1. Introduction

Principle B of Binding Theory rules the syntactic and semantic distribution of pronominals:

(1) Principle B (Chomsky 1980)
A pronominal is free in its governing category (GC).

The terms “free” and “governing category” are to be intended as in (2) and (3):

(2) $\alpha$ is free if and only if it is not bound; $\alpha$ is bound by $\beta$ if and only if $\alpha$ and $\beta$ are coindexed and $\beta$ c-commands $\alpha$.

(3) $\alpha$ is the governing category (GC) for $\beta$ if and only if $\alpha$ is the minimal category containing $\beta$ and a governor of $\beta$, where $\alpha = \text{NP or S}$.

It follows from Principle B and from the related definitions that every syntactic position in a complement clause is an available position for a pronominal, given that complement clauses are Governing Categories (for definition (3)). This claim correctly predicts the following English example:

(4) John, said he, likes Mary.

In sentence (4) the pronoun he may corefer with the subject of the matrix clause.

Some Romance sentences give unexpected results. Consider, for instance, the following example in Italian:\footnote{We will assume the existence of the empty pronominal pro, although the question whether there is such a constituent is not trivial.}:

\footnote{We will assume the existence of the empty pronominal pro, although the question whether there is such a constituent is not trivial.}
(5) Gianni pensa che *pro_{ij} parta domani.
Gianni thinks that leaves(subj) tomorrow.
'Gianni thinks he will leave tomorrow'.

In example (5) the intended subject of the subjunctive complement clause cannot be coreferent with Gianni. This interpretation may be gained only by means of an infinitive:

(6) Gianni pensa di partire domani.
Gianni thinks DI leave(inf) tomorrow.
'Gianni plans to leave tomorrow'.

Sentence (5) is a prototypical example of ‘obviation’ or ‘subjunctive disjoint reference effect’ (we will take these two terms as synonyms for what we are concerned with, as well as ‘obviative’ and ‘referentially disjoint’).

The puzzle of obviation in subjunctive clauses has engaged the attention of Romance linguists since the early 1980s. Two approaches have been generally followed: according to some linguists the Governing Category of a pronominal in the subject position in a subjunctive complement clause is not the embedded clause itself, but rather the matrix clause. According to others a pronominal subject cannot be coreferent with the matrix subject because it is in competition with an anaphoric element, PRO, which has to be preferred over pronominal elements if coreference has to be expressed, due to grammatical principles like Avoid Pronoun or Elsewhere (Chomsky 1981, Bouchard 1982, 1983; see section 2.1.).

Unfortunately, although some theories are able to account for a wide set of data in many languages, in general both approaches seem to lack sufficient insight to account for all the data the phenomenon of obviation involves in Italian and in other Romance languages as well. The task of this article is to show that in Italian there are examples of subjunctive disjoint reference which are unpredicted by any of the existing theories.

In section 2 the main existing theories on obviation in subjunctive clauses will be illustrated. In section 3 we will exam-

---

2 Actually, this possibility may be made available if one thinks to accidental coreference, but in what follows contexts of accidental coreference will *not* be considered. Cases of accidental coreference are generally analyzed as if two nominal elements are assigned two different indexes, and these indexes denote the same individual.
ine the data in Italian. In section 4, finally, we will show that existing theories are not able to account for the whole set of data in Italian. These data seem to involve factors which have been ignored so far.

2. Existing theories

In this section we will illustrate some theories on obviation. In general, two kinds of approaches can be singled out among these theories.

The first kind stems from the tenet that obviation is the consequence of the “competition” between subjunctive and infinitive moods in the relevant contexts (Bouchard 1982, 1983, Farkas 1992, and Schlenker 2004).

The second approach is based on the idea that the binding domain of the null subject in subjunctive complement clauses is the whole sentence. Thus pro cannot be bound by the subject of the main clause, because the latter is included within the binding domain of pro. The causes for the binding domain extension are generally attributed to the properties of the subjunctive. In particular, some linguists (Picallo 1985, Rizzi 1991, Progovac 1993, Manzini 2000) argue that the binding domain extension is due directly to the subjunctive inflection. Some others (Kempchinsky 1984, Raposo 1985, Suñer 1986) claim that the properties of the complementizer (C) of embedded subjunctive clauses are responsible for the extension of the binding domain. Some supporters of the latter approach, Avrutin (1994) and Avrutin - Babyonyshhev (1997), argue that a violation of Condition B arises in obviative examples, but this violation is not supposed to be due to an extension of the binding domain of the subjunctive clause subject, but rather to some Logical Form requirements.

