### 3.1 Chapter outline

Common to all the existing analyses on obviation is the observation that obviation holds between the matrix subject and the subject of subjunctive argument clauses. The present chapter places under scrutiny this descriptive generalization. Remarkably, it will turn out to be incomplete.

First, obviation does not arise in *all* the subjunctive clauses. Ruwet (1984) observes that in French, the subject of *some* subjunctive clauses is not obligatorily disjoint in reference from the matrix subject. His examples have their counterpart in the other Western Romance languages. Second, Manzini (2000) observes that the obviative interpretation can occur even in *adverbial* clauses – not only in argument clauses. Finally, the subject of an embedded clause can be obviative even with respect to a matrix direct or indirect object.

In order to reach an adequate description of the phenomenon at issue I will first consider some factors concerning the verbal form carrying subjunctive morphology, which appears to affect the interpretative properties of the embedded subject: subjunctive tense, passivization, and modalization. Then, I will analyze the question which arguments and which grammatical properties of an argument are involved in obviation both in the embedded and in the matrix clause. I will analyze obviation with respect to double embedding, adverbial clauses, and peripheral factors such as left dislocation and clause dislocation. Finally, I will illustrate some data concerning coordination.

This analysis will allow us to formulate a novel descriptive generalization that states that obviation concerns the embedded subject and the matrix argument referring to the individual to whom a propositional attitude is attributed. Following the consuetude in the philosophy of language and semantics, this argument may be referred to as ‘bearer of the attitude’, ‘context agent’, or ‘context author’. Such an argument *may* (it does not need to) be the matrix

subject. It may also be a direct or an indirect object. This generalization is just rephrasing the definition of obviation as the unavailability of *de se* reading, which has been discussed at the end of the previous chapter, since *de se* attitudes obviously concern the bearer of an attitude.

A second descriptive statement that will be achieved is that obviation occurs if the verbal form inflected in the subjunctive is a full verb. The disjointedness effect appears to be somehow ‘weakened’ if the verbal form carrying subjunctive morphology is an auxiliary or a modal.

Finally, a series of factors appear to affect the interpretation of the embedded subject: the theta-role it discharges, number, its realization as a strong or weak/clitic (or null) pronoun, the presence of left-dislocated constituent and clause dislocation. All these factors appear to facilitate the *de se* reading, showing a more complex framework.

### 3.2 Obviation and subjunctive mood

#### 3.2.1 Obviation and subjunctive ‘tenses’

##### 3.2.1.1 Obviation ‘weakening’ and periphrastic tenses

Ruwet (1984) and Raposo (1985) observe that obviation is sensitive to the “tense” of a subjunctive verb. That is, coindexation appears to be marginally available if the subjunctive tense is periphrastic.

In Italian the subjunctive mood has four ‘tenses’: *presente* ‘present simple’, *passato* ‘present perfect’, *imperfetto* ‘imperfect’ and *trapassato* ‘pluperfect’. The distribution of these forms in subordinate contexts depends on the rules of Sequence of Tenses (SoT). In an environment of primary subordination, SoT depends on the mood and the time of the matrix predicate and to the time relation between the matrix event and the embedded event:

- simultaneity (the matrix and the embedded eventuality overlap temporally);
- anteriority (the embedded eventuality precedes the matrix eventuality);
- posteriority (the embedded eventuality follows the matrix eventuality).

The following (simplified) paradigm illustrates the SoT system in Italian<sup>6</sup>:

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<sup>6</sup> The scheme does not include indicative present perfect tense, which is compatible with the subjunctive present (perfect) and with the subjunctive imperfect or pluperfect.

Matrix verb		Subjunctive tense		
Mood	Tense	Simultaneity	Anteriority	Posteriority
Indicative	Present	Present	Present perf. (Imperfect) <sup>7</sup>	Present
	Future			
	Imperfect	Imperfect	Pluperfect (Imperfect) <sup>8</sup>	Imperfect
Conditional	Present			
	Past			

If the matrix verb is in the present, the embedded verb in the subjunctive may be either in the present or in the present perfect. Coindexation between the matrix and the embedded subject is not available in the former case. For many Italian native speakers, if the embedded verb is a present perfect subjunctive, intuitively coindexation is marginally possible, although the obviate reading is the more natural option:

- (1) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> abbia superato l'esame.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has passed the exam'.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> teme che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> non abbia superato l'esame  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> fears that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> is afraid that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has not passed the exam'.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammarica che *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> non abbia superato l'esame.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has not passed the exam'.

Interestingly, even for the speakers who do not accept coindexation in sentences like (1)a, there is a contrast between such sentences and sentences like (1) in chapter 2.

If the matrix verb is in the past, the embedded verb in the subjunctive may be imperfect or pluperfect. Coindexation is ruled out if the embedded verb is imperfect subjunctive (exactly as it is when the verb is in the present):

- (2) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> voleva che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> leggesse il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> wanted that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the book.  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> wanted him<sub>\*1/2</sub>/her to read the book'.

<sup>7</sup> The imperfect subjunctive expressing anteriority can be the predicate of a clausal argument of a verb in the present or in the imperfect. Such an option is restricted to some temporal and aspectual properties that will be considered later.

<sup>8</sup> See note 6.

- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leggesse molti libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG many books  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she used to read many books.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> temeva che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> facesse molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> feared that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> made.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> was afraid he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she was making many mistakes’.
- d. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammaricava che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leggesse pochi libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG few books  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regretted that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she used to read few books’.

If the embedded subjunctive is pluperfect, however, according to many Italian speakers, coindexation is marginally available, although the obviative interpretation is preferred<sup>9</sup>:

- (3) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> avesse letto molti libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG read many books  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that he%<sub>1/2</sub>/she had read many books.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> temeva che *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> avesse fatto molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> feared that *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG made many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> was afraid he%<sub>1/2</sub>/she he had made many mistakes’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammaricava che *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> avesse letto pochi libri.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*%<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG read.INF books  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regretted that he%<sub>1/2</sub>/she had read few books’.

The other Western Romance languages parallel the behavior of Italian:

- (4) *Catalan* (Gemma Rigau, p.c.)  
 a. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> està sorprès que *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> hagi fet molts errors.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> stays surprised that *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made many mistakes.  
 ‘Joan<sub>1</sub> is surprised that he?<sub>1/2</sub>/she has made many mistakes’.

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<sup>9</sup> To some Italian native speakers, the sentences in (3) appear to be slightly more acceptable than sentences in (1). Tense appears to matter here, as in some other cases that will be discussed.

- b. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> estava sorprès que *pro*<sub>2/1/2</sub> hagués fet molts errors.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> stayed surprised that *pro*<sub>2/1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG made many mistakes.  
 ‘Joan<sub>1</sub> was surprised that he<sub>2/1/2</sub>/she had made many mistakes’.
- (5) *French* (Ruwet 1984)  
 ?Je veux (absolument) que je sois parti dans dix minutes.  
 I want (absolutely) that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG left in ten minutes.  
 ‘I want to be gone in ten minutes’.
- (6) *Portuguese* (Raposo 1985)  
 a. [O António]<sub>1</sub> receia que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> tenha bebido a água envenenada.  
 [The António]<sub>1</sub> fears that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG drunk the water poisoned  
 ‘António fears that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she has drunk poisoned water’.
- b. [A Maria]<sub>1</sub> preferia que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> não tivesse encontrado o Manel.  
 [The Maria]<sub>1</sub> preferred that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG met the Manel  
 ‘Maria<sub>1</sub> preferred she<sub>1/2</sub>/he had not met Manel’.
- (7) *Spanish* (María Martínez Atienza, p.c.)  
 Juan<sub>1</sub> esperaba que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> hubiera cometido pocos errors (pero en realidad había cometido muchos).  
 Juan<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG made few mistakes (but in fact had made many)  
 ‘Juan<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she had made few mistakes (but in fact he<sub>1/2</sub>/she made many)’.

The above data from Italian, Catalan, French, Portuguese, and Spanish seem to suggest that when the subjunctive verb is in a ‘simple’ tense, coindexation is unavailable. When it is in a periphrastic tense, coindexation tends to be possible. Thus, obviation does not simply occur in subjunctive clauses, but only in the subjunctive clauses in which the verb is in a ‘simple’ tense.

### 3.2.1.2 Another aside on Latin

In Latin, although the volitional subjunctive does not allow for coindexation between the matrix and the embedded subject, there are some cases in which

the coreference is nonetheless admitted. In one of these cases, the subjunctive verb is pluperfect<sup>10</sup>.

- (8) a. *Vellem non constituissem me hodie venturum esse L. Aelio*  
(Cic. *De or.* 1, 265)  
‘I had rather I did not decide to go to L. Aelius today’.
- b. *Hoc ipsum tacuissem mallet* (Cic. *Quinct.* 30)  
‘I had rather I had been silent about this same fact’.
- c. *Nollem dixissem* (Cic. *Verr.* 4, 43)  
‘I would like I did not say it’.

Thus, Romance languages may have developed a tendency whose initial stage can be traced back to Latin.

### 3.2.2 *Passive voice*

As shown by Ruwet (1984), in French the *de se* reading is marginally possible when the embedded subjunctive verb is passive. Raposo (1985) shows that Portuguese parallels French. Italian does so as well, although intralinguistic variability holds:

- (9) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>%??1/2</sub> venga promosso.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>%??1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG promoted  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>%??1/2</sub>/she will pass the exam’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> fosse promosso.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG promoted  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she would pass the exam’.

Although the above examples are only marginally acceptable under the coreferential interpretation, still they are considerably more acceptable than the example (1) in chapter 2, which is completely ruled out under the same reading.

<sup>10</sup> The manuscript tradition is not uniform with regard to the following examples, and the examples in which the subjunctive occurs are generally textual variants of forms in the infinitive. Example (a) is the only sentence accepted by the most prominent editions. As for example (b), both the *Les Belles Lettres* and the *Oxoniensis* critic edition accept the textual variant *tacuisse* instead of *tacuissem*. As for example (c), finally, the *Oxoniensis* edition accept *dixisse* instead of *dixissem*.



Sentence (9)a is intuitively less acceptable than (9)b. This does not seem to relate with the choice of the auxiliary, since the sentence *Gianni spera che sia promosso* ('Gianni hopes he/she is promoted') does not seem to display any appreciable difference in status with respect to sentence (9)a.

Coindexation is more natural if the embedded passive verb is in the past, and it appears to be even more so if the verb is a pluperfect subjunctive:

- (10) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>%<sup>?</sup>1/2</sub> sia stato promosso.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>%<sup>?</sup>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG been promoted  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>%<sup>?</sup>1/2</sub>/she has passed the exam'.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>(<sup>?</sup>)1/2</sub> fosse stato promosso.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>(<sup>?</sup>)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG been promoted  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>(<sup>?</sup>)1/2</sub>/she had passed the exam'.

As mentioned at the beginning of the present section, this case of obviation 'weakening' has been observed in other Romance languages:

- (11) a. *Catalan* (Picallo 1985)<sup>11</sup>  
Que *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> sigui amenaçat de mort no m'impresiona.  
That *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG menaced of death not me.CL impresses.  
'It does not impress me that I am menaced with death'.
- b. *French* (Ruwet 1984)  
<sup>?</sup>Je veux que je sois autorisé à partir demain.  
I want that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG authorized to leave.INF tomorrow.  
'I want to be allowed to leave tomorrow'.
- c. *Portuguese* (Raposo 1985)  
[O Manel]<sub>1</sub> deseja que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> seja admitido no concurso.  
[The Manel]<sub>1</sub> wishes that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG admitted in-the contest.  
'Manel<sub>1</sub> wishes he<sub>1/2</sub>/she was admitted in the contest'.
- d. *Spanish* (Quer 2005)  
*Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> espero que *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> sea autorizado a ir.  
*Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> hope that *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG authorized to go.INF.  
'I hope I will be allowed to leave'.

<sup>11</sup> For obviation from the matrix object, see section 2.4.

The data considered here further show that not all subjunctive clauses trigger obviation. Only those in which the verb is in the active voice do, whereas the passive voice allows for the coindexation.

Note that the data described in the previous section and in the present one share the same property: the verbal inflected in the subjunctive is *not* the lexical (or full) verb, but an auxiliary – the tense or the voice auxiliary. In both cases the full verb is in a non-finite form – the past participle.

### 3.2.3 Modal verbs

#### 3.2.3.1 Romance languages

Another environment in which obviation tends not to occur is the case when the form carrying subjunctive morphology is a modal verb. Intuitively, coindexation between the matrix and the embedded argument is not quite ruled out in the following examples, at least for many Italian native speakers:

- (12) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> possa partire domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG leave.INF tomorrow  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub>/she will be able to leave tomorrow’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> potesse partire il giorno dopo.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG leave.INF the day after.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped he<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub>/she would be able to leave on the following day’.

The *de se* reading appear to be even more acceptable if the matrix predicate is emotive-factive:

- (13) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammarica che *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> debba partire domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that *pro*<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub> must.SUBJ.PRES.3SG leave.INF tomorrow  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that he<sub>% $\phi$ 1/2</sub>/she must leave tomorrow’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammaricava che *pro*<sub>( $\phi$ )1/2</sub> dovesse partire il giorno dopo.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*<sub>( $\phi$ )1/2</sub> must.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG leave.INF the day after  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that he<sub>( $\phi$ )1/2</sub>/she had to leave on the following day’.

The data from the other Western Romance languages are similar to those from Italian:

- (14) a. *Catalan* (Picallo 1985)  
*Pro*<sub>1</sub> sentien que *pro*<sub>1</sub> deguessin produir una falsa impressió.  
*Pro*<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*<sub>1</sub> must.SUBJ.PRES.3SG produce a false impression  
 ‘They regretted they had to produce a false impression’.
- b. *French* (Ruwet 1984)  
 ?Je veux que je puisse partir dès demain.  
 I want that I can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to leave by tomorrow.  
 ‘I want to be able to leave by tomorrow’.
- c. *Portuguese* (Raposo 1985)  
 [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> exige que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa ver o seu advogado.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> requires that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG see.INF the his attorney  
 ‘Manel<sub>1</sub> requires that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she be able to see his/her attorney’.
- d. *Spanish* (Quer 2005)  
*Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> espero que *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> pueda ir.  
*Pro*<sub>1sg</sub> hope that *pro*<sub>1sg</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to go  
 ‘I hope to be able to go’.

The data in the present section, as well as the data discussed in the previous ones, suggest that obviation is sensitive to the nature of the verb inflected in the subjunctive. It appears that only full verbs trigger obviation strictly, whereas auxiliaries and modals – functional verbs, in the sense of Cinque (1999, 2004) allow (more or less marginally) the coindexation between the matrix and the embedded subject.

### 3.2.3.2 Again an aside on Latin

At least two examples in Latin show that the coreferential interpretation is possible when the form carrying subjunctive morphology is a modal verb<sup>12</sup>:

- (15) a. *Vellem praesentem possem P. Helvidium Rufum nominare.*  
 (Cic. *Cluent.* 198)  
 ‘I would like to have mentioned P. Helvidius Rufus in front of himself’.

<sup>12</sup> In the main critical editions the modal verb in the subjunctive is accepted. Thus, these examples appear to be valid.

- b. *Vellem equidem idem possem gloriari* (Cic. *Sen.* 32)  
 ‘I would like I praised myself about this’.

Thus, the phenomenon in Romance languages may be rooted in Latin.

### 3.2.4 Other periphrastic forms and restructuring verbs

The examples in the preceding sections show that coindexation appears to be marginally available when the subjunctive verb is a functional verb and the full verb is non-finite. I will now consider to what extent this seems to hold.

In Italian, the progressive auxiliary, *stare* (literally, ‘to stay’) appears to marginally allow for the *de se* reading:

- (16) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> teme che *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> stia facendo molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> fears that *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> stay.SUBJ.PRES.3SG making many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is afraid that he<sub>?1/2</sub>/she is making many mistakes’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> temeva che *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> stesse facendo molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> feared that *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> stay.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG making many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> was afraid that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub>/she was making many mistakes’.

As observed by Picallo (1985) with respect to Catalan, however, restructuring verbs do trigger obviation. In Italian, they do so too:

- (17) a. *Aspectual verbs*  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> cominci a leggere il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> begin.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to read.INF the book  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she begins to read the book’.
- b. *Motion verbs*  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> vada a prendere il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> go.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to take.INF the book.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she goes and gets the book’.
- c. *Conative verbs*  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> provi a leggere il libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> try.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to read.INF the book.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she tries to read the book’.

However, the presence of a tense auxiliary or of a modal verb (preferably in the imperfect subjunctive) considerably improves the possibility of the coreferential reading (provided the appropriate scenario):

- (18) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> avesse cominciato a leggere il libro giusto.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG begun to read.INF the book right  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she had begun to read the right book'.  
(Scenario: Gianni is not sure about the book he was assigned to read)
- a'. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse cominciare a leggere il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.2SG to began to read the book  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could begin to read the book'.  
(Scenario: Gianni is not sure whether he is authorized to start reading the book)
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> fosse andato a prendere il libro giusto.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG gone to bring the book right.  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she had gone and bring the right book'.  
(Same scenario as a)
- b'. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse andare a prendere il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> CAN.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to go to bring the book.  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could go and bring the book'.  
(Same scenario as a')
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse provare a leggere il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> could.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to try to read.INF the book.  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could try to read the book'.  
(Same scenario as a' and b')

According to some Italian native speakers, implicative verbs (*riuscire*, 'to manage', etc.) are not as strict as aspectual, motion, and conative verbs in triggering obviation. In the following examples the two subjects may corefer, even though the most natural interpretation is the obviative one:

- d. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> riuscisse a leggere il libro entro domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> manage.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to read the book by tomorrow.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub>/she would manage to read the book by tomorrow’.

Thus, implicative verbs appear to behave differently from aspectual, motion, and conative verbs.

### 3.2.5 Combining auxiliaries and modals

The combination of at least two of the factors discussed above (tense auxiliaries, voice auxiliaries, modal verbs) generally appears to increase the possibility to coindex the matrix and the embedded subject. The possible combinations are the following:

- a. Aux<sub>tense</sub>+Aux<sub>voice</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>
- b. Mod+Aux<sub>tense</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>
- c. Mod+Aux<sub>voice</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>
- d. Mod+ Aux<sub>tense</sub>+Aux<sub>voice</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>
- e. Aux<sub>tense</sub>+Mod+V<sub>infinitive</sub>

Among the above combinations, the first has already been discussed (section 3.2.2).

Let us consider the remaining four combinations, which also appear to weaken the disjoint reference effect:

- (19) a. Mod+Aux<sub>tense</sub>+V<sub>infinitive</sub>  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa/pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa/potesse aver fatto molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks/thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES/IMPF.3SG have made many mistakes  
 ‘Gianni thinks/thought it is/was possible he<sub>1/2</sub>/she has/had made many mistakes’.
- b. Mod+Aux<sub>voice</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa/pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa/potesse essere ammesso all’università.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks/thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES/IMPF.3SG be admitted at the university  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks/thought that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she can/could be admitted at the university’.

- c. Mod+ Aux<sub>tense</sub>+Aux<sub>voice</sub>+V<sub>participle</sub>  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa/pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa/potesse essere stato ammesso all'università.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks/thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES/IMPF.3SG be been admitted at the university  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks/thought that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could have been admitted at the university'.
- d. Aux<sub>tense</sub>+Mod+V<sub>infinitive</sub>  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> si rammarica/rammaricava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> sia/fosse dovuto partire così presto.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets/regretted that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES/IMPF.3SG must.PRT leave so early  
 'Gianni regrets/regretted that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she has/had had to leave so early'.

Intuitively, obviation does not appear to hold in the above sentences. Thus, apparently, the more embedded a full verb is, the more available coindexation will be. Thus, obviation appears to be sensitive to locality restrictions.

### 3.3 Obviation and arguments

#### 3.3.1 Embedded subject

##### 3.3.1.1 Theta-role sensitivity

Ruwet (1984) observes that in French coindexation is marginally acceptable if the embedded verb is agentless or 'psychological':

- (20) a. ?Je veux que je guérisse.  
 I want that I get.SUBJ.PRES.1SG better  
 'I want I get better'.
- b. ?Je veux que j'amuse ces enfants.  
 I want that I amuse.SUBJ.PRES.1SG those children.  
 'I want I amuse those children'.

Similar examples may be found in Spanish (Suñer 1986):

- (21) Pedro<sub>1</sub> negó que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> supiera la verdad.  
 Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> knowSUBJ.IMPF.3SG the truth  
 'Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she knew the truth'.

In Italian, the same phenomenon is observed only with respect to agentless verbs. It appears that a further improvement is achieved if the matrix verb is epistemic rather than volitional, if emphatic stress is added, and if the subjects are first person pronouns:

- (22) a. <sup>?</sup>*Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> Spero (proprio) che io guarisca presto.  
*Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> hope (really) that I recover.SUBJ.PRES.1SG soon  
 ‘I hope I will soon get better’.
- b. \**Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> Spero (proprio) che io diverta quei bambini.  
*Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> hope (really) that I amuse.SUBJ.PRES.1SG those children

Thus, the agent theta-role appears to be implicated in obviation to a larger extent than the theme (or the benefactive).

### 3.3.1.2 First person pronouns

Obviation appears also to be sensitive to the grammatical person. Intuitively, first person pronouns appear to facilitate coindexation, but only in the environments in which coindexation is already (more or less) marginally available:

- (23) a. \*Voglio che io legga il libro.  
 I-want that I read.SUBJ.PRES.1SG the book.
- b. <sup>?</sup>Spero (proprio) che io abbia superato l’esame.  
 I-hope (really) that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG passed the exam  
 ‘I (really) hope I have passed the exam’
- c. Spero (proprio) che io sia stato ammesso all’università.  
 I-hope (really) that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG been admitted at the university  
 ‘I (really) hope I have been admitted at the university’
- d. Spero (proprio) che io possa leggere quel libro.  
 I-hope that I can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG read that book  
 ‘I (really) hope I can read that book’.

The presence of the first-person pronoun in the subjunctive clause is obligatory. A sentence like *spero che sia stato ammesso ammesso all’università* can only be interpreted as ‘I hope that *he/she* has been admitted at the university’. And a sentence like *Gianni spera che sia stato ammesso all’uni-*



*versità* is ungrammatical under the interpretation ‘John hopes that *I* have been admitted at the university’. As it has sometimes been noticed, first and second person present subjunctive behaves as non-pro-drop verbal forms. The fact that the first (and second) person subjunctive is non-pro-drop does not appear in itself to be the only reason for the obviation ‘weakening’, as the data concerning the third person in the following paragraph show.