2.1. “Competition” theories


In his discussion on the Elsewhere Principle, Bouchard argues that this principle can be applied to the following examples, the first of which is obviative:
(7)  

a. *Je veux que j’aille voir ce film.
   I want that I go(subj) see(inf) this movie.

b. Je veux PRO aller voir ce film.
   I want go(inf) see(inf) this movie.
   ‘I want to go and see this movie’.

The Elsewhere Principle can be formulated in these terms:

(8) *Elsewhere Principle*
   Do not 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 PRO can be either pronominal or anaphoric, depending on whether the position it occupies can be bound or not. In cases of local control constructions, Bouchard claims that PRO is an anaphor, since it can be bound by an antecedent. It follows that in (7)b it is an anaphor bound by its antecedent je. So, a contrast arises between (7)a and (7)b, given that there is a pronoun in the former sentence and an anaphor in the latter. Then, if one assumes that there is no difference between subjunctive and infinitive, as for their temporal interpretation (they are both “unrealized” tenses in the sense of Bresnan 1972), then this interpretation can be maintained in (7) both by having a pronoun or an anaphor. Finally, the Elsewhere Principle requires that the anaphor has to be used to express coreference. Consequently, the pronoun will express here referential disjunction.

This theory predicts that when PRO is pronominal, then the Elsewhere Principle does not determine any contrast between subjunctive and infinitive clauses. According to Bouchard, this prediction is borne out. Take, for instance the following sentences:

(9)  

a. PRO d’être menacé de mort ne me fera pas changer d’idée.
   PRO be(inf) menaced with death NE me(cl) makes(fut) neg change(inf) 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) menaced with death NE me(cl) makes(fut) neg change(inf) of idea.
   ‘Being menaced with death will not make me change my mind’.

Bouchard claims that in (7)a PRO is pronominal, since it is not bound by an NP which c-commands it. Then, the subject
of the embedded clause is pronominal both in (9)a and (9)b, and there is no contrast between the two sentences as far as the Elsewhere Principle is concerned. In fact, it predicts a difference between the two sentences only when a pronominal and an anaphor compete for the same position, which is not the case in (9).


Farkas and Schlenker propose a similar approach to the phenomenon of obviation, in that they argue that obviation follows from the competition between subjunctive and infinitive. Farkas observes that obviation occurs only in those languages in which infinitive competes with subjunctive. Romance languages, for instance, contrast with some Balkan languages in that in the former infinitive and subjunctive are complementary, at least in some contexts, while in the latter there is no such a competition.

The relevant generalization arising from the data she analyses is that obviation occurs in contexts that present the following requirements: (a) clausal complements whose subjects cannot be interpreted as coreferent with the matrix subject must be arguments of a desiderative verb, like want, wish, desire; these complements are called “world-dependent complements”, following the terminology Farkas adopts in her article; (b) the subject of both the main and the complement clause must be in a relation she calls “relation of responsibility” (RESP) with the predicate (Farkas 1988) – in the limits of the present discussion, this notion may be considered analogous to that of agentivity, even if the two concepts are not identical, though overlapping.

If in these contexts both an infinitive clause and a subjunctive clause are available, the infinitive expresses the coreferential interpretation, whereas the subjunctive expresses the obviative interpretation. This generalization includes the examples observed by Bouchard and two of the examples considered by Ruwet (1984, 1991). Ruwet observes that there is a series of contexts in French (as well as in other Romance languages) 3

3 Analogous examples to those found by Ruwet in French can be singled out in Spanish with respect to passive and modal contexts, in Portuguese and Italian with respect to passive, modal, and perfective contexts. Examples (i) involve passive subjunctive; examples (ii) modal subjunctive; examples (iii) perfective subjunctive.
which are "weakly" obviative in spite of the fact that they involve subjunctive complement clauses – i.e. in these contexts the coreferential interpretation is available, although it is not the preferred one. These are contexts involving a passive subjunctive, a modal subjunctive and a perfective subjunctive:

(10) a. *Je veux que je sois autorisé à partir demain.*
   *I want that I am(subj) authorized À leave(inf) tomorrow.*
   ‘I want to be allowed to leave tomorrow’.

   b. *Je veux que je puisse partir dès demain.*
   *I want that I can(subj) leave(inf) by tomorrow.*
   ‘I want to be able to leave by tomorrow’.

   c. *Je veux (absolument) que je sois parti dans dix minutes.*
   *I want (absolutely) that I am(subj) left in ten minutes.*
   ‘I want to leave in ten minutes’.

According to Farkas examples (10)a and b are included in the generalization, because the subject in the embedded clause

(i) a. *Spanish (Quer 2004)*
   Espérito que sea autorizado a ir.
   ‘Hope(1sg) that am(subj) authorized A go(inf).’
   ‘I hope to be allowed to leave tomorrow’.

   b. *Portuguese (Rapo 1985)*
   O Manel deseja que seja admitido no concurso.
   ‘The Manel wishes that is(subj) admitted in-the contest.’
   ‘Manel wishes to be admitted in the contest’.

(ii) a. *Spanish (Quer 2004)*
   Espérito que pueda ir.
   ‘Hope(1sg) that can(subj) go.
   ‘I hope to be able to go’.

   b. *Portuguese (Rapo 1985)*
   O Manel exige que possa ver o seu advogado.
   ‘The Manel requires that can(subj) see(inf) the his lawyer.
   ‘Manel wants to be able to see his lawyer’.

(iii) a. *Portuguese (Rapo 1985)*
   A Maria preferia que não tivesse encontrado o Manel.
   ‘The Maria preferred that NEG had(subj) met the Manel.
   ‘Maria preferred she had not met Manel’.

As for data from Italian, see section 3.

4 We will limit the present analysis to cases in which a null pronoun (or a clitic pronoun in French) occurs in the subject position of subjunctive complement clauses. Other examples mentioned by Ruwet show a reduced degree of disjoint reference effect, even cross-linguistically; crucially, though, the corresponding examples in Italian involve overt pronouns. For these examples we refer to Ruwet’s article.
do not have a RESP-relation with the embedded predicate. Thus, coreference between the two subjects is available.

Schlenker (2004) also develops the intuition that obviation may be due to the competition between subjunctive and infinitive. The set of data which Schlenker’s theory is able to account for is basically the same as the set of data Bouchard’s theory explains; Still, the fact that the subject of a subjunctive clause selected by epistemic and factive verbs can corefer with the matrix subject is unpredicted, because PRO is available as well:

(11) a. Jean-Paul craint de PRO ne pas être/qu’il, ne soit pas reçu au bac.
    Jean-Paul fears DE NE neg be(inf)/that he NE be(subj) neg received at-the bac.
    ’Jean-Paul fears not to be/that he will not be received at the bac.

b. Jean-Paul regrette de PRO ne pas être/qu’il, ne soit pas reçu au bac.
    Jean-Paul regrets DE NE neg be(inf)/that he NE be(subj) neg received at-the bac.
    ’Jean-Paul regrets not being received at the bac’.

2.2. Binding-theoretical approaches

2.2.1. Picallo (1985)

As for Bouchard’s theory, Picallo observes that contrasts like the one in (7), which are identical in Catalan, should obtain in every case in which both subjunctive and infinitive clausal complements are available, and PRO is anaphoric. But the following examples contradict this prediction (Picallo 1985: 35, examples (19) and (20)):

(12) a. En Pere va convèncer en Jordi que pro anés a Nova York.
    The Pere persuaded the Jordi that went(subj) to New York.
    ’Pere persuaded Jordi to go to New York’.

b. En Pere va convèncer en Jordi de PRO anar a Nova York.
    The Pere persuaded the Jordi DE go(inf) to New York.
    ’Pere persuaded Jordi to go to New York’.