### 3.3.1.3 Strong pronouns

Examples involving an explicit third person pronoun – a weak pronoun (see Cardinaletti and Starke 1999) – do not appear indeed to have a different status from examples including a phonetically unrealized pronoun *pro*. Compare for instance the following examples with the sentences (1), chapter 2, (1)a, (9)a, and (12)a:

- (24) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole che egli<sub>\*1/2</sub> legga il libro.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> read.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the book  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> reads the book’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che egli<sub>%?1/2</sub> abbia superato l’esame.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> has passed the exam’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che egli<sub>%?1/2</sub> sia stato promosso.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG been promoted  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> will pass the exam’.
- d. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che egli<sub>%?1/2</sub> possa partire domani.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG leave.INF tomorrow  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub> will be able to leave tomorrow’.

The presence of a strong pronoun, however, seems to matter, since coindexation appears to be almost acceptable in ‘weak’ obviative environments<sup>13</sup>:

- (25) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che lui<sub>(?)1/2</sub> abbia superato l’esame.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> has passed the exam’.

<sup>13</sup> For the syntactic and semantic differences between strong, weak and clitic/null pronouns, see Cardinaletti and Starke (1999) and Cardinaletti (2002).

- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che lui<sub>(?)1/2</sub> sia stato promosso.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG been promoted  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> will pass the exam’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che lui<sub>(?)1/2</sub> possa partire domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.3SG leave.INF tomorrow  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he<sub>(?)1/2</sub> will be able to leave tomorrow’.

Intuitively, the sentences in (25) appear to be better than the sentences in (24), under the coreferential interpretation.

Moreover, if the subject pronoun is focused, the coindexation appears to be possible even if the subjunctive morphology is attached directly to the verbal free morpheme:

- (26) Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che solo LUI<sub>1/2</sub> parta domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that only HIM<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow.  
 ‘Gianni thinks he himself only will leave tomorrow’.

#### 3.3.1.4 Overlapping reference

Suñer (1985) observes that obviation concerns the strict coreference between two arguments, but does not occur if two arguments overlap in reference.

- (27) Lía<sub>1</sub> animó Julián<sub>2</sub> a que *pro*<sub>1+2</sub> escribieran algo juntos.  
 Lía<sub>1</sub> encouraged Julián<sub>2</sub> to that *pro*<sub>1+2</sub> wrote.SUBJ something together.  
 ‘Lía encouraged Julián to write something together’.

In the above sentence, the embedded subject can refer to a set of individuals that contains at least two elements, one of which can be the individual the matrix subject denotes – thus, the reference of the matrix and of the embedded subject ‘overlap’.

In Italian and in French (see Schlenker 2005) overlapping reference is also possible:

- (28) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto a Maria<sub>2</sub> che *pro*<sub>1</sub> vuole che *pro*<sub>1+2</sub> partano prima possibile.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has told Maria<sub>2</sub> that *pro*<sub>1</sub> wants that *pro*<sub>1+2</sub> leave.SUBJPRES.3PL as soon as possible  
 ‘Gianni told Maria that he wants they leave as soon as possible’.

- b. Spero che partiamo subito.  
 Hope.IND.PRES.1SG that leave.SUBJ.PRES.1PL at once  
 ‘I hope that we leave at once’.
- c. Tu voudras que vous vous rasez à 7h.  
 You.2SG will-want that you.2PL you.2PL shave.SUBJ.PRES.2PL at  
 7am  
 ‘You will want that you shave at 7am’.

The availability of overlapping reference does not seem to be granted on the whole. The following sentence allows coindexation very marginally, if ever:

- (29) Il presidente<sub>1</sub> si chiede dove *pro*<sub>??1+</sub> si riuniscano.  
 The chair<sub>1</sub> wonders where *pro*<sub>??1+</sub> gather.SUBJ.PRES.3PL gathered  
 ‘The chair<sub>1</sub> wonders that they<sub>??1+</sub> gathered’.

I assume that the unavailability of overlapping reference is associated with interrogative predicates.

### 3.3.2 Embedded object

It is well known that subjunctive obviation never involves the embedded object:

- (30) Gianni<sub>1</sub> desidera che Maria lo<sub>1/2</sub> inviti alla riunione.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> wishes that Maria him<sub>1/2</sub> invite.SUBJ.PRES.3SG to the meeting  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> wishes that Maria invited him<sub>1/2</sub> to the meeting’.

An embedded object is free to corefer with the matrix subject. This holds for the other Western Romance languages as well:

- (31) a. *Catalan* (Picallo 1985)  
 [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> esperava que [en Jordi] l<sub>1/2</sub>’invités a la reunió.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> hoped that the Jordi him<sub>1/2</sub> invite.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to  
 the meeting  
 ‘Joan<sub>1</sub> hoped that Jordi would invite him<sub>1/2</sub> to the meeting’.
- b. *French*  
 Jean<sub>1</sub> veut que Marie l<sub>1/2</sub>’invite au colloque.  
 Jean<sub>1</sub> wants that Marie him<sub>1/2</sub> invite.SUBJ.PRES.3SG at the meeting  
 ‘Jean<sub>1</sub> wants Marie to invite him<sub>1/2</sub> to the meeting’.

- c. *Portuguese* (Raposo 1985)  
 [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> deseja que a Maria o<sub>1/2</sub> insulte.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> wishes that the Maria him<sub>1/2</sub> insult.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Manel wishes that Maria insulted him’.
- d. *Spanish* (Suñer 1986)  
 Paco<sub>1</sub> quiere que María lo<sub>1/2</sub> invite a la fiesta.  
 Paco wants that Maria him invite.SUBJ.PRES.3SG at the party  
 ‘Paco wants Maria to invite him to the party’.

### 3.3.3 Matrix arguments

#### 3.3.3.1 Introduction

In the present section I will address the question, which matrix arguments may be involved in subjunctive obviation. I will consider three types of arguments: object arguments of psych- and epistemic verbs, object arguments of directive verbs, and prepositional arguments of nouns. The divide between arguments that may be involved in obviation from arguments that may not is provided by the Theta-theory. Only arguments that are assigned the experiencer theta-role, however they surface categorially, must be referentially disjoint from the embedded subject.

#### 3.3.3.2 Experiencer arguments

The embedded subject in subjunctive clauses is generally obviative with respect to the matrix subject, but it can obviate even with respect to a matrix object. Psych-verbs and epistemic verbs, which assign the experiencer theta-role to an argument surfacing as the direct object (e.g. *preoccupare* ‘to worry’), or as the indirect object (e.g. *dispiacere* ‘to regret’, *sembrare* ‘to seem’, used as an attitude predicate)<sup>14</sup>, as requiring a subjunctive argument clause, do trigger the disjoint reference effect between the matrix *object* and the embedded subject:

- (32) a. Lo<sub>1</sub> preoccupa che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> parta domani.  
 Him<sub>1</sub> worries that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow  
 ‘He<sub>1</sub> is worried that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she will leave tomorrow’.

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<sup>14</sup> See Belletti and Rizzi (1988).

- b. A Gianni<sub>1</sub> dispiace che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> parta domain.  
 To Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> regrets that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she will leave tomorrow’.
- c. A Gianni<sub>1</sub> sembra strano che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> parta domani.  
 To Gianni<sub>1</sub> seems strange that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow  
 row  
 ‘It seems strange to Gianni<sub>1</sub> that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she will leave tomorrow’.

The same status holds for the examples containing a psych- or an epistemic verb in Catalan (Picallo 1985):

- (33) Li<sub>1</sub> agradava que *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> llegís el diari.  
 [To-Him/her]<sub>1</sub> was-pleasant that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> read. SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the newspaper.  
 ‘He/she<sub>1</sub> found it pleasant that [he/she]\*<sub>1/2</sub> used to read the newspaper’.

The restrictions we have noticed for the cases of obviation involving the matrix and the embedded subject are true even of the cases of object-subject obviation. Thus, if the subjunctive morphology is attached to a tense or passive auxiliary, or to a modal verb, coreference tends to be acceptable:

- (34) a. A Gianni<sub>1</sub> sembrava strano che *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> avesse fatto molti errori.  
 To Gianni<sub>1</sub> seemed strange that *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG made many mistakes  
 ‘It seemed strange to Gianni<sub>1</sub> that he?<sub>1/2</sub>/she had made many mistakes’.
- b. Lo<sub>1</sub> preoccupava che *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> non venisse ammesso all’università.  
 Him<sub>1</sub> worried that *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG admitted to the university  
 It worried him<sub>1</sub> that he?<sub>1/2</sub>/she would not be admitted to the university’.
- c. Lo<sub>1</sub> preoccupava che *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> dovesse partire così presto.  
 Him<sub>1</sub> worried that *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> must.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG leave so early  
 ‘It worried him<sub>1</sub> that he?<sub>1/2</sub>/she had to leave so early’.
- d. Gli<sub>1</sub> dispiaceva che *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> non fosse stato ammesso all’università.  
 Him<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*?<sub>1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG been admitted to the university  
 He regretted<sub>1</sub> that he?<sub>1/2</sub>/she was not been admitted to the university’.

- e. Gli<sub>1</sub> dispiaceva che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse aver fatto molti errori.  
 Him<sub>1</sub> regretted that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG have made many mistakes  
 ‘He<sub>1</sub> regretted that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she may have made many mistakes’.

### 3.3.3.3 Arguments of directive verbs

Obviation arises in sentences containing a directive predicate between the matrix subject and the embedded subject, but *not* between the matrix object and the embedded subject (such sentences belong to a rather formal register):

- (35) Gianni<sub>1</sub> chiese a Maria<sub>2</sub> che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> partisse il giorno dopo.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> asked to Maria<sub>2</sub> that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the day after  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> asked Maria<sub>2</sub> PRO<sub>\*1/2</sub> to leave on the following day’.

Similar data can be found in the other Romance languages here discussed:

- (36) a. *Catalan* (Picallo 1985)  
 [En Pere]<sub>1</sub> va convèncer [en Jordi]<sub>2</sub> que *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> anés a Nova York.  
 [The Pere]<sub>1</sub> goes persuade.INF [the Jordi]<sub>2</sub> that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> go.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to New York  
 ‘Pere<sub>1</sub> persuaded Jordi<sub>2</sub> PRO<sub>\*1/2</sub> to go to New York’
- b. *Spanish* (Suñer 1986)  
 José<sub>1</sub> lo<sub>2</sub> persuadió a que *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> apagara la TV.  
 José<sub>1</sub> him<sub>2</sub> persuaded to that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> turn-off.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG the TV  
 ‘José<sub>1</sub> persuaded him<sub>2</sub> PRO<sub>\*1/2</sub> to turn off the TV’.

In Italian, if the embedded verb is passive, *pro* can corefer freely with the matrix subject:

- (37) Gianni<sub>1</sub> chiese a Maria che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> fosse autorizzato a partire.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> asked to Maria that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.UBJ.IMPF.3SG authorized to leave  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> asked Maria that he<sub>1/2</sub> would be authorized to leave’.

The availability of coindexation in the above sentence is somehow expected, considering how passive voice interacts with obviation.

All in all, the above data show that obviation can involve a matrix (direct or indirect) object. The embedded subject must obviate from an object, only if the object is assigned the experiencer theta-role. What sentences in which object-subject obviation obtains have in common with examples in which subject-subject obviation obtains, is that the embedded subject must be referentially disjoint from an argument referring to the individual to which an attitude towards the propositional content the embedded clause refers to is attributed. Following a common usage in the philosophy of language, such an argument may be dubbed as ‘bearer of attitude’ (or ‘attitude holder’), or, as is habitual in semantic literature, ‘agent (or author) of the context’<sup>15</sup>.

### 3.3.3.4 Possessives and genitives

When a subjunctive clause is the argument of a deverbal noun expressing an attitude (for instance, *volontà*, ‘will’, *desiderio*, ‘desire’, *speranza*, ‘hope’), the subject of the subjunctive clause can obviate with respect to possessive pronoun or a ‘genitive’ constituent:

- (38) Il {suo<sub>1</sub>} desiderio {di Gianni<sub>1</sub>} che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> parta domani svanirà presto.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> wish that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow will vanish soon.  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> wish that [he/she]\*<sub>1/2</sub> left tomorrow will vanish soon’.

The possessive and the genitive refer to the bearer of attitude here. Thus, the above sentence simply shows that obviation does not depend on the ‘surface’ grammatical category.

Obviation within clausal complements of nouns has the same distribution of obviation within argument clauses of verbs. First, indicative, conditional, and infinitive mood do *not* trigger obviation:

- (39) a. La sua<sub>1</sub> affermazione che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> partirà domani ha sorpreso tutti.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> statement that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> leave.IND.FUT.3SG tomorrow has surprised all  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> statement that [he/she]<sub>1/2</sub> will leave tomorrow has surprised everyone’.
- b. La sua<sub>1</sub> affermazione che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> sarebbe partita il giorno dopo sorprese tutti.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> statement that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.COND.3SG left the day after surprised all

<sup>15</sup> For the present purpose, we will take these terms as synonyms.

‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> statement that [he/she]<sub>1/2</sub> would leave on the following day surprised everyone’.

- c. La sua<sub>1</sub> decisione di *PRO*<sub>1</sub> partire sorprese tutti.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> decision of *PRO*<sub>1</sub> to leave surprised all  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> decision to leave surprised everyone’.

Second, if the form carrying subjunctive morphology is an auxiliary or a modal, coindexation tends to be recovered:

- (40) a. La sua<sub>1</sub> speranza che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> avesse fatto pochi errori svanì ben presto.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG made few mistakes vanished very soon  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that [he/she]<sub>1/2</sub> had made few mistakes vanished quickly’.
- b. La sua<sub>1</sub> speranza che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> fosse (stato) ammesso all’università fu delusa.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG (been) admitted at the university was disappointed  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that [he/she]<sub>1/2</sub> would be/have been admitted to the university was disappointed’.
- c. La sua<sub>1</sub> speranza che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse partire il giorno dopo rimase delusa.  
 The [his/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG leave.INF the day after remained disappointed  
 ‘[His/her]<sub>1</sub> hope that it was possible for [him/her]<sub>1/2</sub> to leave on the following day was disappointed’.

Since possessives and genitives satisfy the role of the experiencer and denote the agent of the context, the facts concerning obviation in a clausal argument of a noun parallel the observation stated so far with respect to clausal arguments of verbs.

### 3.4 Double embedding

The data discussed so far concern only one level of embedding. In such cases, the embedded subject and a matrix argument cannot corefer. As it has sometimes been observed in the literature, in double embedding, the same rule holds *locally*. That is, the most embedded subject is obviative with re-



spect to the intermediate subject, but it is *not* obviative with respect to the matrix subject:

- (41) Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che Maria<sub>2</sub> desiderasse che *pro*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> partisse con lei.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that Maria<sub>2</sub> wish.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG that *pro*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> leave.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG with her  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that Maria<sub>2</sub> wished that he<sub>1/3</sub>/she<sub>\*2/3</sub> left with her’.

The co-indexation between the most embedded subject and the matrix subject is available even when the intermediate predicate is ‘modal’ (like *to be possible*, *to be necessary*, etc.) and has an expletive phonetically unrealized argument:

- (42) Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che fosse indispensabile che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> telefonasse.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that be.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG indispensable that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> call.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG.  
 ‘Gianni hoped that it was indispensable that he<sub>1/2</sub> called.’

Other Western Romance Languages behave alike:

- (43) a. *Catalan* (Picallo 1985)  
 En Pere<sub>1</sub> esperava que en Jordi<sub>2</sub> volgués que *pro*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> hi anés.  
 [The Pere]<sub>1</sub> hoped that [the Jordi]<sub>2</sub> want.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG that *pro*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> there go SUBJ.IMPF.3SG.  
 ‘Pere<sub>1</sub> hoped that Jordi<sub>2</sub> wanted him<sub>1/\*2/3</sub>/her to go there’.
- b. *French* (Progovac 1993, 1994)  
 Jean<sub>1</sub> veut qu’il<sub>\*1/2</sub> desire qu’il<sub>1/\*2</sub> aime Marie.  
 Jean<sub>1</sub> wants that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> wish.SUBJ.PRES.3SG that he<sub>1/\*2</sub> love SUBJ.PRES.3SG Marie  
 ‘Jean<sub>1</sub> wants him<sub>\*1/2</sub> to wish he<sub>1/\*2</sub> loved Marie’.
- c. *Portuguese* (Raposo 1985)  
 [O Eduardo]<sub>1</sub> deseja que [o Manel]<sub>2</sub> queira que ele<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> compre um automóvel novo.  
 [The Eduardo]<sub>1</sub> wishes that [the Manel]<sub>2</sub> want.SUBJ.PRES.3SG that he<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> buy.SUBJ.PRES.3SG a car new.  
 ‘Eduardo<sub>1</sub> wishes that Manel<sub>2</sub> wanted him<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> to buy a new car’.

From the above data, the conclusion follows that obviation can involve the embedded subject and the subject (or the object) of the *immediately dominating* clause.

### 3.5 Adverbial clauses

Manzini (2000) observes that in rationale clauses the subject displays all the interpretative properties it has in clausal arguments, namely, it cannot be coindexed with the subject of the main clause:

- (44) \**Pro*<sub>1SG</sub> vengo perché *pro*<sub>1SG</sub> ti aiuti.  
*Pro*<sub>1SG</sub> come.IND.PRES.1SG in-order-that *pro*<sub>1SG</sub> you-CL  
 help.SUBJ.PRES.1SG

According to Manzini, this sentence can be paraphrased as ‘I come because I want that I help you’. In her view, the fact that rationale clauses include a implicit will attitude explains the obviation interpretation.

Obviation in rationale clauses is sensitive to all the characteristics we have observed in complement clauses concerning the presence of auxiliaries and modals. Thus, the following sentences appear to be almost acceptable:

- (45) a. <sup>?</sup>Vado a comprare il biglietto perché io possa partire domani.  
 Go.IND.PRES.1SG to buy the ticket in-order-that I  
 can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG leave tomorrow  
 ‘I go to buy the ticket so that I can leave tomorrow’.
- b. <sup>?</sup>Ho parlato con il mio avvocato perché fossi rilasciato.  
 AUX.IND.PRES.1SG talked with my attorney in-order-that  
 AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.1SG released  
 ‘I talked with my attorney so that I could be released’.

Obviation can be instantiated even in subjunctive adverbial clauses that do not involve an attitude (at least, not obviously). *Before*-clauses instantiate obviation. However, as Manzini (2000) points out, there are some examples in which coreference is almost legitimate, as (46)b:

- (46) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> legge il giornale prima che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> faccia colazione.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> reads the newspaper before that *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub>  
 make.SUBJ.PRES.1SG breakfast  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> reads the newspaper before he<sub>\*1/2</sub>/she has breakfast’.
- b. <sup>?</sup>*Pro* vado prima che *pro* mi arrabbi.  
 Go.IND.PRES.1SG before that get-angry.SUBJ.PRES.1SG  
 ‘I go before I get angry’.

In any case, example (46)b may not be actually valid, since agentless verbs and the first person facilitate coindexation.

Relative clauses also display obviation:

- (47) Gianni<sub>1</sub> sta cercando un esperto con cui *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> parli del problema.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert with whom *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub>  
 talk.SUBJ.PRES.3SG about the problem  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she can talk about the problem with’.

A modal verb improves the sentence to full grammaticality:

- (48) Gianni<sub>1</sub> sta cercando un esperto con cui *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa parlare del problema.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert with whom *pro*<sub>1/2</sub>  
 can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG talk about the problem  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert he<sub>1/2</sub> can talk about the problem with’.

Other subjunctive adverbial clauses seem to be immune from obviation. Apparently, in clauses expressing a comparison, in conditional, and in concessive clauses coindexation is *not* ruled out:

- (49) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> è più intelligente di quanto *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> non pensi.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is more smart than *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> not think.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is smarter than he<sub>1/2</sub>/she thinks’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si divertirebbe, se *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> venisse.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> would-amuse, if *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> go.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> would amuse himself, if he<sub>1/2</sub>/she went’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> perderà il treno nonostante *pro*<sub>1</sub> prenda un taxi.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> will lose the train despite *pro*<sub>1</sub> take.SUBJ.PRES.3SG a taxi  
 ‘Gianni will lose the train despite he will take a taxi’.
- d. Gianni<sub>1</sub> mi potrà parlare purchè prima *pro*<sub>1</sub> mi chiedo scusa.  
 Gianni to-me will be able to talk only if before *pro*<sub>1</sub> to-me  
 apologize.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni will be able to talk to me only if he apologizes to me before’.

### 3.6 Topics and clause dislocation

#### 3.6.1 Left dislocated topics

In Italian the insertion of a topic appears to allow coindexation more easily. For the native speakers who do not exclude coindexation in the former of the following sentences, the coreferential interpretation is even more acceptable if a left dislocated topic occurs:

- (50) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> abbia fatto pochi errori all'esame di linguistica.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made few mistakes at-the exam of linguistics  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has made few mistakes at the exam of linguistics'
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che, all'esame di linguistica, *pro*<sub>%1/2</sub> abbia fatto pochi errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that at-the exam of linguistics *pro*<sub>%1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made few mistakes  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that at the exam of linguistics, he<sub>%1/2</sub>/she has made few mistakes'

This phenomenon is observed in Catalan as well (Gemma Rigau, p.c., Feldhausen 2008):

- (51) a. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> no es pensa que *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> hagi fet molts errors a l'examen.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> not it thinks *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> that AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made many mistakes at the exam  
 'Joan<sub>1</sub> doesn't think he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has made many mistakes at the exam'
- b. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> no es pensa que [a l'examen de lingüística computacional] *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> hi hagi fet molts errors.  
 [The Joan]<sub>1</sub> not it thinks that at the exam of computational linguistics *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made many mistakes  
 'John doesn't think he *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has made many mistakes at the exam of computational linguistics'.

Particularly, Feldhausen (2008) observes that such an effect is achieved only if a circumstantial is left dislocated (LD). If it is right dislocated (RD),

the coreferential reading is odd (as in the above examples) and disjointedness is enforced:

- (52) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> sia andato nel 1991 ad Amburgo (ma non si ricorda l'anno esatto)  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG gone in 1991 to Hamburg (but he doesn't remember the precise year)  
 'John thinks that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has gone to Hamburg in 1991 (but he doesn't remember the precise year).'
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che [ad Amburgo], *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> ci sia andato nel 1991 (ma non si ricorda l'anno esatto). (LD)
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> ci sia andato nel 1991, [ad Amburgo] (ma non si ricorda l'anno esatto). (RD)

The same effect holds in Catalan:

- (53) a. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> espera que *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> no digués res mal dit al congrés de la societat sociològica.  
 [The John]<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> not say.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG nothing bad say at.the congress of the society sociology  
 'John<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has said nothing bad at the congress of the society of sociology.'
- b. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> espera que [al congrés de la societat sociològica] *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> no hi digués res mal dit. (LD)
- c. [En Joan]<sub>1</sub> espera que *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> no hi digués res mal dit, [al congrés de la societat sociològica]. (RD)

Apparently, even 'core' instances of obviation appear to be influenced by the presence of a topic. The former of the following sentences appears to be more acceptable than the second, which is out, under the relevant indexation:

- (54) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che all'esame di linguistica, *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> facesse pochi errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that at the exam of linguistics *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> make.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG few mistakes  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that at the exam of linguistics, he<sub>?1/2</sub>/she would make few mistakes'.

- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> facesse pochi errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> make.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG few mistakes.  
 ‘Gianni hoped that he\*<sub>1/2</sub>/she would made few mistakes’.

### 3.6.2 Clause dislocation

The dislocation of a subjunctive clause appears to affect the interpretative properties of its subject. The Italian speakers who marginally accept sentence (50)a under the coreferential interpretation, consider such a reading even more acceptable if the subjunctive clause is left dislocated as a topic or a focus:

- (55) a. Che *pro*%<sub>(?)1/2</sub> abbia fatto pochi errori all’esame di linguistica, Gianni<sub>1</sub> lo spera proprio.  
 That *pro*%<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made few mistakes at-the exam of linguistics, Gianni<sub>1</sub> it hopes really.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> really hopes that he%<sub>(?)1/2</sub>/she has made few mistakes at the exam of linguistics’.
- b. Che *pro*%<sub>?1/2</sub> abbia fatto POCHI ERRORI, Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa.  
 That *pro*%<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made FEW mistakes, Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he%<sub>(?)1/2</sub>/she has made FEW mistakes’.

We note that if the focus is *in situ* (or in the right periphery), it brings about no change in status:

- (56) Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che *pro*%<sub>?1/2</sub> abbia fatto POCHI errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that *pro*%<sub>?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG made FEW mistakes  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> thinks that he%<sub>?1/2</sub>/she has made FEW mistakes’.

Thus, contrastive focus appears to affect obviation no matter where the focalized constituent occurs.

## 3.7 Coordination

Ruwet (1984) and Schlenker (2005) observe that when a subjunctive clause is coordinated, coindexation is marginally possible. This can be observed even in Italian, but only if the subject of the subjunctive clause is explicit:

- (57) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che Maria parta e che lui<sub>1/2</sub> resti.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that Maria leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG and that he<sub>?1/2</sub>  
 stay.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni hopes that Maria leaves and that he stays.’
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che Maria parta e che *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> resti.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that Maria leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG and *pro*<sub>1/2</sub>  
 stay.SUBJ.PRES.3SG

Intuitively, here *pro* can only be interpreted as the subject of the coordinated clause.

Ruwet’s (1984) original example from French sounds as follows:

- (58) ?Je veux que tu partes et que je reste.  
 I want that you leave.SUBJ and that I stay.SUBJ.  
 ‘I want you to leave and me to stay’

### 3.8. Conclusions

In this chapter I have tried to define the syntactic environments in which obviation occurs. Many factors appear to influence the interpretative properties of the embedded subject, so that not in all subjunctive clauses the subject displays obviation. I have reached the descriptive conclusion that in the main Western Romance languages, a subject is obviative with respect to the agent of the context only in clauses in which the subjunctive morphology is attached to the full verb. This represents a restricted subset of the subjunctive environments. In other contexts obviation appears to be ‘weaker’, if any.

Such ‘weakening’ depends on a series of factors: tense – the imperfect subjunctive appears to weaken obviation more than the present subjunctive, provided that other condition, such as the presence of an auxiliary or the presence of a modal, are satisfied; the morpheme to which subjunctive morphemes are attached – auxiliaries and modals partially allow for coindexation, whereas full verbs generally do not; the theta-role assigned to the subject also appears to affect the possibility of coindexation; obviation appears to be sensitive to locality, as the data from double embedding show; in adverbial clauses, subject obviation does not arise in all clauses requiring the subjunctive mood: it does only in rationale clauses, *before*-clauses and relative clauses; finally, left dislocated topics, topicalization, focusing and coordination appear to improve the degree of acceptability of sentences in which coindexation is at most marginally possible. All these factors appear to strengthen or weaken obviation:

- (59) a. Matrix verb  
     i. ‘Simple’ tenses > perfect tenses  
     ii. Present subjunctive > imperfect subjunctive  
     iii. Subjunctive full verb > Subjunctive modal  
   b. Embedded subject  
     i. Agent > Theme, Experiencer  
     ii. Weak, clitic subject pronoun > strong subject pronoun  
     iii. 3<sup>rd</sup> ps > 1<sup>st</sup> ps  
     iv. Strict coreference > overlapping reference  
   c. Matrix Experiencer > Matrix Theme, Benefactive  
   d. No dislocated XP > topic, focus XP  
   e. No dislocated subjunctive CP > topic, focus CP  
   f. Rationale, *before-*, relative clauses > conditional, concessive, comparison clauses  
   g. No coordinated clause > coordinated clause

As involving many grammatical properties, obviation does not appear to be an all-or-nothing phenomenon. Rather, the environments I have discussed may be ordered in a continuum, the extremes of which are given by ‘future-oriented’ clausal complements, in which coindexation is ruled out, and, to remain within the domain of subjunctive clauses, clauses having a subjunctive modal verb followed by a past passive infinitive and a left dislocated topic, in which, baroque though it may be, coindexation appears to be fully legitimate:

- (60) a. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> vuole che *pro*<sub>1</sub> superi l’esame.  
     Gianni<sub>1</sub> wants that *pro*<sub>1</sub> pass.SUNJ.PRES.3SG the exam  
   b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che l’esame di linguistica computazionale, *pro*<sub>1</sub> lo potesse aver superato con il massimo dei voti.  
     Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that the computational linguistic test, *pro*<sub>1</sub> it.CL may.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG have passed with full marks.  
     ‘Gianni hoped he may have passed the computational linguistics test with full marks’.

Between these two environments, a series of intermediate degrees holds, including sentences in which the availability of coindexation appears to be intralinguistically variable and, if any, more or less marginal.



## 4 Theories of subjunctive obviation

### 4.1 Introduction

Two kinds of hypothesis have been generally pursued to account for the facts concerning obviation. Both analyze the ‘core’ set of data concerning obviation, paying few attention, if any, to the nuances the phenomenon displays.

The first type of approach stems from the tenet that obviation is the consequence of the ‘competition’ between the subjunctive and the infinitive mood. This viewpoint has been maintained by Bouchard (1983, 1984), Farkas (1992), and more recently by Schlenker (2005).

The second type of approach builds on the idea that the binding domain of the embedded subject includes the matrix subject. Principle B of Binding Theory prevents *pro* from being coindexed with the subject of the main clause and obviation arises. The causes of the binding domain extension are generally attributed to the properties of the subjunctive. However, different machineries have been implemented in order to account for such an extension. The ‘standard’ hypothesis (Piccolo 1985, Raposo 1985, Rizzi 1986, Progovac 1993, 1994) argues that the binding domain extension is due to the subjunctive inflection, which is claimed to be ‘anaphoric’ and must be bound by the matrix tense. Everaert (1986), Kempchinsky (1987, 1998), Raposo (1985), Avrutin (1994), Tsoulas (1996) and Avrutin and Babyonyshev (1997), Manzini (2000) adopt different strategies, which also build on the properties of the subjunctive mood.

In what follows I will briefly illustrate the two types of approach and then discuss the advantages and the disadvantages of each.

## 4.2 ‘Competition’ theories

Competition theories are based on the descriptive observation that obviation occurs in the syntactic environments in which an infinitive is available to convey a coreferential reading.

Bouchard (1983, 1984) claims that the Elsewhere Principle rules the distribution of anaphors and pronouns. It states that, in a given environment, an anaphoric interpretation cannot be obtained by means of a pronoun if it can be obtained by means of an anaphor:

- (1) *Elsewhere Principle*  
 Don’t put a pronoun in a position where an anaphor is possible, that is, in a position where the pronoun will be interpreted as coreferential with an NP that can bind it.

Bouchard argues that the Elsewhere Principle can be applied to the obviation examples, as the following sentence in French:

- (2) \*Je veux que j’aille voir ce film.  
 I want that I go.SUBJ.PRES.1SG to see this movie.

He observes that in this sentence the matrix and the embedded subjects cannot be coreferential. They *must* be coreferential, however, when the argument clause is infinitive:

- (3) Je veux *PRO* aller voir ce film.  
 I want *PRO* go.INF see this movie.  
 ‘I want to go and see this movie’.

The hypothesis that the subject position of a subjunctive or of an infinitival clause is subjected to the Elsewhere Principle, predicts that a pronoun cannot convey an anaphoric reading when appearing in such a position, since an anaphor, *PRO*, is available. Thus, the pronoun must be referentially disjoint from the matrix subject.

Bouchard’s theory also predicts that when *PRO* is pronominal, the Elsewhere Principle does not rule out a pronoun. In Bouchard’s view, this prediction is borne out, since the following sentences are fully acceptable:

- (4) a. *PRO*<sub>1</sub> d’être menacé de mort ne me<sub>1</sub> fera pas changer d’idée.  
*PRO*<sub>1</sub> be.INF menaced with death not me<sub>1</sub> makes NEG change of idea  
 ‘Being menaced with death will not make me change my mind’.

- b. Que je sois menacé de mort ne me fera changer d'idée.  
 That I be.SUBJ.PRES.1SG threatened with death not me makes.fut  
 NEG change.INF of idea  
 'That I have been threatened with death will not make me  
 change my mind'.

Bouchard claims that in the former sentence PRO is pronominal, since it is not bound by a c-commanding NP. In the latter, the embedded subject is pronominal as well. Since the subject of the embedded clause is pronominal in both sentences, there is no contrast between the two in terms of the Elsewhere Principle and coreference is not ruled out in the subjunctive clause.

Farkas (1992) proposes an analysis in the same spirit. She maintains that obviation follows from the competition between the subjunctive and the infinitive moods. She observes that obviation occurs only in those languages in which the infinitive competes with the subjunctive, such as Western Romance languages. In Romanian as well as in the languages included in the so-called Balkan *Sprachbund*, there is no such modal competition and no disjoint reference effect arise<sup>16</sup>.

The relevant generalization arising from the data she analyses is that obviation occurs (i) between the matrix and the embedded subject, if the latter is assigned the agent theta-role, (ii) in volitional and desiderative environments. Such a generalization predicts, beside Bouchard's data, examples in which the embedded subject is not assigned the agent role and obviation does *not* occur in spite of the subjunctive mood, and despite an infinitival 'competitor' is available. The following sentences, originally discussed by Ruwet (1984), illustrate the point:

- (5) a. Je veux que je puisse partir.  
 I want that I can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG leave.  
 'I want I can leave'.
- b. Je veux que je sois autorisé à partir tôt.  
 I want that I be.SUBJ.PRES.1SG authorized to leave soon  
 'I want to be authorized to leave soon'
- c. Je veux que je guérisses aussi tôt.  
 I want that I recover.SUBJ.PRES.1SG soon  
 'I want to recover soon'.

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<sup>16</sup> Terzi (1992) and Krapova (1998) claim that subjunctive complements in Greek and Bulgarian are indeed ambiguous (see section 3.4 for a brief discussion of her idea). For a more recent analysis in the same spirit, applied also to Hebrew data, see Landau (2004).

Moreover, the subjunctive-infinitive ‘rivalry’ is neutralized in sentences in which the embedded subject corefers with a matrix argument that is not assigned the agent role as in the following sentences from Spanish:

- (6) a. Forcé a Ana<sub>1</sub>/La<sub>1</sub> forcé a que *pro*<sub>1</sub> visitara al medico.  
 I forced Ana<sub>1</sub>/Her.CL<sub>1</sub> forced to that *pro*<sub>1</sub> visit.SUBJ.IMP.F.3SG  
 the doctor.  
 ‘I forced Ana/her to go to the doctor’
- b. Forcé a Ana<sub>1</sub>/La<sub>1</sub> forcé a *PRO*<sub>1</sub> visitar al medico.  
 I forced Ana<sub>1</sub>/her.CL<sub>1</sub> forced to *PRO*<sub>1</sub> visit.INF the doctor.  
 ‘I forced Ana/her to go to the doctor’

Farkas’ hypothesis is that in the contexts described, the infinitival clause ‘blocks’ the subjunctive clause to express coreference between the matrix and the embedded subjects, where the term ‘blocking’ is used as in lexical semantics and morphology (see Aronoff 1976): a more ‘specific’ construction, excludes a more general one in a determined environment. Infinitive structures are taken to be more ‘specific’ than subjunctive in that the subject of an infinitive inherits the referential properties of another argument as a lexical requirement, whereas such a restriction does not hold for the subject pronoun in subjunctive clauses<sup>17</sup>.

Schlenker (2005) builds on Farkas’ (1992) theory to extend the idea that obviation is due to the competition between subjunctive and infinitive. He argues that subjunctive mood is a semantic default – that is, it has vacuous semantics, bearing no presuppositions. Due to the pragmatic principles ‘Maximize Presupposition!’ and ‘Prefer *de se*!’, subjunctive must be used only in case its competitor, the infinitive mood, as far as we are concerned, causes a semantic failure – that is, when the presupposition introduced by the infinitive is infelicitous. Since the infinitive is a semantically non-null element – it bears the presuppositions that the propositional attitude is individual and event *first-personal* or *de se* (in the sense of Castañeda 1966, 1968 and Lewis 1979)<sup>18</sup>, a semantic failure may obtain if this presupposition is not satisfied – say, if the situation that is being reported is not *de se*. If the situation that is being reported is compatible with a *de se* logical form (LF), by

<sup>17</sup> To be more precise, Farkas states that obviation follows from a pragmatic principle stating that «in world-dependent complements [such are the complements of volitional and desiderative predicates, but not, crucially, of epistemic and emotive-factive predicates] that conform to the canonical control case [the configuration in which both the matrix subject and the ‘subject dependent’ – referentially dependent from the matrix subject – embedded subject are responsible for bringing about the situation denoted by the complement], the form used to mark subject dependency [the infinitive] blocks the form used for world dependency [the subjunctive]».

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion on event *de se* attitudes, see sections 4.4.2 and 6.3.1.

‘Maximize Presupposition!’ and by ‘Prefer *de se*!’ the infinitival structure is to be chosen, whereas the subjunctive is infelicitous. Subjunctive can be used in non-*de se* situations, where a semantic failure rules the infinitive out (as in the sentences in (5), where the event variable is non-*de se*), or in the environments in which the infinitive is ruled out on syntactic grounds, as in Ruwet’s (1984) examples concerning coordination<sup>19</sup>:

- (7) a. ?Je veux que tu partes et que je reste.  
 I want that you leave.SUBJ.PRES.2SG and that I stay.SUBJ.PRES.1SG  
 ‘I want you to leave and me to stay’
- b. \*Je veux que tu partes et rester.  
 I want that you leave.SUBJ.PRES.2SG and that I stay.INF

The restriction that two coordinate clauses must be isomorphic rules the latter sentence out. The only option available is then the former sentence.

Notice that under this interpretation of the facts concerning the subjunctive and the infinitive, there is nothing in itself that prevents *pro* from being coindexed with a matrix argument, and, as a matter of fact, subjunctive clauses may even be *de se*. We refer to section 4.4 for a discussion on this point.

### 4.3 Binding-Theoretical approaches

#### 4.3.1 Binding Theory Principle B

Obviation in subjunctive clauses has been often claimed to follow from Principle B of Binding Theory:

- (8) *Binding Theory Principle B*  
 A Pronominal is free in its Governing Category

The terms ‘free’, ‘bound’, and ‘Governing Category’ (GC) are defined as follows:

- (9) a. *Binding*  
 $\alpha$  is bound by  $\beta$  iff  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  are co-indexed and  $\beta$  c-commands  $\alpha$ ;  
 $\alpha$  is free iff it is not bound (Chomsky 1980, 1981).

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<sup>19</sup> See section 3.7.

b. *Governing Category* (Chomsky 1981)

$\beta$  is the GC for  $\alpha$  iff  $\beta$  is the minimal category containing  $\alpha$ , a governor of  $\alpha$ , and a SUBJECT accessible to  $\alpha$ , where SUBJECT is agreement in tensed clauses, the subject of infinitival clauses, NPs or small clauses.

Obviation is expected to obtain under the hypothesis that the governing category for the subject position in subjunctive clauses includes the matrix subject. As for the reason why such a governing category extension occurs, a general consensus has not been reached and different strategies have been pursued. I will illustrate here some of them.

4.3.2 *Hypothesis on the 'binding domain extension'*

## 4.3.2.1 Tense anaphoricity

Picallo (1985), Raposo (1985), Rizzi (1986), Progovac (1993, 1994) and Manzini (2000) claim that the subjunctive mood is 'anaphoric' in that it is assigned a temporal value in relation to the time frame of its superordinate clause<sup>20</sup>. Lacking autonomous tense specification, subjunctive tenses must be 'bound' by tenses having an autonomous time specification. Picallo (1985) calls this binding relation a 'tense chain' and hypothesizes that a binding domain for a constituent  $x$  may be defined as the minimal domain of a tense chain containing  $x$  and an accessible (c-commanding) subject.

Similarly, Raposo (1985) claims that in Romance languages a binding domain can be either the c-commanding domain of a subject or the c-command domain of a 'verbal operator', raised to C at LF. Such are the operator [+Tense], which conveys a 'deictic' time reference in indicative clauses, modal verbs, and even auxiliaries.

Rizzi's (1986) definition of governing category is substantially equivalent to Picallo's:

- (10)  $Z$  is a governing category for  $X$  iff  $Z$  is the minimal category with a subject containing  $X$ , a governor  $G$  for  $X$ , and where the binding requirements of  $X$  and  $G$  are satisfiable.

The governor of the embedded subject is the subjunctive inflection. Thus, the governing category for the embedded subject includes the matrix subject, since the binding requirements for the subjunctive inflection are satisfied by the matrix verbal inflection.

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<sup>20</sup> See section 5.2.5 for a discussion of this property in Italian.

Progovac's (1993, 1994) definition of binding domain is also substantially equivalent to Picallo's, Raposo's, and Rizzi's. She accepts Chomsky's definition of governing category and proposes that the subjunctive *C/I* system is deleted at LF as temporally uninterpretable, so that a subjunctive clause is not a Governing Category for *pro*.

A series of theories slightly departs from the above ones, adopting different mechanism to explain obviation, which is however assumed to be a Binding Principle B violation<sup>21</sup>.

#### 4.3.2.2 Williams' Associations.

Everaert (1986) proposes an account for obviation that relies on Binding Theory and on Williams's (1985) Association theory.

According to Williams, a verb specifies the referential 'associations' among thematic roles. To illustrate, consider the following sentence:

- (11) \*John<sub>1</sub> performed his<sub>1</sub> autopsy

Here the agent role of the main verb and the patient role of *autopsy*, which is assigned to the argument *his*, cannot be 'associated' – the agent of *perform* is rather associated with the 'actor' of *autopsy*. Since associated roles must be uniformly indexed, whereas non-associated roles cannot, the sentence is ruled out. Thus, Binding Theory is sensitive to associations.

Everaert (1986) applies Williams' association theory to the data on obviation from Dutch. He compares the following sentences:

- (12) a. Jan<sub>1</sub> wil dat hij<sub>\*1/2</sub> het boek leest.  
 Jan<sub>1</sub> wants that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> the book reads  
 'Jan<sub>1</sub> wants him<sub>\*1/2</sub> to read the book'.  
 b. Jan<sub>1</sub> wil van Karel<sub>2</sub> dat hij<sub>\*1/2</sub> het boek leest.  
 Jan<sub>1</sub> wants of Karel<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> the book reads  
 'Jan<sub>1</sub> wants Karel to read the book'.

He assumes that in the former example the verb *willen* 'to want' has an implicit argument, which is made explicit in the former sentence by the prepositional phrase. He then hypothesizes that the verb *willen* specifies an association between the *van*-argument and the agent of the embedded predicate.

<sup>21</sup> For two different proposals that I will not illustrate here, see Suñer (1986) and Hornstein and San Martin (2005). Suñer's account of obviation builds on the interpretative properties of subjunctive clauses, which are encoded within the subjunctive complementizer. Hornstein and San Martin (2005) hypothesize that a mechanism of 'anti-control' determines obviation.

Concerning theta-roles, this association holds even when a theta-role is *not* assigned to an explicit argument. Thus, in sentence (12)a, the implicit argument of the matrix predicate and the agent of the embedded predicate are associated, implicitness notwithstanding. As for the theta-role assigned to *Jan*, it is not associated with the embedded agent so that *Jan* and *hij* cannot be coindexed.

Everaert's theory predicts that if the embedded subject is not assigned the agent role, no disjoint reference effect should arise. He assumes that modal verbs assign a 'secondary theta-role' to their subject and that an association is sensitive to it. Hence, if the verb of the embedded clause is modal, obviation is not expected to arise. In his view, this idea explain the following contrast:

- (13) a. Peter<sub>1</sub> eiste van Jan<sub>2</sub> dat hij<sub>\*1/2</sub> meewerkt.  
 Peter<sub>1</sub> demanded from Jan<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> cooperates  
 'Peter<sub>1</sub> asked Jan<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>\*1/2</sub> would cooperate'.
- b. Peter<sub>1</sub> eiste van Jan<sub>2</sub> dat hij<sub>1/?\*2</sub> mee mocht werken.  
 Peter<sub>1</sub> demanded from Jan<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>1/?\*2</sub> can cooperate  
 'Peter<sub>1</sub> asked Jan<sub>2</sub> that he<sub>1/?\*2</sub> would be allowed to cooperate'.

In the former sentence *hij* 'he' cannot be coreferent with *Peter*, due to the associations required by the matrix verb, whereas in the latter sentence, the matrix and the embedded subjects corefer.

#### 4.3.2.3 I-to-C movement

Kempchinsky (1987) maintains that the binding domain extension follows under the hypothesis that volitional verbs select for a subjunctive operator in C, which is conveyed by the subjunctive morphology. The subjunctive I must raise to C at LF in order to satisfy the subcategorization requirements of the matrix predicate. Defining a governing category for a constituent *x* as the least Complete Functional Complex, the minimal category in which all grammatical functions are satisfied (Chomsky 1986), containing *x* and the governor of *x*, she claims that due to I-to-C movement, the governing category for the embedded subject at LF is no longer the embedded clause, since the governor of the subject, I, has moved higher up, but the dominating clause. Thus, due to Binding Principle B, obviation obtains.



## 4.3.2.4 Nominative Case marking

In further research, Kempchinsky (1998) hypothesizes that obviation is explained by hypothesizing, as Watanabe's (1993) and Koizumi's (1995) do, (i) that C is the ultimate licenser of Nominative Case, (ii) that the functional structure of subjunctive clauses lacks the CP level, and, finally, (iii) that a binding domain may be defined as the Nominative Case-checking domain. Since the Nominative Case on the embedded subject must be checked by the matrix C, being the embedded C missing, the binding domain for the embedded subject includes the arguments of the matrix clause, thus instantiating obviation.