We will not explain this theory here and refer to Schlenker’s article for details.
The grammaticality of the preceding sentences is unexpected under Bouchard’s theory. Picallo argues that the contrast in (7) must follow from a principle other than the Elsewhere Principle. In particular, she claims that the referential properties of a pronominal subject in a subjunctive clause follow from Binding Theory as proposed in Chomsky (1981, 1982). But, in contrast to what Chomsky says, Picallo claims that it is not the case that S is a governing category or a binding domain. Rather, a revised definition of “governing category” or “binding domain” is needed, which should take into account some properties of subjunctive complement clauses. This follows from the following data (Picallo 1985: 30, examples (4) and (7)a):

(13) a. En Joan, ha decidit que pro, telefonarà al Pere.
   The Joan has decided that call(ind, fut) to-the Pere.
   'Joan has decided that he will call Pere'.

   b. *En Jordi, espera que pro, vingui.
      The Jordi hopes that comes(subj).

While in (13)a pro can be coindexed with the matrix subject, in (13)b it cannot. In (13)a the complement clause is an indicative clause, whereas in (13)b it is a subjunctive clause. According to Picallo, these two properties are linked. In particular, she observes that in (13)a pro is free to corefer with the matrix subject, while in (13)b it is not. This is exactly the contrast one would expect if in (13)a the binding domain of pro were the embedded clause, and if in (13)b it were the whole sentence – in the latter case pro would be bound in its governing category, violating Principle B of Binding Theory. But why should the binding domain of pro be the whole sentence in (13)b?

Picallo claims that subjunctive fails to denote time, rather it is assigned a value with respect to the time frame specification of its superordinate clause (Picallo 1985: 48, examples (39) and (40)):

(14) a. Pro desitja que pro telefon
telefoni hagi telefonat
   *telefonés
   *hagués telefonat
Pro desires that pro call
   has called
   *called
   *had called
ON OBLIVIATION IN SUBJUNCTIVE CLAUSES: THE STATE OF THE ART

b. Que en Joan *arribi tard demostrava que no li functiona el rellotge.
   *hagi arribat arribés hagués arribat

That John *arrives late proved that his watch doesn’t work.
   *has arrived arrived had arrived

In other words, subjunctive morphology undergoes sequence of tense effects. Thus, Piccallo considers the tense specification of subjunctive forms anaphoric, since their interpretation depends on the tense specification of another form. Indicative, on the other hand, does have an autonomous tense specification.

Because of these properties, Piccallo argues that forms lacking autonomous tense specification, like subjunctive forms, enter in a binding relation with forms having an autonomous tense specification, like indicative. She calls this binding relation “Tense-chain”. Finally, she argues that Binding Theory applies within the domain delimited by a Tense-chain and characterizes a binding domain as follows (Piccallo 1985: 64, (79) and (80)):

(15) A T-governor of \( \alpha \) is the maximal tense chain containing \( \alpha \) and the governor of \( \alpha \).

(16) \( \beta \) is a binding domain for \( \alpha \) if \( \beta \) is the minimal subchain of the T-governor of \( \alpha \) containing a subject accessible to \( \alpha \), if there is one. If there is no accessible subject the T-governor is the binding domain.

Piccallo’s definition of a binding domain makes the same predictions about the distribution of anaphors and pronouns in a local domain as Chomsky’s definition does. It also predicts the examples considered so far. As for (13)a, the matrix and the embedded clauses constitute two separate tense-chains, since both are indicative, and the matrix clause cannot be a binding domain for the embedded subject. This follows from the definition of binding domain in terms of tense chains given in (16).

In (13)b the matrix and the embedded clauses form a unique tense-chain. Then, the binding domain of pro has to be the minimal subchain of the T-governor of pro containing a subject accessible to pro, where the T-governor is the maximal tense chain containing pro and its governor. This maximal tense chain
turns out to include both the matrix and embedded verb. Furthermore, the embedded verb governs pro, and the matrix subject is an accessible subject for pro. Then, the binding domain of pro is the matrix clause, and pro has to be interpreted as obviative with respect to the matrix subject. 

The revised definition of binding domain also predicts the Catalan counterpart of Bouchard’s example (9)b (Picallo 1985: 69, example (67)):

(17) Que pro sigui amenaçat de mort no m’impressiona.
That am(subj) menaced with death NEG me(cl) impress.
‘That I am menaced with death does not impress me’.

In (17) the binding domain of pro is the matrix clause. Though, pro can freely corefer because it does not have an accessible subject within its T-governor – the root sentence.

Picallo’s definition of binding domain also correctly predicts the following data (Picallo 1985: 69, 70, examples (89), (90), (92)):

(18)  
\(a\). En Joan creu que és imprescindible que pro télefoni.
The Joan believes that is(ind) essential that calls(subj).
‘Joan thinks it is essential that he calls’.

\(b\). *Tu desitges que sigui imprescindible que pro télefonis.
You desire that is(subj) essential that call(subj).

\(c\). En Pere esperava que en Jordi volgués que pro \(v_i^j\) hi anés.
The Pere hoped that the Jordi wanted(subj) that there went (subj).
‘Pere hoped that Jordi wanted him to go there’.

In (18) the binding domain of pro is the intermediate embedded clause, since its verb is indicative and heads the tense chain which the subjunctive in the more deeply embedded clause belongs to. Therefore, pro is free to corefer with the object in the embedded clause is free to corefer with the matrix subject (Picallo 1985, example (91)a: 70):

(i) En Joan esperava que en Jordi l’invites a la reunió.
The Joan hoped that the Jordi him invited(subj) to the meeting.
‘Joan hoped that Jordi would invite him to the meeting’.

According to Picallo’s definition, the embedded clause is the binding domain for the clitic object pronoun, because it is the minimal subchain of the T-governor containing an accessible subject, i.e. en Jordi. Thus, the object pronoun is free to corefer with the subject of the matrix clause.

6 Picallo’s theory also correctly predicts that an object in the embedded clause is free to corefer with the matrix subject (Picallo 1985, example (91)a: 70):
matrix subject, which is outside the binding domain of pro.

In (18)b the binding domain of pro is the whole sentence. The two embedded subjunctives are part of the tense chain headed by the matrix subject. Furthermore, there is no accessible subject between pro and the matrix subject. Therefore, the sentence is ungrammatical because pro must be free in its binding domain.

In (18)c, finally, the binding domain of pro is the intermediate embedded clause, because it is the minimal subchain of the T-governor containing a subject accessible to pro. Hence, pro cannot corefer with the intermediate subject, but it is free to corefer with the matrix subject.

Other examples are not straightforwardly accounted for under the definition of binding domain given in (16).

Take for instance the following examples, in which elements which are not syntactic subjects trigger opacity in the domain of tense (Picallo 1985: 72, example (95)b):

(19) *Li i agradava que pro i llegís el diari.
Him/her(cl) was-pleasant that read(subj) the newspaper.

The definition in (16) is sufficient to account for the fact that pro and the matrix object cannot be coreferent. But if this sentence is further embedded, then the following result obtains (Picallo 1985: 72, (96)):

(20) En Joan i esperava que li j agradés que pro i/*j anés a Nova York.
The Joan hoped that him/her(cl) was-pleasant(subj) that went (subj) to New York.
‘Joan hoped that it was pleasant for him/her to go to New York’.

According to the definition in (16), one would expect that pro cannot be coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause, given that there is no accessible subject intervening between pro and en Joan. However, in (20) there is an interpretation where pro and en Joan are coreferent.

Therefore, PICALLO proposes to mend the definition in (16) as follows:

(21) β is a binding domain for α if β is the minimal subchain of the T-governor of α containing an argument accessible to α, if there is one. If there is no accessible argument the T-governor is the binding domain.
It follows that in (20) the binding domain of \textit{pro} is the intermediate clause. In fact, it is the minimal subchain of the T-governor containing an accessible argument for \textit{pro}, i.e., the clitic pronoun.

Another prediction follows from the definition in (21): since the binding domain for a pronominal subject in a subjunctive complement clause is the matrix clause, one might expect that the subject position in a subjunctive clause is an available position for anaphors, which may be bound by the matrix subject. This is an incorrect prediction, however (Picallo 1985: 74, example (100)a):

\begin{quote}
(22) *En Pere espera que si mateix arribi.
The Pere hopes that himself arrives(subj).
\end{quote}

The ungrammaticality of sentence (22) may actually be due to independent reasons related to the licensing of lexical anaphors in the subject position of finite clauses\(^7\).