## 4.3.2.5 I-to-C and C-to-C movement

Avrutin (1994) and Avrutin and Babyonyshev (1997) build a theory of obviation discussing data from Russian. These data parallel the data from Romance languages. The paradigm they analyze is the following:

- (14) a. Volodja<sub>1</sub> xočet čtoby on<sub>\*1/2</sub> pocelovala Nadju.  
Volodya<sub>1</sub> wants that.SUBJ he<sub>\*1/2</sub> kissed Nadya  
'Volodja wants to kiss Nadya'.
- b. Volodja<sub>1</sub> skazal čto on<sub>1/2</sub> poceloval Nadju.  
Volodya<sub>1</sub> said that he<sub>1/2</sub> kissed Nadya  
'Volodja<sub>1</sub> said that he<sub>1/2</sub> kissed Nadya'.
- c. Volodja<sub>1</sub> xočet čtoby Nadja pocelovala ego<sub>1/2</sub>.  
Volodya<sub>1</sub> wants that.SUBJ Nadya kissed him<sub>1/2</sub>  
'Volodja<sub>1</sub> wants Nadja to kiss him<sub>1/2</sub>'.
- d. Volodja<sub>1</sub> xočet čtoby emu<sub>1</sub> bylo veselo.  
Volodya<sub>1</sub> wanted that.SUBJ him.DAT<sub>1</sub> was.SG.NEUT fun  
'Volodya wants to be having fun'.
- e. Volodja ugovoril Nadju<sub>1</sub> čtoby ona<sub>1</sub> poexala v Evropu.  
Volodya persuaded Nadya<sub>1</sub> that.SUBJ she<sub>1</sub> went to Europe  
'Volodya persuaded Nadya to go to Europe'.

In Russian, obviation obtains between the nominative matrix and the nominative embedded subject of 'subjunctive' clauses (introduced by the complementizer *čtoby*). It does not occur if the embedded clause is in the indicative (introduced by the complementizer *čto* – see example (14)b), be-

tween the matrix subject and the embedded object (see example (14)c), between the matrix subject and the embedded quirky subject (see (14)d), and between the matrix object and the embedded nominative subject (see (14)e).

They assume that V moves to I (that is, to T and to AgrS) and (in non-V2 languages, covertly) to C, with no cross-linguistic variation. Moreover, they take that since volitional verbs are ‘future oriented’, an event operator, which they hypothesize is the subjunctive complementizer *čtoby*, co-binds the events of the embedded and of the matrix clause, determining the temporal ordering. To do so, it is assumed to move at LF to the matrix C, from where it can c-command and bind both the matrix VP and the embedded VP, passing through any head between its base position and the matrix C. Finally, they assume that Agr heads are pronominal and that they are coindexed with a constituent standing in a specifier-head relation with them.

They show that this theoretical apparatus and Binding Principle B are able to account for obviation, which is predicted to take place at LF between the matrix and the embedded AgrS<sup>o</sup>, and not directly between the matrix and the embedded subject<sup>22</sup>. Avrutin (1994) claims that independent evidence for the mechanism proposed is provided from data on language acquisition.

#### 4.3.2.6 C-to-V movement

Tsoulas (1996) implements an account of obviation in minimalist terms. Following Chomsky (1995), he claims that a binding domain may be defined as a ‘minimal domain’ – that is, the minimal subset of categories locally related to a head. A minimal domain is defined *derivationally*, not *representationally*: if a head moves, the minimal domain is defined with respect to the resulting chain. He then hypothesizes that at LF an embedded C having subjunctive mood features moves to the matrix V to get its features checked (Tsoulas 1994a, b). The binding domain for the embedded subject thus includes the trace of the matrix subject in the specifier of VP, determining obviation.

#### 4.3.2.7 Exceptional Case Marking

Luján's (1999) hypothesizes that control and obviation are a result of Case marking. She assumes that pronouns universally undergo LF-movement to C in order to define their reference, and that clausal complements are marked with Case (through Exceptional Case Marking). Due to these principles, at LF the subject pronoun of a subjunctive clause lays on the head carrying the Case features assigned by the matrix verb. Thus, it has to be interpreted in

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<sup>22</sup> See Avrutin (1994) and Avrutin and Babyonyshev (1997) for a detailed discussion.

the domain of the main clause. Unlike subjunctive clauses, which are assumed to have a simple CP, indicative clauses assumingly have a *double* CP. A subject pronoun moves to the lower C, whereas Case is assigned to the higher C. Thus, the binding domain for the pronoun does not extend to the matrix clause. Infinitival clauses, finally, have a simple CP structure, like subjunctive clauses. But since their subject, PRO, is anaphoric, coindexation can (and must) take place.

#### 4.3.2.8 Syntactic dependency

Manzini (2000) defines a binding domain relying on the notion of ‘syntactic dependency’, and claims that (as in Avrutin’s and Avrutin and Babyonyshev’s theories) obviation occurs between the matrix and the embedded agreement morphology, rather than between the subjects in themselves. Building on the observation that in Romance languages the embedded I tense specification depends on the temporal properties of the matrix I, she assumes that, since I contains [Tense] and [Agr], the matrix and the embedded [Agr] belong to the same syntactic ‘dependency’. Moreover, [Agr] is taken to be pronominal. Hypothesizing that a dependency is a binding domain, Binding Principle B rules out coindexation between agreement heads occurring within the same dependency and obviation follows.

#### 4.3.3 Explaining obviation through Binding Theory

All these theories can be considered as extensions of the Binding Theory in order to account for the data concerning subjunctive clauses. Thus, while making the same predictions as Chomsky’s original theory about the distribution of anaphors and pronouns in a local domain, they predict that the binding domain for the subject of a subjunctive clause should include in some sense the matrix subject.

They explain a series of facts:

i) While subjunctive clauses trigger obviation, indicative clauses do not. Indicative verbs are not ‘anaphoric’, so they do not need to be part of a tense chain with a c-commanding verb (in Picallo’s terms) – or, equivalently, they do not need to be bound:

- (15) a. Subjunctive: [X<sub>1</sub> I<sub>2</sub> [Y\*<sub>1</sub> I<sub>2</sub>]  
 b. Indicative: [X<sub>1</sub> I<sub>2</sub> [Y<sub>1</sub> I<sub>3</sub> ]

Whatever mechanism one chooses, the binding domain for the embedded subject is extended to the matrix clause if the embedded tense is ‘anaphoric’, otherwise it corresponds to the embedded clause itself.

ii) The object in a subjunctive clause is free to corefer with the matrix subject:

(16)  $[X_1 [Y_2 Z_1]]$

The embedded subject is an accessible subject for an embedded object and, whatever binding requirements the embedded verb may have, the matrix subject is not contained in the binding domain for the embedded object.

iii) The subject of a doubly embedded clause in the subjunctive can be coindexed with the matrix subject, but must be obviative with respect to the intermediate subject:

(17) a.  $[X_1 [Y_2 [Z_1 ]]]$   
 b.  $[X_1 [Y_2 [Z_{*2} ]]]$

The minimal domain including an accessible subject for the most embedded subject contains the intermediate, but not the matrix subject, whatever binding requirements the embedded verb may have.

iv) Obviation may involve a matrix object, proviso that the notion of ‘accessible subject’ is substituted with the notion of accessible ‘argument’. As Picallo (1985) points out, not all object arguments can be considered as ‘accessible’ for the embedded subject. Only those that belong to the thematic structure of ‘ergative-type’ verbs (*please, regret, etc.*) appear to have this property. On the other hand, ‘transitive’ predicates (*persuade, convince, etc.*) do not instantiate obviation between the embedded subject and a matrix object, which is then inaccessible for the embedded subject, although they do instantiate obviation between the embedded and the matrix subjects (examples from Picallo 1985):

(18) a. En Pere va convèncer [en Jordi]<sub>1</sub> que *pro*<sub>1</sub> anés a Nova York.  
 The Pere persuaded [the Jordi]<sub>1</sub> that *pro*<sub>1</sub> go.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to New York  
 ‘Pere persuaded Jordi to go to New York’  
 b. \*[En Pere]<sub>1</sub> va convèncer en Jordi que *pro*<sub>1</sub> anés a Nova York.  
 [The Pere]<sub>1</sub> persuaded the Jordi that *pro*<sub>1</sub> go.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to New York

Here Picallo claims that the embedded clause is extraposed<sup>23</sup>. Kempchinsky (1987) also adopts a similar solution. The embedded subject is then c-

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<sup>23</sup> Due to Stowell’s (1981) Case Resistance Principle, which states that Case cannot be assigned to a category bearing a Case-assigning feature, like complement clauses, and requires that a clausal argument be removed from a Case-assignment position, like, Picallo assumes, the VP-internal position of the object clause.

commanded by the matrix subject but not by the matrix object. Thus, the matrix subject, but not the matrix object is an accessible argument for *pro*, which consequently is obviative with respect to the former, but it may be proximate with respect to the latter.

- (19) a. [X<sub>1</sub> [Y<sub>2</sub>] [Z<sub>2</sub> ]]  
 b. [X<sub>1</sub> [Y<sub>2</sub>] [Z\*<sub>1</sub> ]]

Avrutin's (1994), Avrutin and Babyonyshev's (1997) and Manzini's (2000) accounts of examples like 0a differ from Picallo's and Kempchinsky's in that they resort subject agreement. Since in Romance languages (and in Russian) an object does not agree with a verb, there is no restriction on the referential properties of the embedded subject, which is allowed to corefer with the matrix object.

v) Picallo (1985) and Raposo (1985) also observe that modal verbs determine 'opacity', so that the subject of a subjunctive clause *can* be coindexed with the matrix subject (examples from Picallo 1985):

- (20) a. *Pro*<sub>1</sub> sentien que *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> produissin una falsa impressió.  
*Pro*<sub>1</sub> regret.IND.IMPF.3PL that *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> produced.SUBJ.IMPF.3PL a false impression  
 'They<sub>1</sub> regretted that they\*<sub>1</sub> give a false impression'
- b. *Pro*<sub>1</sub> sentien que *pro*<sub>1</sub> deguessin produir una falsa impressió.  
*Pro*<sub>1</sub> regretted.IND.IMPF.3PL that *pro*<sub>1</sub> must.SUBJ.IMPF.3PL produce.INF a false impression  
 'They<sub>1</sub> regretted that they<sub>1</sub> must give a false impression'

Picallo hypothesizes that sentential operators, such as [+Tense] for indicative clauses, or modal verbs, must raise to C, and in doing so, they delimit a binding domain, thus eliminating the disjoint reference effect. Such a hypothesis has also been maintained by Raposo (1985), who includes among the 'verbal operator' even the auxiliaries to account for examples like the following:

- (21) a. [O Manel]<sub>1</sub> deseja que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> seja admitido no concurso.  
 [The Manel]<sub>1</sub> wishes that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG admitted in-the contest  
 'Manel<sub>1</sub> wishes that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she was admitted in the contest'.
- b. [A Maria]<sub>1</sub> preferia que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> não tivesse encontrado o Manel.  
 [The Maria]<sub>1</sub> preferred that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.IMF.3SG met the Manel.  
 'Maria<sub>1</sub> wished she<sub>1/2</sub>/he had not met Manel'.

Thus, the structural configuration of sentences involving an auxiliary or a modal verb corresponds to (15)b rather than to (15)a.

#### 4.4 Remarks on the theories on obviation

##### 4.4.1 Integrating ‘competition’ and Binding Theory approaches

I take that the ‘Competition’ and the Binding Theory-based approaches have gained important insights into the phenomenon of obviation, and although they have often been considered as antithetical – the evidence against the one has often motivated the attempt to pursue the other, they may indeed be seen as complementary or even be equivalent, as Luján (1999) suggests.

Picallo (1985) and Rizzi (1986) claim indeed that if the binding domain for the subject position of an embedded clause includes the matrix subject (or the object of a psych-verb), pronouns are expected to be referentially disjoint from this matrix argument, but anaphors may be bound by them. This expectation is incorrect, however. Take for instance Picallo’s example:

- (22) \*[En Pere] espera que si mateix arribi.  
 [The Pere] hopes that himself arrive.SUBJ.PRES.3SG

As both Picallo and Rizzi point out, however, the ungrammaticality of this sentence may be due to independent reasons. As an empirical generalization, anaphors cannot be in the Nominative. This may be due to the licensing of lexical anaphors in the subject position of a finite clause, or perhaps to Case checking.

In any case, if, more in general, one takes the binding domain for the subject of a clause *having anaphoric tense* to include a matrix argument, since under Binding Theory-based accounts an anaphor would be legitimate in the embedded subject position, the distribution of PRO, which is anaphoric, follows straightforwardly. Note that infinitival clauses share the temporal properties of subjunctive clauses, in that their interpretation depends on the matrix tense (see section 6.2.1). Thus, this solution may be pursued for free.

This notwithstanding, the two types of approach have been generally regarded as mutually exclusive. In what follows I will review the two types of approaches and show that, attractive though a unified approach may be, it is not feasible, and that in spite of some limitations, competition theories appear to be more promising.

4.4.2 *Competition theories: an analysis*

Common arguments against the competition theories are that the complementary distribution of subjunctive and infinitival clauses does not always hold – a claim that is meant to show that it is not always the case that a ‘pronoun cannot be put in a position where an anaphor is possible’, to repeat the basic tenet of competition theories. Discussing Bouchard’s (1983, 1984) proposal, Picallo (1985) observes that in Catalan the subjunctive-infinitive opposition is neutralized in directive environments – see for instance example 0a, here repeated as 0a, contrasted with 0b:

- (23) a. En Pere va convèncer [en Jordi]<sub>1</sub> que *pro*<sub>1</sub> anés a Nova York.  
The Pere persuaded [the Jordi]<sub>1</sub> that *pro*<sub>1</sub> go.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG to New York  
‘Pere persuaded Jordi that he should go to New York’.
- b. En Pere va convèncer [en Jordi]<sub>1</sub> de *PRO*<sub>1</sub> anar a Nova York.  
The Pere persuaded [the Jordi]<sub>1</sub> of *PRO*<sub>1</sub> go.INF to New York  
‘Pere persuaded Jordi to go to New York’.

Farkas (1992) rejects the above data as a piece of evidence against a competition approach in itself, restricting the empirical field where competition is at work to sentences conforming to what she dubs ‘canonical control case’ – volitional environments involving a controllee satisfying the agent role (see note 17 of the present chapter). But such a step appears to be justified only on an empirical ground<sup>24</sup>.

Suñer (1986) puts forward the same objection as Picallo, observing that, in Spanish, not only directive verbs do not instantiate obviation, but denial, dubitative, and emotive-factive predicates do so as well, despite the availability of a ‘rival’ in the infinitive:

- (24) a. Pedro<sub>1</sub> negó que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> supiera la verdad.  
Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> knowSUBJ.IMPF.3SG the truth  
‘Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she knew the truth’.
- a'. Pedro negó *PRO*<sub>1</sub> saber supiera la verdad.  
Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied *PRO*<sub>1</sub> know.INF the truth  
‘Pedro<sub>1</sub> denied knowing the truth’.
- b. Dudo que *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> lo hubiera pagado.  
Doubt.IND.PRES.1SG that *pro* him AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.1SG paid  
‘I doubt having that I/he/she had paid him’.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion on directive predicates and competition theories of obviation, see also Feldhausen (2007).

- b'. Dudo *PRO* haberlo pagado.  
 Doubt.IND.PRES.1SG have(inf)-him paid  
 'I doubt having paid him'.
- c. Yo sentí mucho que *pro* no lo haya visto.  
 I regret much that *pro* not him.CL AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG seen  
 'I deeply regret that I/he/she have/has not seen him'.
- c'. Yo sentí mucho *PRO* no haberlo visto.  
 I regret much *PRO* not AUX.INF-him.CL seen  
 'I deeply regret not having seen him'.

One may even add examples in which coindexation appears to be possible:

- (25) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse essere ammesso all'università.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG be admitted at the university  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could be admitted at the university'.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava di *PRO*<sub>1</sub> poter essere ammesso all'università.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought to *PRO*<sub>1</sub> can.INF be admitted at the university  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought he<sub>1</sub> could be admitted at the university'.

Here again, Farkas's theory would strike the above examples from the 'canonical control cases' – somehow stipulatively, however, since there is no obvious sense in which one is not responsible for paying or for seeing (though there may be some sense in which one is *not* responsible for knowing the truth or for being admitted at the university).

It is perhaps here the case to note that some of the examples involving multiple functional verbs may even give support to the competition theories, since infinitival clauses appear to be rather degraded:

- (26) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse aver fatto molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG have made many mistakes  
 'Gianni thought he<sub>1/2</sub>/she might have made many mistakes'.
- a'. <sup>??</sup> Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava di poter aver fatto molti errori.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought C/P *PRO*<sub>1</sub> can.INF have made many mistakes



- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava che *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> potesse essere stato ammesso all'università.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG been been admitted at the university  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought that he<sub>1/2</sub>/she could have been admitted at the university'.
- b'. <sup>??</sup>Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensava di PRO<sub>1</sub> poter essere stato ammesso all'università.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> thought C/P PRO<sub>1</sub> can.INF be been admitted at the university

Compelling evidence against 'competition' theories could only involve a volitional verb and an embedded subject satisfying the agent role. Another potential falsifying evidence may be provided by *non* 'canonical control' examples in which obviation does occur.

*Prima facie*, examples of the former sort – concerning a tense auxiliary in the subjunctive, appear to correspond to this description. The following example from Italian reproduces one of Ruwet's (1984) examples from French:

- (27) <sup>?</sup>Voglio (assolutamente) che io sia partito entro dieci minuti.  
I want (absolutely) that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG left in ten minutes.  
'I want that I am gone in ten minutes'.

An alternative option in the infinitival is available:

- (28) Voglio (assolutamente) essere partito entro dieci minuti.  
I want (absolutely) AUX.INF left in ten minutes.  
'I want to be gone in ten minutes'.

It seems however that the above sentences have different truth conditions. Intuitively, the former is understood to mean that I want that the condition for me to leave must be brought about in ten minutes in order for me to be gone by that time, but I cannot do anything myself to achieve this. By contrast, the latter sentence is understood to mean that I can do something in order to leave in ten minutes. Thus, in a scenario in which I got stuck in a traffic jam, the former sentence would be felicitous, whereas the latter would be infelicitous (for a discussion on alike examples, see section 6.4.1).

Farkas' theory would probably rule out sentence (27) from the 'canonical control case'. In Schlenker's (2005) theory, although the two sentences *are* individual *de se*, the latter, but not the former, is 'event *de se*' – that is, the propositional attitude in the latter sentence is about the first person (individual *de se*) and an event that is brought about by the first person (event *de se*).

To illustrate, a sentence like *John wishes to be elected* is individual *de se*, but it is not event *de se*, since the event of being elected is not brought about by John himself.

Thus, bearing no event *de se* presupposition, the subjunctive can be used if the infinitive would give rise to a semantic failure. In the traffic jam scenario, the infinitive does give rise to a semantic failure, since the event *de se* presupposition is incompatible with the context set. Thus, the default mood, the subjunctive, is an available option.

As for the second type of evidence, in Italian obviation occurs even in epistemic and emotive-factive environments, which do not conform to the ‘canonical control’ cases and do not appear to be event *de se* – the leaving event may not be brought about by Gianni (he may be compelled or requested to leave):

- (29) a. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> teme che *pro*<sub>1</sub> parta domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> fears that *pro*<sub>1</sub> leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> teme di PRO<sub>1</sub> partire domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> fears C/P PRO<sub>1</sub> leave.INF tomorrow  
 ‘Gianni is afraid to leave tomorrow’.

Farkas’ theory may accommodate this example by modifying the notion of ‘canonical control’ as to include epistemic predicates. Schlenker’s theory would claim that the pragmatic principle *Maximize presupposition!* forces to choose the latter sentence in a situation compatible with a *de se* interpretation, facing no problem at all.

Such an answer, however, requires to scrutiny more in detail the following sentences:

- (30) a. Spero che io possa vivere a lungo.  
 Hope.IND.PRES.1SG that I can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG live long  
 ‘I hope I can live long’.
- b. Spero di poter vivere a lungo.  
 Hope.IND.PRES.1SG C/P can.INF live long  
 ‘I hope I can live long’.

Intuitively, such sentences are individual *de se*, but obviously not event *de se*. Thus, in a context compatible with a *de se* interpretation, both sentences are felicitous. This fact is surprising, since by *Maximize presupposition!*, in such a context the latter sentence should be chosen. On the other hand, the former sentence should be felicitous only in contexts in which an infinitive determines a semantic failure, but apparently this is not the case, since the two sentences are appropriate in the same relevant context.

All in all, competition theories appear to be promising in order to explain obviation, but something more should be said about how competition works.

#### 4.4.3 Binding Theory-based theories under scrutiny

Common objections to the Binding Theory approaches have laid stress on the fact that in languages where the infinitive is missing in the relevant contexts, subjunctive clauses do not trigger obviation. Farkas, for instance, discusses the following sentence from Romanian:

- (31) Ion<sub>1</sub> vrea *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> să plece.  
 Ion<sub>1</sub> wants *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> PART.SUBJ leave.3SG  
 ‘Ion wants to leave/that he/she leaves’.

Kempchinsky (1987) argues that data like the one above are not compelling, maintaining that the subjunctive particle *să*, and not the full verb, which morphologically do not differ from the indicative form, raises to C at LF. Thus, the binding domain for *pro* remains unchanged. Alternatively, one may follow Terzi’s (1992) hypothesis that in Romanian as well as in other Balkan languages, the absence of disjoint reference effects in subjunctive clauses is only apparent. Subjunctive complements are assumed to be ambiguous since their subject may be PRO or *pro*:

- (32) a. O Yiannis theli na fai to rizogalo.  
 The Yiannis wants PRT eats the rice pudding  
 ‘John wants (him/her) to eat the rice pudding’.
- b. [O Yiannis]<sub>1</sub> theli [CP [C [MP PRO<sub>1</sub> [M na fai
- c. [O Yiannis]<sub>1</sub> theli [CP [C na fai [MP *pro*<sub>\*1/2</sub> [M ...

Evidence for the existence of the two structures is established independently and correlates with the interpretation of tense in the two types of clause. As for the interpretative properties of the embedded subject, in the former structure, it must be interpreted as coreferential with respect to the matrix subject, whereas in the second structure, it is obviative<sup>25</sup>. Thus, the absence of obviation in the systems in which there is no mood competition is apparent and cannot be taken in itself as a proof to exclude Binding Theory-based approaches.

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<sup>25</sup> We refer to Terzi (1992) for a detailed discussion on the subject.

A more substantial objection to Binding Theory approaches is discussed by Schlenker (2005). He observes that Binding Condition B prohibits not only coreference, but also *overlapping* reference:

(33) a. #Tu vous admireras. (French)  
 You.2SG you.CL.2PL will-admire.

b. \*I admire us.

If obviation were a consequence of Binding Theory, one would expect that the prohibition against overlapping reference should occur even between the matrix and the embedded subject in subjunctive clauses. But crucially, this prediction is *not* borne out<sup>26</sup>:

(34) a. #Tu voudras que tu te rases à 7h.  
 You.2SG will-want that you.2SG you.2SG shave.SUBJ.PRES.2SG  
 at 7am

b. Tu voudras que vous vous rasez à 7h.  
 You.2SG will-want that you.2PL you.2PL shave.SUBJ.PRES.2PL at  
 7am  
 ‘You will want that you shave at 7am’.

Schlenker takes these facts as strong evidence against the Binding Theory-based analysis of obviation.

If this is correct, competition and Binding Theory-based approaches cannot be claimed to be equivalent, as I have hypothesized at the beginning of this section, since examples like (34)b, which can be explained by ‘competition’ as not belonging to the ‘canonical control case’ or not involving a *de se* reading, under a Binding-Theoretical approach remains unaccounted for<sup>27</sup>.

#### 4.5 Conclusive remarks

Everything considered, from a descriptive viewpoint, ‘competition’ theories appear to be more promising than Binding-Theoretical accounts of obviation.

<sup>26</sup> See also the examples in section 3.3.1.4.

<sup>27</sup> Additionally, Binding Theory-based proposals are descriptively problematic in that, first, either they restrict the domain of obviation to volitional contexts only, or they generalize it to all subjunctive clauses – but some subjunctive clauses do in fact allow for coindexation, and, second, they depict the phenomenon as a prohibition against coindexation between the matrix and the embedded subject, which does not appear to be quite accurate. Explicatively, many of them employ rather stipulative theoretical principles.

tion. Even the empirical generalization on the availability of indexation between a matrix argument and the embedded *object*, or between a matrix argument and the doubly embedded subject, or, finally, between the object of a directive verb and the matrix subject are easily accounted for by the most recent competition theory: object pronouns are ambiguously *de se*, non-*de se* and *de re*, thus coreference is expected. *De se* attitudes involve a contextual author and a propositional content, so that doubly embedded clauses are expected not to be *de se* with respect to the matrix author – the locality restrictions on obviation then follows straightforwardly. Finally, directive propositions are not first-personal (although they may be second-personal, see Schlenker, to appear).

It must be noted, however, that many of the factors described in chapter 2 must be accommodated within a ‘competition’ theoretical framework (and they should be even within a Binding Theory-based approach). Specifically, the asymmetries (a) between deficient (weak and clitic) subject pronoun and full subject pronoun (especially if focused), (b) between first and third person, (c) between clauses having a dislocated constituent and clauses having no such a constituent, and (d) between sentences where the subjunctive clauses is *in situ* and sentences where it is dislocated, are all facts that must be explained. As for the facts in (c) and in (d) one may note that infinitival clauses do not admit a left dislocated topic or focus and that they themselves cannot be dislocated:

- (35) a. ?\*Gianni spera, l’esame di linguistica, di averlo superato.  
Gianni hopes, the exam of linguistics, C/P AUX.INF-it.CL passed
- b. \*Gianni spera di, l’esame di linguistica, averlo superato.  
Gianni hopes C/P, the exam of linguistics, AUX.INF-it.CL passed
- (36) ??Di aver superato l’esame, Gianni lo spera proprio.  
C/P AUX.INF-it.CL passed the exam, Gianni it.CL hopes really

Thus, the fact that obviation is weakened in these environments is somehow predicted.

The data concerning the contrasts between first vs. third person and focused vs. non-focused pronouns cannot be explained through a competition strategy straightforwardly. As for the first one, both subjunctive clauses involving the first person (in which obviation appears to be weaker if compared with sentences containing a third person pronoun) and those involving the third person pronoun ‘compete’ with an alternative in the infinitive:

- (37) a. ?Spero (proprio) che io abbia superato l’esame.  
I-hope (really) that I AUX.SUBJ.PRES.1SG passed the exam  
‘I (really) hope I have passed the exam’

- a'. Spero (proprio) di aver superato l'esame.  
 I-hope (really) C/P AUX.INF passed the exam  
 'I (really) hope to have passed the exam'
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> abbia superato l'esame.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>%?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG passed the exam  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>%?1/2</sub>/she has passed the exam'.
- b'. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera di aver superato l'esame.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes C/P AUX.INF passed the exam  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes to have passed the exam'.

These examples arise two questions. First, a *de se* reading is available in (37)a, and, at least for some speakers, in (37)b, despite the rivalry of an infinitival clause. This is a crucial question, the endowment of which is proved by other examples as well – see for instance the examples in (30), and requires careful consideration. Second, sentence (37)a is intuitively more acceptable than sentence (37)b. This fact is also to be explained.

As for the second contrast (focused vs. non-focused pronouns), if a focused pronoun occurs, the subjunctive and the infinitive options are both syntactically possible and, as far as interpretation is concerned, they are both *de se*:

- (38) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che parta solo LUI<sub>1/2</sub>, domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that leave.SUBJ.PRE.3SG only HIM<sub>1/2</sub>, tomorrow  
 'Gianni hopes that he himself only will leave tomorrow'.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera di partire solo LUI<sub>1</sub>, domani.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes C/P leave.INF only HIM<sub>1</sub> tomorrow  
 'Gianni hopes to leave himself only tomorrow'.

(Since left dislocated focuses are ruled out in infinitival clauses, the contrast has been illustrated locating the focused constituent at the right of the verb). Here again, competition theories should be refined in order to account for this fact.

In the following chapters I will address these questions.

## 5 Subjunctive mood at the interface

### 5.1 Introduction

In the present chapter I will present some phenomena concerning subjunctive mood in Italian, whose properties appear to recall the facts related to obviation. Although the similarities with obviation are only partial, I will nonetheless take them to be substantial and not accidental, so that a theory that account for the ones, must also be able to account for obviation.

The first of the phenomena that I will discuss is Complementizer Deletion (henceforth, CD), the optional omission of the complementizer *che*, which obtains in syntactic contexts that appear to partly overlap with those in which obviation obtains. Connected with CD is the second phenomenon that I will illustrate, Double Accessibility Reading (DAR for short), which never obtains in environments in which CD is possible.

The third phenomenon is Long-Distance Anaphors (for short, LDA) binding, which obtains in subjunctive clauses (and in conditional as well), and conveys the *de se* reading – so that in the very environment in which a subject cannot be *de se* (obviation), a LDA *must* be so.

I will assume that these properties may be accounted for through the same underlying principles. Thus, we will present Giorgi and Pianesi's (1997, 2004) theory of CD, which crucially relies on their (2001) theory of Sequence of Tenses (SoT) and of Double Accessibility Reading (DAR), and Giorgi's (2004, 2006, 2007) theory of LDA, which is also based on the theory of SoT.

I will assume that this theoretical apparatus is what is needed to implement an account for the facts concerning obviation presented in chapters 2 and 3. Such an account will be the topic of chapter 6.

## 5.2 Complementizer Deletion and Double Accessibility Reading

### 5.2.1 Complementizer Deletion descriptively

Giorgi and Pianesi (1997, 2004) analyze in detail the environments allowing CD. Some of the syntactic properties characterizing the environments allowing for CD appear to correlate to some of the environments in which obviation occurs. A unified explanation for these two phenomena is then desirable.

Descriptively, Giorgi and Pianesi observe the following distributional properties of CD<sup>28</sup>:

- a) CD is optionally possible only in subjunctive clauses<sup>29</sup>:

<sup>28</sup> For completeness, I note that beside the properties I am going to discuss here, Giorgi and Pianesi single out the following properties affecting CD, which I think are not relevant for the present purpose: CD clauses have a peculiar distribution of the subject (and, at least for some Italian native speakers, the occurrence of a preverbal full subject within the embedded is ruled out); CD is possible in root subjunctive clauses having an optative or imperative meaning; CD displays ‘first-person effect’. Although obviation is sensitive to the first person, I will take that this phenomenon roots on different principles and has more to do with the phenomenon of first-person ‘blocking’ in LDA-Binding (see section 5.3.3) than with the first-person effect in CD.

<sup>29</sup> The only exceptions concern the future indicative and the past conditional (future in the past) in an embedded clause, which do allow for CD, as Poletto (1995) and Giorgi and Pianesi (1997, 2004) observe:

- (i) a. Crede (che) verrà.  
Believe.IND.PRES.3SG (that) come.IND.FUT.3SG  
‘She/He believes s/he will come’.  
b. Sperava (che) sarebbe venuto.  
Hope.IND.IMP.3SG (that) AUX.COND.PRES.3SG come  
She/He hoped s/he would come’.

To my intuitions, however, the above sentences are very marginal. Switching the third to the first person improves them:

- (ii) a. Credo (che) verrà  
Believe.IND.PRES.3SG (that) come.IND.FUT.3SG  
‘I believe s/he will come’.  
b. Speravo (che) sarebbe venuto.  
Hope.IND.IMP.1SG (that) AUX.COND.PRES.3SG come  
I hoped s/he would come’.

In such sentences the verbs are epistemic and desiderative respectively – that is, predicates which can select for a subjunctive clause. We assume that this somehow counts. CD is indeed unavailable if the matrix predicate is a *verbum dicendi* – a predicate which cannot select for a subjunctive clause – even if the embedded predicate is future:

- (iii) a. Ha detto \*(che) verrà/sarebbe venuto.  
Has said \*(that) come.IND.FUT.3SG/AUX.COND.PRES.3SG come  
‘She/he has said s/he will come/would come’.  
b. Ho detto \*(che) verrà/sarebbe venuto.  
Have said \*(that) come.IND.FUT.3SG/AUX.COND.PRES.3SG come  
‘I have said s/he will come/would come’.

We will not consider these facts further here.



- (1) a. Crede (che) sia partito.  
Thinks (that) AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG left  
'Gianni thinks he left'.
- b. Ha detto \*(che) è partito.  
Has said \*(that) AUX.IND.PRES.3SG left  
'Gianni said he left'.

However, not all subjunctive clauses admit CD. Clausal arguments of volitional, desiderative, and epistemic predicates do, whereas emotive-factive predicates, which select for a subjunctive clause as well, do not<sup>30</sup>:

- (2) Gianni si rammarica \*(che) sia partito.  
Gianni regrets \*(that) is(subj) left  
'Gianni regrets that he left'.

b) Dislocated subjunctive clauses do not allow for CD, either:

- (3) a. \*(Che) fosse partito, lo credeva.  
That AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG left, it.CL believed  
'That he had left, he believed'.
- b. \*(CHE) FOSSE PARTITO, credeva.  
That AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG left, believed.  
'HE HAD LEFT, he believed'.
- c. \*(Che) sia già partito, è probabile.  
That AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG already left, is probable  
'That he has already left, is probable'.

c) CD is not allowed in 'Double Accessibility Reading' (DAR, for short) contexts – that is, in contexts in which an embedded eventuality is interpreted twice, with respect to the attitude eventuality and with respect to the

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<sup>30</sup> As in other environments, if the matrix verb is in the first person, CD is not quite ruled out:

- (i) a. \*Gianni rimpiange tu abbia perso il treno.  
Gianni regrets you have lost the train
- a'. \*A Gianni dispiace tu non abbia vinto.  
To Gianni regrets you not have won
- b. <sup>(?)</sup>Rimpiango tu abbia perso il treno.  
I regret you have lost the train  
'I regret you have lost the train'
- b'. <sup>(?)</sup>Mi dispiace tu non abbia vinto.  
To me regret you not have won  
'I regret you haven't won'

utterance time. To show this property, Giorgi and Pianesi underline that the indicative tenses (excluding the imperfect), which do not allow for CD, typically display the DAR.

- (4) Gianni ha detto che Maria è incinta.  
 Gianni has said that Maria be.IND.PRES.3SG pregnant  
 ‘Gianni has said that Maria is pregnant’.

This sentence can be considered true if the Maria’s state of pregnancy holds both at the time of Gianni’s saying eventuality and at the utterance time, ‘now’. Thus, the following formula may express the appropriate logical form for sentence (4)<sup>31</sup>:

- (5)  $\exists e \exists e'$  say(G, [be-pregnant(M, e')], e) &  $t(e) < \text{now}$  &  $t(e') \approx t(e) \approx \text{now}$

Indicative tenses trigger the DAR, whereas subjunctive tenses apparently do not:

- (6) Gianni pensava che Maria fosse incinta.  
 Gianni believed that Maria was(subj) pregnant  
 ‘Gianni thought Maria was pregnant’.

This sentence can be considered true if the state of pregnancy holds at the time of Gianni’s saying (or if the state of pregnancy was anterior to Gianni’s saying). But there is no time relation specified between the embedded eventuality and the utterance time.

However, in some cases subjunctive verbs do instantiate DAR. In these cases, CD is unavailable. To illustrate, verbs like *ipotizzare* (‘to hypothesize’), which select for a subjunctive clausal argument even when employed to express a speech act, can convey a DAR<sup>32</sup>:

- (7) a. Gianni ha ipotizzato che Maria fosse incinta.  
 Gianni has hypothesized that Maria AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG pregnant  
 ‘Gianni hypothesized that Maria was pregnant’.

<sup>31</sup> In the following formula  $t(e)$  and  $t(e')$  indicate the time interval of the eventualities  $e$  and  $e'$ . The symbol ‘ $\approx$ ’ indicates the overlapping relation.

<sup>32</sup> In fact this property appears to relate the matrix verb in the present perfect rather than a specific class of predicates selecting for subjunctive clauses. Another class of verbs requiring a subjunctive complement though triggering the DAR and disallowing CD are the directive predicates, like *dire* ‘to say’ under the meaning ‘to order’, *ordinare* ‘to order’, etc.

- b. Gianni ha ipotizzato che Maria sia incinta.  
Gianni has hypothesized that Maria AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG pregnant  
'Gianni has hypothesized that Maria is pregnant'.

In sentence (7)a, the embedded eventuality is interpreted as simultaneous (or anterior) with respect to the attitude episode (John's hypothesizing). In sentence (7)b, the embedded eventuality is interpreted as simultaneous with respect to the attitude episode, but it must also be interpreted as holding 'now', that is, it must be simultaneous with respect to the utterance time. For sentence (7)b to be true, it must be the case that the embedded eventuality (Maria's pregnancy) holds at the time when Gianni hypothesizes that *p* and at the time of the utterance (see (8)b). The truth conditions of sentence (7)a, on the other hand, do not include the reference to the utterance time (see (8)a)<sup>33</sup>:

- (8) a.  $\exists e \exists e'$  hypothesize(G, [be-pregnant(M, e')], e) & t(e) < now & t(e)  $\approx$  t(e')
- b.  $\exists e \exists e'$  hypothesize(G, [be-pregnant(M, e')], e) & t(e) < now & t(e')  $\approx$  t(e)  $\approx$  now

The interpretation sentence (7)b displays DAR, since the embedded eventuality is temporally evaluated both with respect to the matrix eventuality, and with respect to the utterance time – there is a double 'access' to the temporal information of the embedded eventuality.

Giorgi and Pianesi show that only in example (7)a is CD available:

- (9) a. Gianni ha ipotizzato (che) fosse incinta.  
Gianni has hypothesized (that) AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG pregnant  
'Gianni hypothesized (that) she was pregnant'.

<sup>33</sup> These two types of interpretation arise not only with *hypothesize*, but also with the other verbs selecting for subjunctive clauses in the present perfect – conveying an 'aoristic'/'incohesive' interpretation:

- (i) a. Quando Gianni ha visto Maria, ha pensato che sia incinta.  
When Gianni has seen Maria, he has thought that be.SUBJ.PRES.3SG pregnant.  
'When Gianni has seen Maria, he thought she is pregnant'
- b. Quando Gianni ha visto Maria, ha pensato che fosse incinta.  
When Gianni has seen Maria, he has thought that be.SUBJ.PRES.3SG pregnant.  
'When Gianni has seen Maria, he has thought she was pregnant'.

The former sentence, which involves a present subjunctive, is felicitous if the state of being pregnant overlaps both to John's thinking *and now*, thus displaying DAR, whereas the latter sentence, which involves an imperfect subjunctive, must be simultaneous to John's thinking, but not necessarily with the utterance time:

- (ii) a.  $\exists e \exists e'$  think(G, [be-pregnant(M, e')], e) & t(e)  $\approx$  t(e')  $\approx$  now  
b.  $\exists e \exists e'$  think(G, [be-pregnant(M, e')], e) & t(e)  $\approx$  t(e')

- b. Gianni ha ipotizzato \*(che) sia incinta.  
 Gianni has hypothesized \*(that) AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG prgnant  
 ‘Gianni has hypothesized that she is pregnant’.

Thus, CD cannot obtain if DAR does, and vice versa.

d) The occurrence of a topic or a focus within the embedded clauses degrades CD:

- (10) a. Gianni crede che la mela, Maria l’abbia mangiata.  
 Gianni believes the apple, Maria it.CL has eaten  
 ‘Gianni believes Maria has eaten the apple’.
- a'. (?)?Gianni crede la mela, Maria l’abbia mangiata.  
 Gianni believes the apple, Maria it.CL has eaten.
- b. Gianni crede che LA MELA, Maria abbia mangiato, non la pera.  
 Gianni believes that THE APPLE, Maria has eaten, not the pear  
 ‘Gianni believes that Maria has eaten the APPLE, not the pear.’
- b'. ?\*Gianni crede LA MELA, Maria abbia mangiato, non la pera.  
 Gianni beleves THE APPLE, Maria has eaten, not the pear

The presence of a right dislocated phrase, however, does not affect the status of a sentence:

- (11) a. Gianni crede tu l’abbia mangiata, la mela.  
 Gianni believes you it.CL has eaten, the apple  
 ‘Gianni believes you have eaten the apple’.
- b. Gianni crede tu abbia mangiato LA MELA, non la pera.  
 Gianni believes you have eaten the APPLE, not the pear  
 ‘Gianni believes you have eaten the APPLE, not the pear’.

### 5.2.2 *Common properties of Complementizer Deletion and obviation*

Comparing the above survey of the distribution of CD phenomena with the syntax of obviation, it becomes clear that the two phenomena are affected by the same syntactic properties. They both occur in subjunctive clauses only; they are both sensitive to the presence of a topic, of a focus, and to clause dislocation – both these factors rule CD out and weaken obviation. As for the relation between DAR and obviation, see section 5.2.6.

## 5.2.3 CP-layer, AgrP and Complementizer Deletion

Building on the properties of CD in Italian, Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) propose that the Italian complementizer *che* lexicalizes two different sets of features: those of the indicative complementizer, C, and those of the subjunctive complementizer, which they dub ‘MOOD’:

- (12) a. ... [CP [C *che*] [AgrP [Agr ... ] ... ]  
 b. ... [MOODP [MOOD *che*] [AgrP [Agr ... ] ... ]

They propose that only the complementizer *che* heading MOODP can be ‘deleted’. ‘Deletion’ is in fact a syntactic mechanism stating that more features are lexicalized in a single morpheme. This mechanism is an implementation of a grammatical principle, which they call ‘Feature Scattering Principle’, according to which each feature *can* head a projection, though it needs not. When it does not head a projection, it is realized in another head, which ‘syncretically’ encodes at least two features.

They hypothesize that CD is a case of syncretism: subjunctive morphology may lexicalize both the feature of the MOOD head, and the features of the subject agreement head ‘Agr’:

- (13) ... [MOOD/AgrP [MOOD/Agr ... ] ... ]

This option may be chosen, if there are no additional, non-inherent features, encoded in the complementizer *che*, which makes it necessary to prefer the non-syncretic option.

Under Giorgi and Pianesi’s (1997) theory, the facts discussed in the previous section are accounted as follows. First, the contrast between indicative and subjunctive is due to the fact that MOOD may not head a maximal projection, whereas C must do so. Thus, the indicative C can never be deleted, that is, realized syncretically with agreement features.

The contrast between volitional and epistemic subjunctive clauses and emotive-factive subjunctive clauses follows from the hypothesis that factivity is encoded in C, which cannot be deleted. Under this hypothesis, the left periphery of emotive-factive subjunctive clauses should contain both C and MOOD (syncretically realized as MOOD/Agr):

- (14) [CP [C *che*<sub>[+fact]</sub>] [MOOD/AgrP ... ]

In dislocated clauses, MOOD also carries additional, non-intrinsic features – the features connected to the semantics of the dislocation, which cannot be realized syncretically, thus disallowing the omission of C.

The presence of additional, non-intrinsic features also explains why topicalization and focusing rule CD out: MOOD carries non-intrinsic features that cannot be lexicalized through a syncretic category; moreover, CP must be split à la Rizzi (1997) to make room for a topic or a focus XP<sup>34</sup>:

- (15) [CP [C *che*] [TopicP [FocusP [MOODP [AgP...]

#### 5.2.4 CP, MOODP, and DAR

In further research, Giorgi and Pianesi (2001, 2004) propose that the interface properties of the two complementizer C and MOOD are even responsible for the facts concerning DAR, and for the fact that in embedded clauses Sequence of Tenses (for short, SoT) – that is, the morphological agreement between the matrix and the embedded tense – obtains.

Since C cannot be omitted in contexts instantiating the DAR, Giorgi and Pianesi claim that some of the features conveying the DAR must reside in C. Particularly, following Higginbotham's (1995, 2001) idea that the attitude episode must be represented within the content of the attitude itself in order to anchor it and that SoT is the morpho-syntactic counterpart of this semantic requirement, they hypothesize that at the syntax-semantics interface, C contains the temporal features of the indicative tenses, which deliver the utterance time, whereas T or, for the subjunctive, MOOD contain the coordinates of the bearer of the attitude:

- (15) a. [CP [C-utterance *che*] [AgrP [TP [T-attitude ...] ...]  
 b. [MOODP [MOOD-attitude *che*] [AgrP [TP [T ...] ...]

Thus, C provides the temporal relation between the interval of the embedded eventuality  $t(e')$  and *now* represented in the logical forms discussed above, whereas T and MOOD provide the temporal relation between the intervals of the embedded eventuality  $t(e')$  and that of the attitude episode  $t(e)$ .

#### 5.2.5 Subjunctive tenses as anaphors

The accounts of obviation based on the Binding Theory have often built on the tenet that subjunctive tenses are 'anaphoric'. The interface properties of subjunctive clauses as here analyzed help in defining more appropriately this notion.

<sup>34</sup> The fact that the two complementizers cannot be both lexicalized is assumed to be a phonological requirement of Italian. It does not hold in some Northern Italian dialects (see Poletto 1995, Paoli 2003).

The pieces of evidence that has been given in support of the claim that subjunctive tenses are anaphoric are mainly two: first, subjunctive cannot occur in a root clause having declarative force and, second, SoT is enforced in subjunctive clauses:

- (16) a. \*Gianni parta domani.  
Gianni leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow
- b. \*Gianni pensa che Maria partisse domani.  
Gianni thinks that Maria leave.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG tomorrow  
ok: *parta* (leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG)
- c. \*Gianni pensava che Maria parta domani.  
Gianni thought that Maria leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG tomorrow  
ok: *partisse* (leave.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG)

The first evidence does not seem to be compelling, however. Subjunctive verbs do occur in a root clause, on condition that the clause has an imperative or optative force:

- (17) a. (Che) partano immediatamente!  
(That) leave.SUBJ.PRES.3PL at once  
'They leave at once!'
- b. Se solo fosse qui Gianni!  
If only be.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG here Gianni  
'If only Gianni were here'.