Another set of data which is unexpected under the definition of binding domain given in (21) is exemplified by sentences like (12)a. In this sentence \textit{pro} corefers with the object of the main clause, which shows that the binding domain of \textit{pro} must be the embedded clause. But even this conclusion does not seem to be trivial. In fact, if the embedded clause is an opaque domain, one should expect that the embedded and the matrix subjects can be coreferent, which does not seem to be the case (Picallo 1985: 84, (112):

\begin{quote}
(23) En Jordi i convencia en Joan que \textit{pro}_{ij} aprengúeu a tocar el piano.
The Jordi persuaded the Joan that learned to play the piano.
‘Jordi persuaded Joan to learn to play the piano’.
\end{quote}

Furthermore, the fact that \textit{pro} is coreferent with the object in the matrix clause in (23) contrasts with the fact that it cannot corefer with the object in the matrix clause in sentence (19).

With respect to this problem, Picallo claims that the latter contrast follows from the structural position that the subordinate clause must occupy at S-structure in sentences like (23) due to conditions on Case assignment to sentential arguments. In particular, following Stowell (1981), she argues that clausal arguments may not be in a position where Case is assigned. This

\(^7\) I refer to Picallo (1985) for the complete discussion on this problem.
generalization is supposed to follow from a core grammar principle called “Case Resistance Principle” (Stowell 1981: 146):

(24) Case cannot be assigned to a category bearing a Case assigning feature.

Due to this principle, according to Stowell, sentential arguments cannot remain in a Case-assignment position, hence they have to adjoin to VP leaving in its base-generate position a trace which will be assigned the Case. It follows that the binding domain of pro will not include the object of the matrix clause, because it is no longer an accessible argument, but it will include the matrix subject 8.

Picallo argues that the Case Resistance Principle applies to internal clausal arguments of transitive predicates, but it does not apply to clauses subcategorized for by ergative-type verbs. This would explain why sentences like (23) are obviative, whereas sentences like (19) are not.


Similar viewpoints on obviation are supported by Rizzi and Manzini. Rizzi claims that obviation is due to Binding-Theoretical reasons. Pronouns are free in their binding domain, which is defined in terms of Governing Category:

(25) Governing Category: 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.

Definition (25) is analogous to Picallo’s definition in (16). Given that a subjunctive has anaphoric tense properties, the Governing Category of a pronominal in the subject position of

8 The following diagram illustrates the procedure required by the Case Resistance Principle with respect to example (12)a:

(i) a. En Pere va convèncer en Jordi que proi anés a Nova York.
   b. [En Perei [vp [vp va convèncer en Jordi j t s] [que proi anés a Nova York]j].

In (i)b the minimal domain as defined in (21) includes en Pere, but it does not include en Jordí, because en Jordí does not c-command pro. Therefore, it is not an accessible argument for pro. It follows that pro can corefer with en Jordí, but not with en Pere.
a subjunctive embedded clause is the minimal category with a subject which contains the pronominal subject, its governor, i.e. the subjunctive I, and positions where the binding requirement of X and G are satisfied; given that G, i.e. the subjunctive I, is anaphoric, the minimal category in which its binding requirements are satisfied is the matrix clause. In fact, an anaphoric I has to be bound by the matrix I, which is not anaphoric – it has an autonomous time reference. Furthermore, the same predictions as Picallo’s theory follow from Rizzi’s.

A quite similar view is supported by Manzini. She argues that subjunctive is licensed within “dependencies” between the matrix and the embedded T, which is assumed to be placed in I. Given that I heads contain Agr, the matrix and the embedded Agr belong to the same dependency. Manzini claims that a dependency can count as a binding domain and Agr is pronominal. Thus, the embedded Agr must be referentially disjoint from the matrix Agr: if it is not, then it is coindexed with a c-commanding pronominal element, which binds it. Then, a violation of Principle B of Binding Theory arises. This theory is not equivalent to Picallo’s, since it predicts that obviation arises only if the matrix and the embedded subject agreement are involved. But sentences as (17) show that obviation can occur even if the grammatical subject of the matrix clause is not at issue.9

2.2.2. Subjunctive C as an operator

2.2.2.1. Kempchinsky (1985)

Kempchinsky argues that in Spanish the subjunctive disjoint reference effect is due to the interaction between LF requirements on subcategorization and the syntax of the subjunctive. She observes that in Spanish predicates selecting subjunctive complements which show disjoint reference effects are volitional in nature. Emotive-factive predicates, negative epistemic predicates, and Polarity subjunctive do not trigger obviation. Take for instance an example with a subjunctive instantiated under a negative polarity item (Kempchinsky 1985: 130, example (13)b):

9 For a different view concerning the nature of the subjunctive morphology, see Giorgi - Pianesi (1997), chapter 5.
KEMPCHINSKY proposes that volitional verbs select for a subjunctive operator in C. In languages in which subjunctive is marked by a set of inflectional endings on the verb, subjunctive morphology serves as an operator and must raise to C at Logical Form in order to satisfy the subcategorization requirements of the matrix predicate.