Thus, the fact that subjunctive verbs do not occur in declarative root sentences appears to be linked to the modal semantics of the subjunctive, rather than to its temporal interpretation in itself.

The facts concerning SoT appear to be more substantial, since the subjunctive does in fact contrast with the indicative in this respect. The tense of an indicative clause is independent of the matrix tense:

- (18) a. Gianni sostiene che Maria partiva domani.  
Gianni claims that Maria leave.IND.IMPF.3SG tomorrow  
'Gianni claims that Maria was expected to leave tomorrow'.
- b. Gianni sosteneva che Maria parte domani.  
Gianni claimed that Maria leave.IND.PRES.3SG tomorrow  
'Gianni claimed that Maria is expected to leave tomorrow'

These examples contrast minimally with examples (16)b and c. In (18)a and (16)b, the SoT present-imperfect occurs; the former sentence is grammatical, the latter is unacceptable. In (18)b and (16)c, the SoT imperfect-present holds; again, only the former is grammatical. The grammatical sentences, to be sure, contain an indicative embedded clause. Thus, the second piece of evidence in support to the claim that subjunctive tenses are anaphoric appears to be uncontroversial<sup>35</sup>.

Three counterarguments to the claim that subjunctive tenses are anaphoric may be rejected. The first one is the fact that embedded clauses in which the subjunctive verb is not instantiated uniquely by the matrix tense, do exist. The examples in (7) are a case in point, although it must be noted that they involve a present perfect indicative attitude predicate, a tense that in the Northern varieties of Italian, is ambiguous between a present (perfect) and a real past. Under the former option, the present tense agreement is instantiated, whereas under the latter, the imperfect tense agreement is instantiated. Thus, the argument that DAR obtains in some cases does not appear to be valid.

The second (apparent) piece of evidence against the claim that strict SoT is enforced in subjunctive clauses is discussed in Giorgi (2009) and Costantini (2007):

- (19) *Il testimone crede che ieri alle 5 l'imputato fosse a casa.*  
 The witness believes that yesterday at 5 the defendant  
 be.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG at home.  
 'The witness thinks that yesterday at 5 the defendant was at home'.

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<sup>35</sup> The argument Giorgi and Pianesi (1997, 2001) adopt to claim that subjunctive tenses are anaphoric – that is, the coordinate of the utterance are not represented in a subjunctive clause – do not seem to be fully convincing. They take as evidence for this claim the fact that subjunctive clauses are interpreted with respect to the attitude time frame, though not with respect to the utterance time:

- (i) *Gianni pensava che Maria fosse incinta.*  
 Gianni believed that Maria be.SUBJ.IMPF pregnant  
 'Gianni thought Maria was pregnant'.

This sentence can be considered true if the state of pregnancy holds at the time of Gianni's saying (or if the state of pregnancy was anterior to Gianni's saying, if the context provides a salient time reference). But there is no time relation specified between the embedded eventuality and the utterance time. Thus, Giorgi and Pianesi conclude that a subjunctive clause does not give access to the speaker's point of view.

However, the lack of a deictic anchoring is a property of the imperfect tense, rather than of the subjunctive mood. The imperfect indicative does not instantiate DAR either:

- (ii) *Gianni ha detto che Maria era incinta.*  
 Gianni has said that Maria be.IND.IMPF.3SG pregnant  
 'Gianni has said that Maria was pregnant'.

Here too, the state of pregnancy needs not stretch over the utterance time, though it must overlap with the Gianni's speech act.



Here the matrix verb is present indicative, the embedded verb is imperfect subjunctive, which apparently violates a strict SoT. Costantini (2007) shows however that the imperfect subjunctive can occur under a present matrix only if the embedded eventuality is stative, either lexically, or as a result of a type-shift through adverbial or aspectual modifiers, and is shifted in a time interval prior to the attitude episode. When the embedded predicate denotes an event, the strict SoT is enforced – the perfect aspect possibly sets the eventuality in an interval preceding the attitude eventuality:

- (20) \*Il testimone crede che ieri l'imputato partisse.  
The witness thinks that yesterday the defendant leave.SUBJ.IMP

Finally, if the matrix verb is present, the embedded eventuality is temporally accessed from the attitude episode time *and* from the utterance time, which coincide. However, it is not possible to establish whether the DAR obtains or whether the only available access is that from the attitude episode, which *indirectly* sets the embedded eventuality with respect to the utterance time.

To conclude, subjunctive tenses may be truly considered 'anaphoric', keeping this term as a label underlying the unavailability of DAR.

### 5.3 Long-distance Anaphors

#### 5.3.1 The syntax of LDAs

Giorgi (2004, 2006, 2007) investigates the phenomenon of long-distance binding of anaphors. She proposes that their distribution follows from the same apparatus ruling the temporal interpretation of subjunctive sentences. In Italian, LDAs are indeed sensitive to the mood of the embedded clause and are subject-oriented, or rather *de se*.

As for the first property, in Italian the LDA *proprio* 'one's own' can appear in subjunctive (and conditional) clauses, but it is ruled out in indicative clauses ('verbal blocking effect', Giorgi 2006. See also Giorgi 1983):

- (21) a. [Quel dittatore]<sub>1</sub> spera che i notiziari televisivi parlino a lungo delle proprie<sub>1</sub> gesta.  
[That dictator]<sub>1</sub> hopes that the TV news talk.SUBJ.PRES.3PL for a long time about self's deed.  
'[That dictator]<sub>1</sub> hopes that the TV news will talk about his<sub>1</sub> deeds for a long time'.

- b. \*[Quel dittatore]<sub>1</sub> ha detto che i notiziari televisivi hanno parlato a lungo delle proprie<sub>1</sub> gesta.  
 [That dictator]<sub>1</sub> has said that the TV news AUX.IND.PRES.3PL talked for a long time about self's deed.

Giorgi (2006) observes that LDAs are sensitive to some nominal phrases as well. First and second person pronouns degrade a sentence in which a LDA occurs ('nominal blocking effect'):

- (22) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che tutti siano innamorati della propria<sub>1</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that everybody be.SUBJ.PRES.3PL in love with self's<sub>1</sub> wife  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that everybody is in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife'.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che Mario sia innamorato della propria<sub>1</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that Mario be.SUBJ.PRES.3SG in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes Mario is in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife'.
- c. ?\*Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che io sia innamorato della propria<sub>1</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that I be.SUBJ.PRES.1SG in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes I am in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife'.
- d. ?\*Gianni<sub>1</sub> pensa che tu sia innamorato della propria<sub>1</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that you be.SUBJ.PRES.2SG in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes you are in love with his<sub>1</sub> wife'.

Examples (22)a and b contrast with examples (22)c and d in that the embedded subject is in the third person and LDA binding is possible. In the latter sentences, the embedded subject is in the second and in the first person, respectively, and long distance binding is almost unacceptable.

Another well-known property of LDAs is that they are subject-oriented (Giorgi 1983, 2004, Pica 1987, Sells 1987, Cole, Hermon and Sung 1990). Thus, in the following sentence *proprio* can be bound by *Gianni*, though not by *Maria*:

- (23) Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto a Maria<sub>2</sub> che i notiziari televisivi avrebbero parlato del proprio<sub>1/\*2</sub> libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has told to Maria<sub>2</sub> that the TV news would-have talked of the self's<sub>1/\*2</sub> book.  
 'Gianni<sub>1</sub> told Maria<sub>2</sub> that the TV news would talk of his<sub>1/\*2</sub> book'.

The above sentence contrasts minimally with the following with respect to the interpretation of *proprio*:

- (24) Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto a Maria<sub>2</sub> che i notiziari televisivi avrebbero parlato del suo<sub>1/2</sub> libro.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has told to Maria<sub>2</sub> that the TV news would-have talked of-the his<sub>1/2</sub> book.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> told Maria<sub>2</sub> that the TV news would talk of his<sub>1/2</sub> book’.

In this sentence both *Gianni* and *Maria* may serve as antecedents for the pronominal *suo*, whereas in sentence (23) the only available antecedent for *proprio* is the matrix subject.

LDAs may be bound by arguments that do not serve as subject. Consider for instance the following sentence:

- (25) Che la propria<sub>1</sub> figlia sia andata in campeggio da sola preoccupa Gianni<sub>1</sub>.  
 That the self’s daughter is gone to camping by herself worries Gianni  
 ‘That his<sub>1</sub> daughter is camping by herself worries Gianni<sub>1</sub>’.

LDAs can be bound by the object argument of psych-verbs. Hence, although LDAs are more often subject-oriented, they are not always so. In chapter 3 we have noticed that the individual argument of psych-verbs refers to the bearer of attitude, the individual to which an attitude, possibly *de se*, is attributed. LDAs, rather than being subject-oriented, have indeed been shown to be *de se* (Chierchia 1989, Pan 1998, 2001, Huang-Liu 2001)<sup>36</sup>.

<sup>36</sup> To show this, Chierchia (1989) considers the following sentence (originally discussed by Kaplan 1989):

(i) John believes that his pants are on fire.

Sentence (i) is ambiguous. It can be *de se* – the speaker might be saying that John has a belief about himself; but it can also be considered true as non-*de se* – in a scenario in which John is looking at a mirror and is seeing a person whose pants are on fire. The person he is seeing is in fact John himself, but he does not realize it. Of course, a third interpretation is also available, namely, John is quite aware of who is who and has a *de re* attitude which does not involve himself.

In Italian there are two possible sentences corresponding to sentence (i):

(ii) a. Gianni crede che i suoi pantaloni siano in fiamme.

Gianni believes that the his pants are on fire

‘Gianni believes his pants are on fire’.

b. Gianni crede che i propri pantaloni siano in fiamme.

Gianni believes that the self’s pants are on fire

‘Gianni believes that his own pants are on fire’.

Sentences (ii)a and b contrast minimally whereby the former is ambiguously *de se* or non-*de se*. Gianni might have two different beliefs: he might be completely aware that the person whose pants are on fire is himself; or, he might not be aware that the object of his belief is

Finally, LDAs can appear in adverbial clauses:

- (26) Il primo ministro<sub>1</sub> sperava che il dittatore<sub>2</sub> partisse prima che i rivoluzionari sequestrassero il proprio<sub>1/\*2</sub> patrimonio.  
 The PM<sub>1</sub> hoped that the dictator<sub>2</sub> left before that the revolutionaries sequestered self's<sub>1/\*2</sub> patrimony  
 'The PM<sub>1</sub> hoped that the dictator<sub>2</sub> would leave before the revolutionaries sequestered his own<sub>1/\*2</sub> patrimony'.

In this sentence the matrix subject, though not the subject of the argument clause, is available as an antecedent for *proprio*<sup>37</sup>.

### 5.3.2 Common properties of LDAs and obviation

LDAs appear to share some properties with obviation. They concern the distribution of the two phenomena, although the behavior of the two in the same environment is the opposite. Thus, they are both sensitive to mood, in that they are instantiated in subjunctive clauses, though not in indicative clauses. The presence of a first (or second) person embedded subject appears to block slightly both LDA-binding and obviation. They can obtain in adverbial clauses.

Moreover, they have contrasting properties as far as their interpretation is concerned: LDAs are *de se*, whereas obviation has been defined as the unavailability of this interpretation. In a way, this observation comes out as no surprise, since LDAs are anaphors, whereas obviation concerns (subject) *pronouns*. Thus, in the light of Binding Theory, the fact that in the same environment they display complementary properties is expected.

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himself. On the other hand, sentence (ii)b is unambiguously *de se*. This observation leads Chierchia to conclude that *proprio* patterns just like the null subject of infinitival clauses, PRO, and might be viewed as a phonologically realized counterpart of PRO.

This claim seems however to be too strong, as Giorgi (2004) points out, since it suggests that *proprio* is inherently *de se*. But this does not seem to be the case. Consider the following example:

- (iii) Gianni spera che Maria recuperi i propri soldi.  
 Gianni hopes that Maria recovers.SUBJ the self's money  
 'Gianni hopes Maria recovers his money'/'Gianni hopes Maria recovers her money'.

If *proprio* were intrinsically *de se*, it might not corefer with *Maria*. Hence, either *proprio* is necessarily *de se* only when it is bound outside its clausal domain (LDA), though not in a local domain, or there are two *proprio* – one locally bound, the other long-distance bound. Only the latter is *de se*.

<sup>37</sup> Irrelevantly, the subject of the adverbial clause, as a coargument, can bind *proprio*.

### 5.3.3 LDAs and indexicality

Giorgi (2006) hypothesizes that the speaker's coordinates delimits the domain of LDA binding. More in general, she postulates a 'blocking condition' that states that an event located with respect to the speaker's coordinate must be fully saturated – where saturation is to be intended in a Fregean sense.

Following Higginbotham's (1997), she hypothesizes that LDAs are implicit or mixed anaphora – that is, unsatisfied theta-positions that must be assigned through theta-identification. Before illustrating Giorgi's hypothesis, let us consider Higginbotham's notion of theta-identification and implicit anaphora.

Higginbotham (1985) observes that a series of examples show that part *b* of Chomsky's (1981) Theta-criterion is simplistic:

(27) *Theta-criterion*

- a. Every argument is assigned one and only one thematic role;
- b. Every thematic role is assigned to one and only one argument.

Consider now the following example:

(28) The boat was sunk [*PRO* to collect the insurance] (Manzini 1983)

It means, by and large, that whoever sank the boat, did it in order to collect the insurance. The predicate *sink* specifies two theta-roles, agent and theme, of which only the theme is satisfied (it is discharged by the subject *the boat*). The agent role is not assigned to an argument (although it is active as the controller of *PRO*). The fact that the agent is not assigned to an argument violates part *b* of the Theta-criterion.

Consider now the following example:

(29) the dog

In many language nouns can serve as predicates and in semantics nouns are predicates of the type  $\langle e, t \rangle$  (Heim and Kratzer 1997). Thus, the noun *dog* is supposed to have a theta-grid in its lexical entry, containing one position, which Williams (1980) calls 'R' (referential). When the noun heads an NP, that position is not assigned to any argument. This also seems to violate part *b* of the Theta-criterion.

Finally, consider the following example:

(30) This is a big butterfly

It does not simply mean 'this is a butterfly and this is big'. Rather, it can be

paraphrased as ‘this is a butterfly and this is big *for a butterfly*’. The adjective *big* grades the noun *butterfly* with respect to butterflies, not in general terms (even a big butterfly is not a big thing). Thus, it is supposed to have two thematic positions, one of which must be satisfied by the attribute the adjective grades (the other is the theta-position any predicate has, ‘R’). Part *b* of the Theta-criterion does not help in explaining how the attribute theta-role is assigned.

To fill these gaps in the Theta-criterion, Higginbotham proposes that theta-marking is not the only way of discharging a theta-role. He argues that there are three more ways of discharging a theta-role: theta-binding, theta-identification, and ‘autonomous’ theta-marking.

Example (28) illustrates the first procedure. The determiner *the* is supposed to ‘bind’ the theta-position of the noun and, in this way, to discharge the theta-position. Example (29) illustrates the second and the third way of discharging a theta-role. Both the adjective and the noun can be predicates, and must accordingly have a theta-position. However, the whole constituent *a big butterfly* is a predicate and, consequently, must have a unique theta-position. Therefore, the theta-position of the noun and that of the adjective are supposed to be ‘identified’ and passed to the whole constituent<sup>38</sup>. Moreover, the adjective has a second theta-position, because it grades the noun it modifies with respect to the attribute the noun denotes. Hence, the second theta-position of the adjective is discharged by the noun it modifies.

In the light of these data, Higginbotham substitutes the second statement of the Theta-criterion with the following, more general, one:

(31) Every thematic role is discharged.

In further research, Higginbotham (1997) discusses the properties of ‘implicit anaphora’ and ‘mixed anaphora’. The former term refers to the case in which the antecedent and the anaphora are both unsatisfied theta-position or implicit arguments (that is, a theta-position that is not satisfied through obvious theta-marking). Consider for instance the following example:

(32) A self-starting motor

The theta-grid of the adjective *self-starting* contains two theta-positions (agent and theme) that are identified. Thus, a self-starting motor is ‘an *x* such that *x* is a motor and *x* starts *x*’.

As for the term ‘mixed anaphora’, it refers to the case when a binding relation holds between an explicit antecedent and an unsatisfied theta-position. He

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<sup>38</sup> Theta-assigning is assumed to hold under sisterhood. This condition may be satisfied by means of percolation (Williams 1987) – that is, non-discharged positions are passed up to the containing XP, if that XP is a predicative expression, until they are discharged.

claims that Obligatory Control relations may be analyzed as instances of mixed anaphora, taking PRO to be the spell-out of an unsatisfied theta-position.

Let us now go back to Giorgi's theory of LDA. Giorgi's hypothesis states that LDAs are unsatisfied theta-positions that must be assigned through theta-identification. Her hypothesis states that they may be theta-identified either with an argument of the embedded clause (a co-argument) or with the author of the context, which must be locally represented (within MOODP)<sup>39</sup>. Thus, theta-identification brings the *de se* reading about. Moreover, due to the 'blocking condition', theta-identification must obtain within the domain of the speaker's coordinates, otherwise the embedded predicate would be unsaturated. Finally, the theta-position so satisfied is spelled out as the adjective *proprio*<sup>40</sup>. Thus, a theory of LDAs can be summarized as follows:

(33) *Giorgi (2004, 2006, 2007) theory of LDAs*

A. *LDA-binding*

- a. LDA is the spell-out of an unsatisfied position;
- b. A LDA can be satisfied either
  - i. by a co-argument, or
  - ii. by the bearer of the attitude;

B. *Blocking condition*

An event located with respect to the speaker's coordinate must be fully saturated.

Giorgi claims that under this theory, the distribution of LDAs follows straightforwardly. First, LDAs must be *de se*. Consider the following configuration:

(34)  $c_a \dots V$  [<sub>MOODP</sub> [XP ... [Th ...

The unsatisfied theta-position *Th* may be identified with the local antecedent XP; however, if XP is not the intended antecedent, MOODP is unsaturated and *Th* may be identified with the bearer of the attitude  $c_a$ . Finally it is spelled-out as *proprio*. This is what happens in the following sentence:

(35) Gianni<sub>1</sub> crede che Mario<sub>2</sub> odi la propria<sub>1/2</sub> moglie.

Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that Mario<sub>2</sub> hates self's<sub>1/2</sub> wife.

'Gianni<sub>1</sub> believes that Mario<sub>2</sub> hates his<sub>1/2</sub> wife'.

<sup>39</sup> In Cinque's (1999) hierarchy of verbal functional projections (concerning the higher IP-field), the highest projections, *speech act mood*, *evaluative mood*, and *evidential mood*, are related with the pragmatic roles associated with a sentence – speaker and attitude bearer. This is also what Speas (2002) suggests. According to these points of view, the speaker and the attitude bearer should be represented in one of these heads.

<sup>40</sup> Implicit here is Halle and Marantz's (1993) Distributed Morphology framework.

The anaphor may be bound either by *Gianni* or by *Mario*. *Mario* is indeed a co-argument of the (clause-bound) anaphor (see clause (b)<sub>i</sub> in (33)). Though, if this does not convey the appropriate meaning, the unsatisfied theta-position may even be discharged through theta-identification with the bearer of the attitude.

In multiple embedding, this mechanism works recursively:

(36)  $c_a \dots V$  [<sub>MOODP</sub>  $c_a'$  ... [<sub>MOODP</sub> XP ... [Th ...

Here, *Th* can be identified with XP, with  $c_a'$ , or with  $c_a$ , depending on the intended meaning. Thus, the following sentence is also expected:

(37) Gianni<sub>1</sub> supponeva che Mario<sub>2</sub> pensasse che Paolo<sub>3</sub> odiasse la propria<sub>1/2/3</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> supposed that Mario<sub>2</sub> believed that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hated the self<sup>s</sup><sub>1/2/3</sub> wife.  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> supposed that Mario<sub>2</sub> believed that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hated his wife’.

The anaphor *proprio* may be bound by *Gianni*, *Mario*, or *Paolo*. *Paolo* is locally available as an antecedent. If it is not the intended antecedent, the anaphor may be theta-identified with the attitude bearer *Mario*. If *Mario* is not the intended antecedent either, the anaphor may be identified with the matrix argument referring to the attitude bearer.

Second, the asymmetry between indicative and subjunctive clauses follows from (33). LDAs cannot occur in indicative clauses, since the speaker’s coordinate intervenes (in C) and, by the blocking condition, the embedded predicate must be fully saturated when C is merged:

(38)  $c_a \dots V$  [<sub>CP</sub> [XP ... [Th ...

Thus, in the following sentence the anaphor *proprio* can only be locally bound:

(39) Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto che Maria<sub>2</sub> ama la propria<sub>\*1/2</sub> madre.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that Maria<sub>2</sub> loves the self<sup>s</sup><sub>\*1/2</sub> mother  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> said Maria<sub>2</sub> loves her own mother’.

*Maria* is an available antecedent, whereas *Gianni* is not, because the speaker’s coordinate in the embedded C requires that all theta-position be satisfied. This may be done only if theta-identification with a co-argument discharges an otherwise unsatisfied theta-position. The contrast between the above sentence and the following ones is also predicted:



- (40) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto che Mario<sub>2</sub> pensa che Paolo<sub>3</sub> odi la propria\*<sub>1/2/3</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that Mario<sub>2</sub> think.IND.PRES.3SG that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hate.SUBJ.PRES.3SG the self's\*<sub>1/2/3</sub> wife  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that Mario<sub>2</sub> thinks that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hates his\*<sub>1/2/3</sub> wife’.
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> ha detto che Mario<sub>2</sub> sa che Paolo<sub>3</sub> odia la propria\*<sub>1/2/3</sub> moglie.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that Mario<sub>2</sub> know.IND.PRES.3SG that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hates.IND.PRES.3SG the self's\*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> wife  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> has said that Mario<sub>2</sub> knows that Paolo<sub>3</sub> hates his\*<sub>1/\*2/3</sub> wife’.

In sentence (40)a, *Mario* and *Paolo* are available antecedents of *proprio*, whereas *Gianni* is not: the speaker's assignment sequence intervenes in the intermediate C and ‘closes’ the binding domain for the anaphor *proprio*. In sentence (40)b, *Paolo* is the only available antecedent for *proprio* – the most embedded clause contains the utterance coordinates and the unassigned theta-position can only be discharged by a co-argument.

Finally, the facts concerning adverbial clauses are also accounted for:

- (41) c<sub>a</sub> ... V [MOODP [XP ... [AdvCP YP ... [Th ...

Here XP is not the agent of the context, nor is it a coargument. Thus, the only possible antecedent for *Th* is the matrix subject. This accounts for the peculiar interpretation of *proprio* in examples like (26).

## 5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown the similarities and the differences between CD and obviation and LDA-binding and obviation. Obviation, CD, and LDAs appear to be sensitive to the same syntactic and semantic factors. The descriptive properties of CD and LDAs appear to follow from the interface properties of subjunctive clause. Assuming that the similarities (and the dissimilarities) between obviation and the other phenomena are not random, we will pursue the hypothesis that the same machinery ruling CD and LDAs (but DAR and SoT as well) is also responsible for the characteristics of obviation.

As a starting point, we summarize the generalization concerning the phenomena discussed in the present chapter in the following table:

(42)		DAR	CD	LDA	Obviation
	V [C ...	ok	*	*	*
	V [C [MOOD ...	ok	*	ok <sup>41</sup>	ok
	V [MOOD ...	*	ok	ok	(%)ok/?/??

The *de se* reading of the embedded subject is unavailable in environments involving MOOD, the subjunctive complementizer, no matter whether C occurs as well. Thus, its distribution overlaps with that of LDAs<sup>42</sup>. CD and obviation are also affected by the presence of C<sup>43</sup>.

Apart from the syntactic properties analyzed here, however, obviation appears to be sensitive to other characteristics, which do not seem to depend on mood selection – the presence of a ‘functional’ verb in the subjunctive, for instance, the theta-role assigned to the embedded subject, which seemingly require an independent account.

<sup>41</sup> The distribution of LDAs is not sensitive to the presence of C (here indicated by the presence of a topic):

(i) [Quel dittatore]<sub>1</sub> spera che questa sera i notiziari televisivi parlino a lungo delle proprie gesta.

[That dictator]<sub>1</sub> hopes that this evening the TV news talk.SUBJ.PRES.3PL for a long time about self’s deed.

‘[That dictator]<sub>1</sub> hopes that this evening, the TV news will talk about his<sub>1</sub> deeds for a long time’.

<sup>42</sup> Though, while LDAs (as well as CD) can occur in an embedded clause in the conditional, obviation is not required in this type of sentence.

<sup>43</sup> I note however that the relations between obviation and CD are not completely clear. Consider again the examples in (7). The first one involves an imperfect subjunctive, which is interpreted only with respect to the attitude episode, the second example involves a present subjunctive, which enforces the DAR. If the behavior of obviation parallels that of CD, we would expect that obviation should obtain in the latter case, but not in the former. However, unlike CD, the *de se* reading is more acceptable in sentences having an imperfect rather than a present subjunctive (as we have noted in section 3.2.1):

(i) a. Maria<sub>1</sub> ha ipotizzato che *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> fosse incinta.

Maria<sub>1</sub> has hypothesized that *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG pregnant  
‘Maria hypothesized that she was pregnant’.

b. Maria<sub>1</sub> ha ipotizzato che *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> sia incinta.

Maria<sub>1</sub> has hypothesized that *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG pregnant  
‘Maria has hypothesized that she is pregnant’.

Apparently, these two sentences have a different status, which suggests that DAR affects even obviation. The point is *how* it does affect the possibility of coindexation.

Note that coindexation is even more acceptable if CD obtains:

(ii) Maria<sub>1</sub> ha ipotizzato *pro*<sub>?1/2</sub> fosse incinta.

Maria<sub>1</sub> has hypothesized that *pro*<sub>(?)1/2</sub> AUX.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG pregnant  
‘Maria hypothesized that she was pregnant’.

Thus, clauses displaying the DAR, while ruling CD out, do require obviation (that is, they prevent the *de se* reading), whereas clauses that are devoid of the deictic anchoring, license the *de se* reading (and CD) more easily. This is surprising, since other syntactic characteristics such as topicalization, focalization and clause dislocation, affect CD and obviation in a parallel way.

In the following chapter I will attempt to account for all the properties obviation displays. In so doing, I will exploit the theoretical apparatus described in the present chapter, resorting additional principles to account for the properties that do not depend on mood.



## 6 An interface proposal for subjunctive obviation

### 6.1 Introduction: desiderata for a theory of obviation

In this chapter I will work out a proposal to account for the facts I discussed in chapters 2 and 3 in view of the theoretical notions discussed in chapter 5.

As we have seen, obviation – that is, the unavailability of the *de se* reading – obtains only in subjunctive clauses – indicative, conditional, and infinitival clauses do not trigger it. It involves only the subject (*pro*, in Italian) of a subordinate clause and the argument of the superordinate clause referring to the person to whom a certain attitude toward a propositional content is attributed. It obtains strictly if the form carrying subjunctive morphology is a full verb, whereas if the form carrying subjunctive morphology is a tense auxiliary, a passive auxiliary, or a modal verb, obviation tends not to occur. Additional factors, such as theta-role, number, implicitness or explicitness of the embedded subject, intervening material in the left periphery of the subordinate clause, clause dislocation, coordination, affect the availability of the *de se* reading.

A theory of obviation in subjunctive clauses should be able to account for all these facts. Particularly, it should be able to answer the following questions:

- a. Why are subjunctive clauses different from indicative, conditional and infinitive clauses with respect to the referential properties of their subject?
- b. Why are functional verbs (that is, tense and voice auxiliaries, modal verbs) different from full verbs with respect to the referential properties of the subject of a subjunctive clause?
- c. Why does obviation involve only matrix arguments referring to the bearer of the attitude?
- d. How do the other factors contribute the interpretative properties of the embedded subject? Particularly, (i) how is theta-theory concerned? (ii) How

is the phonological typology of the subject pronoun (iii) How is number involved? (iii) And how is information structure involved?

To answer these questions, I will build on the conceptual apparatus worked out by Giorgi and Pianesi (2001) and Giorgi (2004, 2006, 2007), discussed in chapter 5, here summarized:

- (1) *Giorgi and Pianesi's (2001) theory of CD, DAR, and SoT:*
  - a. Indicative clause: [CP [C-utterance *che*] [AgrP [TP [T-attitude ...] ...]
  - b. Subjunctive clause: [MOODP [MOOD-attitude *che*] [AgrP [TP [T ...] ...]
- (2) *Giorgi's (2004, 2006, 2007) theory of LDAs*
  - A. *LDA-binding*
    - a. LDA is the spell-out of an unsatisfied position;
    - b. A LDA can be satisfied either
      - i. by a co-argument, or
      - ii. by the bearer of the attitude;
  - B. *Blocking condition*  
 An event located with respect to the speaker's coordinate must be fully saturated.

In chapter 5 I have discussed some phenomena, CD, DAR, SoT, LDA-binding, which correlate with obviation as for the environment in which they occur and for the interpretative properties. In previous research, it has been shown that these phenomena are accountable under a theory that includes the above principles. The attempt to extend the above principles to the data concerning obviation appears to be desirable, if not necessary.

## 6.2 The hypothesis

### 6.2.1 Generalities

Building on the above theoretical apparatus I propose that the following hypothesis, which is an extended version of Giorgi's LDA binding, is able to explain the facts concerning obviation:

- (3) *Hypothesis*  
 The *de se* interpretation obtains if and only if an unsatisfied position is theta-identified with the agent of the context.

I assume that the above hypothesis is restricted by the *Blocking Condition* (2)b. This hypothesis correctly predicts the distribution of LDAs and, as Giorgi (2006, 2007) points out, even the interpretation of the null subject of

infinitival clauses, PRO, which as Higginbotham (1997) shows, is semantically compatible with an unsatisfied position (see section 5.3.3).

Furthermore, both LDAs and PRO occur in environments that are devoid of the utterance temporal coordinates, so that the blocking condition does not apply. This property has already been discussed with respect to subjunctive clauses in chapter 5, but it can be easily shown that infinitival clauses do not license the DAR as well:

- (4) Maria credeva di essere incinta.  
 Maria believed C/P be.INF pregnant  
 ‘Maria believed she was pregnant’

This sentence can be considered true if the state of pregnancy holds at the time of Mary’s belief, though not necessarily at the utterance time. Thus, the temporal coordinate of the speaker is not represented within an infinitival clause – only the temporal coordinate of the attitude bearer is.

The above hypothesis then accounts for the fact that infinitival clauses are *de se* straightforwardly. The speaker’s coordinate does not occur in an infinitival clause. Thus, the blocking condition does not apply and the unsatisfied position within the infinitival clause can be theta-identified with the bearer of the attitude, thus conveying the *de se* reading.

As for subjunctive clauses, the hypothesis above predicts that these clauses cannot be *de se*. Small *pro* does not indeed spell out an unsatisfied position. It is standardly assumed to saturate a predicate whereas PRO cannot:

- (5) a. *Pro* legge molti libri.  
*Pro* reads many books  
 ‘He/she reads a lot of books’.
- b. \*PRO leggere molti libri.  
 PRO read.INF many books

Since *pro* is a syntactic formative satisfying a theta-role through obvious theta-marking, if no implicit argument occurs in a subjunctive clause, such a clause cannot be *de se* by the hypothesis proposed.

Moreover, conditional clauses do not include the coordinate of the utterance. Thus, a *de se* reading can be achieved only if an unsatisfied position occurs. Typically, when conveying a future in the past reading, the tense of a conditional clause is periphrastic, composed by an auxiliary bearing conditional morphology and by full verb in the past participle. Following Higginbotham’s (1997), Roeper’s (1993), and Safir’s (1991) I propose that the external argument of non-finite lexical verbs is not assigned a theta-role

via obvious theta-marking. If so, by hypothesis the unassigned theta-role can be theta-identified with a co-argument or with the bearer of the attitude. In this case, a *de se* reading obtains.

Note that if the full verb carries conditional morphology, a sentence may be *de se* as well:

- (6) Gianni ha detto che *pro* partirebbe (se solo *pro* potesse).  
Gianni has said that *pro* leaves.COND, if only *pro* could.SUBJ  
'Gianni said that he would leave (if only he could)'.

Notice, however, that full verbs carrying conditional morphology are part of an implicit conditional. In such a structure, the conditional must include the coordinate of the utterance, since it can be uttered by itself:

- (7) Gianni partirebbe (se solo *pro* potesse).  
Gianni leaves.COND, if only *pro* could.SUBJ  
'Gianni would leave (if only he could)'.

This fact explains the apparent counterevidence to the hypothesis here discussed. The domain of application of the above hypothesis includes indeed the clauses devoid of the coordinate of the speaker – subjunctive and infinitival clauses. As for the clauses including the coordinate of the speaker (indicative and present conditional clauses), the blocking condition states that an event must be saturated if the coordinate of the utterance is introduced. All theta-positions must be satisfied and the *de se* reading cannot be achieved via theta-identification of an unsatisfied position. Thus, this reading can be conveyed even by an explicit formative, like *pro*.

The above hypothesis thus appears to explain straightforwardly the facts discussed in chapter 2.

## 6.2.2 Obviation weakening

### 6.2.2.1 Non-finite full verbs

Although the prediction that subjunctive clauses cannot be *de se* is true for many subjunctive clauses, this is not true for *all* subjunctive clauses. In general, subjunctive clauses cannot be *de se* if the morphology of the subjunctive mood is attached to the full verb (and not to an auxiliary or to a modal verb). Moreover, many additional factors have to be considered. Let us first examine the case involving a full verb in the subjunctive vis-à-vis the case involving a functional verb in the subjunctive.



Treating the case of conditional clauses, I have hypothesized that the external argument of non-finite lexical verbs is not assigned a theta-role via obvious theta-marking. That is, if in a subjunctive clause the lexical verb is in a non-finite form, the subject argument can only be satisfied via theta-identification. The mechanism of LDA-binding can here be assumed to hold, so that the unsatisfied position can be theta-identified either with a co-argument or with the attitude bearer. I propose that this is exactly what happens in the instances of obviation ‘weakening’, which crucially involve non-finite forms of lexical verbs.

The following structures illustrate the contrast between non-*de se* (obviative) subjunctive clauses and (optionally) *de se* subjunctive clauses:

- (8) a. DP<sub>1</sub> ... [MOODP [ *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> V.SUBJ [~~*pro*~~<sub>±</sub>  $\nabla$   
 b. DP<sub>1</sub> ... [MOODP [ *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> F.SUBJ [*x* V.INF/PART/GER

In (8)a there is no unsatisfied position. Thus, by (3) the *de se* reading is ruled out. In (8)b, one of the arguments (notated as a variable *x*) is not satisfied through theta-marking, because the lexical verb is non-finite. By the hypothesis above, this argument is satisfied through theta-identification either with a co-argument (*pro*, which cannot be *de se*), or with the agent of the context. If the first option holds, the subjunctive clause is non-*de se*, otherwise, it is *de se*. This appears to be correct, since a *de se* subjunctive clause is not obligatorily *de se*.

Note that the hypothesis under investigation predicts that infinitival and subjunctive clauses should be complementary (as competition theories do) only if the verbal form carrying the morphology of the infinitive or of the subjunctive is a lexical verb. If the verbal form carrying the morphology of the infinitive or of the subjunctive is a functional verb, infinitive and subjunctive clauses are no longer in complementary distribution, since in both clauses an unsatisfied position occurs, licensing the *de se* reading.

Thus, the hypothesis investigated here accounts for the mood ‘competition’ in a novel way, building on interface rather than simply on semantic properties, and accounting for the facts concerning obviation ‘weakening’, which represented a challenge to Farkas’ and Schlenker’s competition theories (see 3.4.2). Particularly, the following couple of examples appeared to be problematic for a competition account on obviation:

- (9) a. Spero che io possa vivere a lungo.  
 Hope.IND.PRES.1SG that I can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG live long  
 ‘I hope I can live long’.
- b. Spero di poter vivere a lungo.  
 Hope.IND.PRES.1SG C/P can.INF live long  
 ‘I hope I can live long’.

To summarize the point at issue, we have seen that intuitively, both sentences are *de se*, which appears to be unpredicted. Since the condition of felicity for these sentences are the same, by the pragmatic principle *Maximize presupposition!* (Schlenker 2005), the infinitival clause should be the only form appropriate in a *de se* scenario, whereas the subjunctive clause should be ruled out as bringing about a semantic failure. This is not the case, however, since the subjunctive clause is appropriate in the same relevant context as the infinitival clause.

Under the hypothesis I have proposed here, both sentences are expected to be *de se*. In both sentences an unsatisfied position occurs, instantiating the first personal interpretation: in the former sentence, the full verb is non-finite, whereas in the latter both the modal auxiliary and the full verb are non-finite<sup>44</sup>. Thus, in both a theta-position can be theta-identified with the bearer of the attitude.

#### 6.2.2.2 Topic, focus, strong pronouns, dislocated clauses

In chapter 5 we have seen that topic and focus block CD, a fact that, as Giorgi and Pianesi (1997, 2004) maintain, is due to the activation of the CP-field.

Let us assume that the CP introduces a reference to the utterance, since it interfaces syntax with pragmatics and links a clause to the conversational background – the set of propositions that two interlocutors share (see Chierchia and McConnell-Ginet 1990 and Chierchia 1997). Thus, it requires that all theta-positions must be satisfied, by the Blocking Condition. If so, a clause containing a topic or a focus should be weakly obviative. As we have seen in section 3.6.1, the data are compatible with this proposal.

The case is on the whole similar to indicative clauses: no unsatisfied position can occur within clauses having a topic or a focus, so the *de se* reading must be conveyed through alternative strategies than theta-identification of an unsatisfied position. This implies that the presence of a topic or of a focus should improve the availability of a *de se* reading even if no additional features weakening obviation occurs. This prediction appears to be correct:

- (10) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> rispondesse a tutte le domande.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> answered to all the questions  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped he\*<sub>1</sub> answered all the questions’.

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<sup>44</sup> Note also that in the above example the first person is concerned. As we have seen (section 3.3.1.2) this appears to matter. I will show in section 6.3.2.3 that the hypothesis discussed here is able to account for this fact quite naturally.

- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sperava che domani, all'esame di linguistica computazionale, *pro*<sub>?1</sub> rispondesse a tutte le domande.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hoped that tomorrow, at the computational linguistics test, *pro*<sub>?1</sub> answered to all the questions  
 'Gianni hoped that tomorrow, at the computational linguistics test, he<sub>?1</sub> answered all the questions'.

A similar solution may be proposed with respect to strong pronouns. Cardinaletti (2004) shows that strong pronouns (together with full DPs) occupy a higher position than weak pronouns. Moreover, she maintains that this position is located within the CP. (Under this hypothesis, the fact that a group of speakers do not accept CD when the embedded subject is a DP or a strong pronoun, follows straightforwardly, assuming that the subject position is within the CP and that the CP is deleted).

If a strong pronoun occurs, the CP field is activated. No unsatisfied position can occur and the strategies to achieve a *de se* reading do not involve theta-identification of such a position.

Note that the sentences in (10), the CP does not introduce the *temporal* coordinate of the speaker: the sentence does not convey the DAR, indeed. Thus, the reference to the utterance, rather than the utterance temporal coordinate, appears to be responsible for the 'blocking condition' in this case.

All this considered, it comes as no surprise that dislocated clauses facilitate the *de se* reading (see section 3.6.2). If a clause is dislocated, the information structure it carries makes it unavailable the application of the hypothesized principle, carrying a reference to a specific conversational background.

### 6.2.2.3 First-person pronouns

The above hypothesis also accounts for the fact that first-person pronouns appear to facilitate the *de se* reading.

We have seen (section 5.3.1) that a first-person pronoun 'blocks' the availability of binding a LDA (nominal blocking condition). Giorgi (2006) shows that this is predicted by the blocking condition discussed above, assuming that first person pronouns introduce a reference to the utterance context.

The fact that obviation is 'weakened' if the first person is involved may then follow from the blocking condition. The first person pronoun introduces a reference to the utterance. The predicate must be saturated – all the theta-positions must be satisfied and the *de se* reading cannot be conveyed via theta-identification of an unsatisfied position with the bearer of the attitude.

As for the case of strong pronoun above, the prediction arise that even in ‘core’ obviation cases the first-person pronoun is more acceptable than a third-person (null) pronoun. For a discussion on this topic, see section 6.3.1 below.

#### 6.2.2.4 Directive predicates

In section 3.3.3.1 I have shown that a clausal argument of a directive verb is obviative with respect to the matrix subject, but it can be proximate with respect to the matrix object, I assume that orders and requests can be viewed as a attitudes involving the will of the person who expresses them, the attitude bearer. If so, the fact that the embedded proposition cannot be *de se* follows straightforwardly under the above hypothesis. *Pro* can however refer to the indirect object in the matrix clause, since it does not refer to the attitude holder.

Note that if the embedded form carrying subjunctive morphology is a voice auxiliary, the embedded clause may be first-personal:

- (11) Gianni<sub>i</sub> chiese al rettore che *pro*<sub>i</sub> fosse ammesso all’università.  
 Gianni asked to the chancellor that *pro*<sub>i</sub> was.SUBJ admitted at the university  
 ‘Gianni asked the chancellor that he was admitted at the university’.

In the above sentence an unsatisfied position is associated with the non-finite form. By the hypothesis here proposed, it can be theta-identified with the attitude bearer, conveying the *de se* reading.

#### 6.2.2.5 Double embedding

The data concerning double embedding discussed in the section 3.4. are also accounted for by the mechanism hypothesized here. As it has often been shown in the literature concerning obviation, a doubly embedded subject is obviative only with respect to the intermediate subject (or object), not with the matrix. A *de se* reading involves an attitude and the object of that attitude. In the double embedding cases, the most embedded clause does not refer to the object of a propositional attitude by the matrix author. Rather, an attitude toward the content of the most embedded clause is attributed to the intermediate author. Thus, the most embedded subject cannot be *de se* with respect to the intermediate author (unless an unsatisfied position occurs

within the most embedded clause), though it can be with respect to the matrix<sup>45</sup>.

#### 6.2.2.6 Adverbial clauses

In section 3.5 I have shown that obviation obtains even in some adverbial clauses in the subjunctive. Particularly, in rationale, *before-*, and relative clauses the matrix and the embedded subjects cannot be coindexed if the lexical verb of that clause is inflected in the subjunctive, whereas in concessive, conditional and comparison clauses they can be coindexed.

The hypothesis under investigation appears to be correct with respect to rationale clauses. As Manzini (2000) and von Stechow and Iatridou (2005) suggests, in rationale clauses the complementizer introduces a volitional attitude controlled by the matrix predicate. Thus, under the hypothesis here proposed, the *de se* reading is expected to obtain only if the predicate of the rationale clause is non-finite. This appears to be correct, since, as I have shown in section 3.5, the occurrence of a tense, voice, modal auxiliary appear to improve the coreferential reading, and an infinitival clause grants the *de se* reading:

- (12) a. \**Pro* vengo perché *pro* ti aiuti. (= 3.5, (44))  
*Pro*.1SG come.IND.PRES.1SG in-order-that *pro*.1SG you-CL  
 help.SUBJ.PRES.1SG
- b. *Pro* vengo per *PRO*<sub>1</sub> aiutarti. (= 3.5, (44))  
*Pro*.1SG come.IND.PRES.1SG in-order-to *PRO*<sub>1</sub> help.INF you-CL  
 ‘I come to help you’.

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<sup>45</sup> If the most embedded clause were the object of the attitude on the part of the matrix subject, some morpho-syntactic implication would be expected. If the matrix verb selected for a subjunctive clause, the most embedded clause would be in the subjunctive as well, whatever mood the intermediate predicate selected for. Hence, if the matrix predicate selected for a subjunctive clause, and the intermediate predicate selected for an indicative clause (when non-embedded), the verb of the most embedded clause should be in the subjunctive, too. Vice versa, if the matrix predicate selected for an indicative clause, and the intermediate predicate selected for a subjunctive clause, the verb of the most embedded clause should be able to be in the indicative. But this does not seem to be the case:

- (i) a. Gianni sperava che Maria dicesse che *pro* era/\*fosse partito.  
 Gianni hoped that Maria told.SUBJ that *pro* was.IND/\*SUBJ left  
 ‘Gianni hoped that Maria told that he/she had left’.
- b. Gianni ha detto che Maria voleva che *pro* \*partiva/partisse presto.  
 Gianni has said that Maria wanted.IND that *pro* left.\*IND/SUBJ soon  
 ‘Gianni said that Maria wanted him/her to left soon’.

I assume that an implicit attitude occurs in relative clauses as well. Under this assumption, the hypothesis here proposed appears to be adequate, since it correctly predicts the status of clauses in which the full verb bears the morphology of the subjunctive vis-à-vis the status of clauses in which the full verb is non-finite:

- (13) a. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> sta cercando un esperto con cui *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> parli del problema. (= 3.5, (47))  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert with whom *pro*<sub>1</sub> talk.SUBJ.PRES.3SG about the problem
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sta cercando un esperto con cui *PRO*<sub>1</sub> parlare del problema.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert with whom *PRO*<sub>1</sub> talk.INF about the problem  
 ‘Gianni is looking for an expert to talk about the problem with’.
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sta cercando un esperto con cui *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> possa parlare del problema. (= 3.5, (48))  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for a n expert with whom *pro*\*<sub>1/2</sub> can.SUBJ.PRES.1SG talk about the problem  
 ‘Gianni<sub>1</sub> is looking for an expert he<sub>1/2</sub> can talk about the problem with’.

As for the *before*-clauses, the assumption that an implicit attitude occurs does not appear to be feasible, since the relation the embedded eventuality has with respect to the matrix eventuality is purely temporal. Whereas rationale and relative clauses may be *de se*, *before*-clauses cannot be considered *de se*, since no attitude is reported. Thus, the hypothesis in (3) is not concerned in *before*-clauses.

However, since the modal ‘competition’ between subjunctive and infinitive holds, a mechanism like Bouchard’s (1984) Elsewhere Principle would be adequate:

- (14) a. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> legge il giornale prima che *pro*<sub>1</sub> faccia colazione. (= 3.5, (46)a)  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> reads the newspaper before that *pro*\*<sub>1</sub> make.SUBJ.PRES.1SG breakfast
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> legge il giornale prima di *PRO*<sub>1</sub> fare colazione.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> reads the newspaper before *PRO*<sub>1</sub> make.INF breakfast  
 ‘Gianni reads the newspaper before having breakfast’.

Since an anaphoric relation cannot be expressed through a pronoun if in the same environment an anaphor is available, sentence (14)a is predicted to be ungrammatical, since sentence (14)b expresses an anaphoric relation employing an anaphor (PRO).

Note that this mechanism would be able to generate the subjunctive adverbial clauses in which obviation does not occur. As we have seen in section 3.5, in comparison, conditional, and concessive clauses obviation is not triggered. The Elsewhere Principle predicts that PRO is not available. This appears to be correct:

- (15) a. Gianni<sub>1</sub> è più intelligente di quanto *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> non pensi.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> is more smart than *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> not think.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> is smarter than he<sub>1/2</sub>/she thinks'.
- a'. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> è più intelligente di quanto *PRO*<sub>1</sub> pensare.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> is more smart than *PRO*<sub>1</sub> not think.INF
- b. Gianni<sub>1</sub> si divertirebbe, se *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> venisse.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> would-amuse, if *pro*<sub>1/2</sub> go.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
'Gianni<sub>1</sub> would amuse himself, if he<sub>1/2</sub>/she went'.
- b'. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> si divertirebbe, se *PRO*<sub>1</sub> venire.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> would-amuse, if *PRO*<sub>1</sub> go.INF
- c. Gianni<sub>1</sub> sa guidare nonostante *pro*<sub>1</sub> non abbia ancora la patente.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> can drive despite *pro*<sub>1</sub> not AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3SG yet the driving license  
'Gianni can drive the car despite he has not had the driving license'.
- c'. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> sa guidare nonostante *PRO*<sub>1</sub> non avere ancora la patente.  
Gianni<sub>1</sub> can drive despite *PRO*<sub>1</sub> not have.INF yet the driving license
- d. Gianni<sub>1</sub> mi potrà parlare purchè prima *pro*<sub>1</sub> mi chiedo scusa.  
Gianni to-me will be able to talk only if before *pro*<sub>1</sub> to-me apologize.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
'Gianni will be able to talk to me only if he apologizes to me before'.
- d'. \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> mi potrà parlare purchè *PRO*<sub>1</sub> chiedermi scusa.  
Gianni to-me will be able to talk only if before *PRO*<sub>1</sub> to-me apologize.INF

To conclude, while the hypothesis in (3) appears to be adequate in order to explain obviation in attitudinal environments, an additional rule is needed to account for obviation in non-attitudinal environments, as *before*-clauses. To a first, sketchy, analysis, the Elsewhere Principle appears to be able to undertake this task.

### 6.2.2.7 Coordination and overlapping reference

The proposal here investigated is able to make correct predictions even with respect to the data concerning coordination (illustrated in 3.7). Due to the syntactic properties of coordination, an infinitival clause cannot be coordinated with a preceding subjunctive clause (while a subjunctive clause can be coordinated with a preceding infinitival clause):

- (16) a. \*Gianni spera che Maria parta e di venire.  
 Gianni hopes that Maria leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG and to come.INF.
- b. Gianni spera di venire e che Maria parta.  
 Gianni hopes to come.INF and that Maria leave.SUBJ.PRES.3SG  
 ‘Gianni hopes to come and that Maria leaves’.

The hypothesis in (3) and the blocking condition in (33)A state that in an environment devoid of references to the utterance a *de se* reading is achieved via theta-identification of an unsaturated position with the agent of the context. This implies that if a clause containing an unsaturated position and a clause that do not contain are both available, the former, but not the latter, must be used to express a *de se* attitude.

Let us suppose, however, that the clause containing the unsaturated position is unavailable due to independent reasons. In this case, the clause that does contain the unsatisfied position can be interpreted *de se* as well. Indicative clauses are such a case, to the extent to which I have characterized them, since due to their interface properties, an unsatisfied position is unavailable and the *de se* reading must be achieved in a different way than via theta-identification of an unsatisfied position with the bearer of the attitude.

As for the examples involving coordinated subjunctive clauses, an account may proceed as follows. Due to the syntax of coordination, an infinitival clause cannot be coordinated with a subjunctive clause preceding it, as example (16)a shows. Thus, since an infinitival clause, which contain an unsaturated position, is unavailable, the *de se* reading may be conveyed even by an explicit formative. This appears to be correct<sup>46</sup>:

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<sup>46</sup> I take that the strong pronoun is responsible for the strong marginality, though not complete ungrammaticality, of a *de se* reading. The null pronoun is not available in construals like (17) (see section 3.7).



- (17) Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che Maria parta e che lui<sub>1</sub> venga.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that Maria leaves and that he<sub>1</sub> comes  
 ‘Gianni hopes that Maria will leave and he will come’.

Vice versa, since an infinitival clause can be coordinated with a subjunctive clause following it (as in (16)b), the *de se* reading can be conveyed by the infinitive. A *de se* subjunctive clause should then be ruled out. This appears to be correct:

- (18) \*Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che *pro*<sub>1</sub> venga e che Maria parta.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that *pro*<sub>1</sub> comes and that Maria leaves.

If the unavailability of a *de se* competitor makes it possible a *de se* reading for a subjunctive clause, the fact that a *de se* reading of an embedded pronoun can be achieved when such a pronoun is coordinated, is expected. Coordination concerns indeed syntactic formatives. Thus, the *de se* interpretation cannot be achieved by an unsatisfied position, which is not a formative. This prediction appears to be correct:

- (19) Gianni<sub>1</sub> spera che lui<sub>1</sub> e Maria escano insieme.  
 Gianni<sub>1</sub> hopes that he<sub>1</sub> and Maria go outside together.  
 ‘Gianni hopes that he and Maria go outside together’.

These facts shed light on the data concerning overlapping reference (see section 3.3.1.4). If the subject of the subjunctive clause is intended to referentially include, though not to exhaust, the author of the context, an unsatisfied position is not available, since it would convey a strictly *de se* reading. Thus, again, a formative can convey this reading. For a more in depth analysis of overlapping reference data, see section 6.3.3.2 below.

## 6.3 Problems and tentative solutions

### 6.3.1 Theta-role sensitivity

I have shown that the hypothesis in (3) is able to account for most of the facts concerning obviation that I have discussed in chapters 2 and 3. However, a principled account appears to be missing on some data and on some implication of the proposal here investigated. I will briefly discuss these issues, proposing some tentative solution.

Let us consider first the empirical issues concerning the hypothesis proposed. Descriptively, we have seen (section 3.3.1.1) that obviation is sensitive to the theta-roles of the embedded clause, in that the *de se* reading is

harder to get if the embedded subject discharges the agent theta-role. To illustrate, consider the examples in (22), section 3.3.1.1, repeated here:

- (20) a. *Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> Spero (proprio) che io guarisca presto.  
*Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> hope (really) that I recover.SUBJ.PRES.1SG soon  
 ‘I hope I will soon get better’.
- b. \**Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> Spero (proprio) che io diverta quei bambini.  
*Pro*<sub>1ps</sub> hope (really) that I amuse.SUBJ.PRES.1SG those children

The former sentence is intuitively less degraded (and in fact it is almost fully acceptable) than the latter. The hypothesis in (3) does not discern this difference.

As a preliminary remark, it must also be observed that the first-person pronoun vis-à-vis the third person pronoun improves the acceptability of the former sentence, though not of the latter:

- (21) \*Pietro<sub>1</sub> spera (proprio) che *pro*<sub>1</sub> guarisca presto.  
 Pietro<sub>1</sub> hopes (really) that *pro*<sub>1</sub> recover.SUBJ.PRES.3SG soon

The contrast between (20)a and (21) can be accounted along the lines traced in section 6.2.2.3. What is interesting, however, is that the first-person pronouns improves sentence (20)b much less than sentence (20)a.

A possible solution to the question raised by the sentences in (20) may be to claim, in the spirit of Schlenker’s (2005), that the notion of *de se* in the hypothesis in (3) is to be defined as individual and event *de se*. By event *de se* attitude I mean here an attitude towards an eventuality that assumingly is consciously brought about by the very same individual to which an attitude towards a proposition is attributed. Thus, in an individual *de se* eventuality, the agent of the context takes a role in that eventuality; in an event *de se* eventuality, the agent of the context is the ‘initiator’ (in the sense of Farkas 1988) of the eventuality.

To illustrate, in uttering the sentence *I want to leave*, I am reporting an attitude toward a leaving eventuality that involves myself. Intuitively, in uttering this sentence, I presuppose that I can bring about the eventuality of leaving. We then may define this attitude report as event *de se*, since the initiator is the first person, and individual *de se*, since the argument of *leave* is the first person.

If the presupposition that I have the opportunity to bring about the event of leaving cannot be considered true, the sentence *I want to leave* determines a semantic failure (alternatively, the sentence can be accommodated within the context set as an emphatic expression of the wish to leave). This is what would happen in a scenario in which I am not allowed or I am not physically

able to leave: I might not properly *want* to leave, though I might *wish* to leave. For instance, if I got stuck in a traffic jam, to mention a scenario already discussed (in section 4.4.2), I may say *I wish to leave*, but I may not say *I want to leave*, since the latter sentence presupposes that I can bring about the conditions to leave by a personal resolution, which is not felicitous in such a scenario. In other words, an event *de se* attitude report is inappropriate in such a scenario, since I cannot be the initiator of the event of leaving.

As Farkas (1988) claims (and as the above example shows), the agent and the initiator need not coincide. If they do, an attitude report is individual and event *de se*. If they do not, the attitude report can be individual *de se*, though not event *de se*, or the other way around – individual non-*de se* and event *de se*. When the agent and the initiator do not coincide, the attitude report may be individual *de se*, but if so, the initiator cannot be *de se* as well. Vice versa, if the *initiator* is *de se*, the argument of the embedded predicate cannot be *de se* as well. Moreover, if an eventuality is agentless, the initiator does not coincide with the subject argument (it may be taken to be as a quasi-argument, as the subject of weather predicates).

If the hypothesis in (3) refer to both the individual and event *de se* reading, it may be paraphrased as stating that both the initiator and the agent-role must be unsatisfied in order to achieve the *de se* reading (the blocking condition remains unaltered). This predicts that if the agent and the initiator are both formatives (*pro*), the attitude is event and individual non-*de se*. If the agent and the initiator do not coincide, there are two options: If the agent is not assigned via theta-marking while the initiator is, the attitude is individual *de se* and event non-*de se*. I assume that if agentless predicates (like *recover*) are a subcase of this option. Vice versa, if the agent is assigned and the initiator is not, the attitude will be individual non-*de se* and event *de se*.

Given these assumptions, let us consider the contrast in (20). In sentence (20)a the embedded predicate is agentless. Thus, the initiator does not coincide with the subject argument, is satisfied by a *pro* argument, thus conveying the non-*de se* event reading. Moreover, if the embedded subject is assigned a theta-role, the attitude is individual non-*de se* (unless additional factors intervenes); if this theta-role remains unassigned, the attitude is individual *de se*. This may be achieved through an infinitival clause:

- (22) Gianni spera di guarire presto.  
 Gianni hopes to recover soon.  
 ‘Gianni hopes to recover soon’.

In sentence (20)b the embedded predicate assigns the agent (or rather, the causer) theta-role to the subject. Since in this case the initiator and the agent generally coincide, either they are both unsatisfied through theta-marking,

conveying the individual and event *de se* reading, or they are assigned to a formative, conveying the individual and event non-*de se* reading. This appears to be correct, since as far as interpretation goes, sentence (20)b reports the speaker's hope that he complies with a request to amuse the children.

Thus, while in sentence (20)a the only violation of the hypothesis proposed concerns the individual *de se* reading – the matrix subject is a formative, a violation that is remedied by the first-person pronoun, in sentence (20)b there is a double violation – with respect to the individual *de se* reading and with the event *de se* reading.

The idea here pursued also allows us to predict that subjunctive clauses containing a stative predicate are more easily *de se* than subjunctive clauses containing an eventive predicate that assigns the agent role:

- (23) Maria<sub>1</sub> supponeva *pro*<sub>71</sub> fosse incinta.  
 Maria<sub>1</sub> supposed *pro*<sub>71</sub> was pregnant.  
 'Maria<sub>1</sub> supposed she<sub>71</sub> was pregnant'.

Stative predicates are indeed agentless. The subject argument and the 'initiator' do not coincide. Thus, the *de se* reading may be marginally achieved even by *pro*, because the violation to the hypothesis in (3) concerns only the requirements concerning the individual *de se* reading.

### 6.3.2 Implications concerning Control

#### 6.3.2.1 Unsatisfied positions

The hypothesis proposed above assumes Higginbotham's (1997) claim that Obligatory Control can be restated in terms of theta-identification between two theta-roles, one of which, the theta-role assigned to the subject argument of an infinitive verb, cannot be satisfied through obvious theta-marking (section 5.3.3). In Higginbotham's view, PRO might be merged only if the theta-role it discharges has already been theta-identified with a matrix argument – the controller.

This idea raises questions concerning a syntactic implementation of Obligatory Control. Recent theories on Obligatory Control have tried to get rid of an autonomous module of Control resorting general principles. Hornstein (1999), Manzini and Roussou (2000) have proposed that Obligatory Control can be restated in terms of raising. Landau (2000) has claimed that Obligatory Control can be explained in terms of abstract Agree (Chomsky 1998). Wurmbrand (2000) and Cinque (2004, 2006), treating restructuring predicates as raising predicates, claim that some structures traditionally con-

sidered as Control structures can be considered as restructuring structures – thus involving raising.

The raising analysis of some Control predicates, which appears to be valid (as also the data discussed in Costantini 2008 and to appear show), contrasts with the idea that Obligatory Control involves an unsatisfied position. The latter idea states that this position is discharged via theta-identification with another theta-position. This view is in itself incompatible with the raising analysis of Control. If Obligatory Control is raising, the higher position is not assigned a theta-role, because a movement chain can contain only one theta-position<sup>47</sup>. Since movement cannot target a position in which a theta-role is discharged, the locus of theta-assignment in infinitival clauses involving Obligatory Control must be within the embedded VP. This implies that the embedded subject is assigned a theta-role through theta-marking.

This observation may be even addressed to the idea, developed in 6.3.2.1, that in modal constructions and in periphrastic tenses the theta-role that is generally assigned to the subject argument is satisfied through theta-identification rather than through theta-marking. As for modal constructions, movement appears to be involved. As for periphrastic tenses, movement is standardly taken to occur.

At present, the hypothesis that Obligatory Control involves theta-identification is not able to cope with these theoretical shortcomings. This also weakens the hypothesis here proposed.

Moreover, assuming a mechanism of theta-identification for the cases of obviation weakening concerning embedded clauses having a non-finite full verb leaves in the obscurity the status of the subject of the embedded clauses, *pro*. Under the hypothesis proposed, it is not merged within the VP and it is not assigned a theta-role by the functional verb, because functional verbs presumably do not assign theta-roles (see Cinque 2004). Thus, it must be analyzed as an expletive. However, differently from expletives, we have assumed that it has an autonomous reference, since *de se* subjunctive clauses are ambiguous between the *de se* and the non-*de se* reading. Moreover, if it has an autonomous reference, it cannot be *de se* by hypothesis. As a tentative, though not quite satisfactory, answer, we may take subjunctive clauses having a non-finite full verb to be the spell-out of two different structures, one having a position that is theta-identified with the bearer of the attitude and having *pro* as a (non-referential) expletive (or having no *pro* at all<sup>48</sup>), and the other having a referential *pro*, generated within the VP:

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<sup>47</sup> Hornstein (1999) claims that A-chains can contain more than one theta-position. Such a claim is however controversial.

<sup>48</sup> For recent discussions on *pro* see Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998), Uriagereka (1999), Cardinaletti (2002), Holmberg (2005). Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (1998) and Uriagereka (1999) claim that *pro* can be dispensed with in a minimalist framework.

- (24) a. DP<sub>1</sub> ... [*pro*\*<sub>1</sub> F.SUBJ [~~*pro*~~\*<sub>1</sub> V.INF/PART/GER (non-*de se*)  
 b. DP<sub>1</sub> ... [*pro*<sub>expl</sub> F.SUBJ [*x* V.INF/PART/GER (*de se*)

This solution does not appear to be satisfactory, however, since expletives pronouns are standardly taken not to occur in environments as the ones at issue.

A final question is raised by Giorgi (2007). As we have seen in 5.3.3, Giorgi (2007) proposes that the mechanism of theta-identification is responsible for the *de se* reading of both PRO (in Obligatory Control) and LDAs.

Giorgi (2007) argues that some control facts may be accounted for under this analysis, but others cannot. In particular, she observes that while Exhaustive Control (Landau 2000, EC for short) can be treated as involving that-identification (PRO is indeed referentially identical to the controller), the phenomenon of Partial Control (Landau 2000, henceforth, PC) does not seem to be compatible with the hypothesis that PRO is the spell-out of an unsatisfied position, since its reference includes the author of the context, but can include some other referentially salient individual. Thus, PC PRO is not strictly *de se*.

To illustrate, consider the following examples:

- (25) a. \*Mary thought that John managed to [PRO meet at 6].  
 b. Mary thought that John wanted [PRO to meet at 6].

The embedded predicate in the examples above is a *collective* verb. Its subject cannot be singular:

- (26) \*John met at 6.

In both the examples in (25) the controller is singular. This notwithstanding, sentence (25)a is ungrammatical, whereas sentence (25)b is acceptable

Landau takes collective predicates (*gather*, *meet*, etc.) as a diagnostics to divide all instances of Obligatory Control into the classes of EC and PC. The former class of predicates requires that the reference of the controller and of PRO should be strictly identical, whereas the latter class does not require strict coreference between the controller and the controllee. Though, the reference of the controller must be included within the reference of PRO.

EC involves the predicates belonging classes of the implicative, aspectual, and modal predicates. Since these predicates are not attitude report predicates – PRO is not *de se*, strictly speaking, one may claim that they do not raise substantial questions to the hypothesis in (3), because it states a principle concerning attitude predicates (which EC predicates are not) and attitudes *de se*.

PC involves desiderative, epistemic, factive predicates – they are attitude predicates. The question then arises, how the non-exhaustiveness reading is achieved, assuming that theta-identification (which implies strict identity between two theta-roles) is concerned.

A possible solution may resort Landau’s (2000, 2004) theory of PC, according to which PC PRO carries semantically plural features (or the feature [+mereological], see Landau 2004). He claims that semantic plurality is lexically encoded in PRO. Since PRO can be understood as a consequence, rather than the causer of control – that is, PRO is supposed to be «selected to occur in certain configurations where control [i.e., theta-identification] has already been established» (Higginbotham 1997: 192), the fact that the PC reading holds does not challenge the view on Obligatory Control here pursued.

### 6.3.2.2 Overlapping reference and Partial Control

Given the above view on PC and theta-identification, a problem arises, however, for the hypothesis here proposed. Since PC is *de se* (see Landau 2000), the hypothesis predicts that the overlapping reference relative to the subject of a subjunctive clause should be ruled out.

As has been shown in section 3.3.1.4, this is contrary to the expectation. In section 6.2.2.7, I have proposed a solution based on the argument that syntax excludes that an unsatisfied position can refer to a set of individuals that includes the author of the context. Implicit in this argument is the idea that theta-identification instantiates strict coreference.

However, the facts concerning PC appear to challenge this view. Consider the following examples:

- (27) a. Il presidente<sub>1</sub> crede che *pro*<sub>1+</sub> si siano riuniti inutilmente la notte scorsa.  
The chair<sub>1</sub> believes that *pro*<sub>1+</sub> AUX.SUBJ.PRES.3PL gathered in vain the night passed  
‘The chair<sub>1</sub> believes that they<sub>1+</sub> gathered in vain last night’.
- b. Il presidente<sub>1</sub> crede di *PRO*<sub>1+</sub> essersi riuniti inutilmente la notte scorsa.  
The chair<sub>1</sub> believes P/C *PRO*<sub>1+</sub> AUX.INF gathered in vain the night passed  
‘The chair believes to have gathered in vain last night’.

Sentence (27)a is ambiguous between the *de se* and non-*de se* reading, whereas sentence (27)b can only be *de se*. Thus, in a scenario in which the

chair is amnesiac and does not remember that, for instance, the company council of directors of which he is the chair gathered the preceding night without reaching an agreement, sentence (27)a may be considered true, whereas sentence (27)b may not.

The point is that the former sentence may be considered true even in a scenario in which the chair is completely aware of whom she is – it can be *de se*. Under the hypothesis in (3), this is unexpected, since the *de se* reading may only be conveyed by theta-identification of an unsatisfied position, which cannot be generally spelled out by *pro* (reformulating what has been claimed in section 6.3.2), though it can be by PRO.

We observe however, that sentence in (27)a involve an environment in which obviation is weakened, which may be treated along the lines drawn in section 6.3.2.1. Once we consider a sentence having no non-finite null verb, the *de se* reading appears to be very degraded as example (29), section 3.3.1.4, shows:

- (28) Il presidente<sub>1</sub> si chiede dove *pro*<sub>??1+</sub> si riuniscano.  
 The chair<sub>1</sub> wonders where *pro*<sub>??1+</sub> gather.SUBJ.PRES.3PL gathered  
 ‘The chair<sub>1</sub> believes that they<sub>??1+</sub> gathered’.

Thus, although some examples appear to show that overlapping reference is possible, some others makes the claim questionable whether this reading is possible. Further analysis appears to be needed in order to reach an adequate descriptive generalization.

## 6.4 Conclusions

In the present chapter I have presented the hypothesis that an attitude is *de se* if the content of the attitude is unsaturated. The theta-role that remains unassigned via obvious theta-marking is theta-identified with the bearer of the attitude, giving rise to the *de se* interpretation. This principle is sensitive to Giorgi’s (2006) Blocking Condition, which restricts the distribution of unsatisfied positions to the environments devoid of a reference to the utterance situation.

I have shown that the hypothesis proposed is able to account for most of the data concerning obviation and obviation weakening. Some problematic issues have been accommodated within the theory. The only real limitation of the theory concerns the theoretical status of unsatisfied positions, which at present appears to be problematic. The wide range of phenomena accounted for by the hypothesis proposed suggests however to provisionally keep this theoretical notion, relying on future research to shed more light on the non-trivial relations existing between theta-roles, pragmatic roles, and arguments.



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