Furthermore, KEMPCHINSKY assumes CHOMSKY’s (1986) definition of binding domain in terms of “complete functional complex”:

(27) a. The governing category of x is the least complete functional complex containing the governor of x.

b. A least complete functional complex is the smallest category in which all grammatical functions are satisfied.

KEMPCHINSKY argues that the subjunctive inflectional head is the governor of the subject of an embedded subjunctive clause. She claims that, given that the subjunctive verb moves to C at Logical Form, the least complete functional complex containing the subjunctive inflection head is no longer the embedded clause, rather the immediately dominating clause. The pronominal embedded subject must be free in its governing category, provided Condition B of Binding Theory. If the governing category of the embedded subject is the matrix clause, then it must be referentially disjoint from the matrix subject.

As for the possibility for an embedded subject pro to be coreferent with a matrix object, KEMPCHINSKY assumes the theory proposed by PICALLO (1985).

She also claims that her theory predicts that if in a language the subjunctive morphology does not differ from the indicative morphology – which means in her theory that the subjunctive inflection does not serve as a subjunctive operator – the verb in subjunctive does not need to move to C. Then the governing category for the embedded subject does not “extend” to the matrix clause.

This is the case in Romanian. Subjunctive in Romanian is marked by the element sâ before the verb, while there is no difference between subjunctive and indicative inflectional morphology:
(28) Vreau ca Ana să vină cu noi.
   Want(1sg) that Ana SA come with us.
   ‘I want Ana to come with us’.

   If the lexical subject of the embedded clause is an empty pronominal, then the complementizer ca does not appear:

(29) Vreau să merg.
   Want SA leave.
   ‘I want to leave’.

   Accordingly, Kempchinsky proposes that in Romanian the subjunctive operator moving to C is să, not the inflection. Then, the governing category of the embedded subject is its own clause. A pronominal subject is free to corefer with the subject of the matrix clause.

2.2.2.2. Raposo (1985)

Raposo claims that in Romance languages binding domains may be characterized in two ways: the c-commanding domain of a subject and the c-commanding domain of a “verbal operator”. The notion of “verbal operator” includes modals, auxiliaries, and an operator, [+TENSE], which appears in the head C of clauses subordinate to epistemic and declarative verbs.

Raposo observes that from the viewpoint of Chomsky’s (1981) definition of binding domain, the following contrast in Portuguese is unexpected:

(30) a. O Manel pensa que pro, lê bastantes livros.
   The Manel thinks that reads(ind) enough books.
   ‘Manel thinks he reads enough books’.

b. *O Manel, deseja que pro, leia mas livros.
   The Manel wishes that reads(subj) more books.
   ‘Manel wishes that he/she read more books’.

   In fact, if a clause is a binding domain, as Chomsky claims, it is not clear why sentence (30)a is grammatical under a coreferential interpretation, while (30)b is not.

Raposo works out an explicative theory for the facts in (30) which crucially relies on the properties of the subjunctive mood. His intuition is fundamentally the same as Picallo’s: subjunctive mood cannot express a time reference which is autonomous with respect to the time reference in the matrix clause. Furthermore, the subjunctive tense is dependent on the
tense of the matrix verb, due to sequence of tense phenomena. Raposo claims that volitional predicates (which he calls W-predicates) are characterized by a feature which he calls [–TENSE] in their C. He also argues that the operator [+TENSE] closes a binding domain, the operator [–TENSE] leaves it open. It follows that in complement clauses dependent on a W-predicate, like (30)b, the pronominal element in the subject position cannot corefer with the subject of the matrix clause, because they are in the same binding domain. In the case of (30)a, on the other side, the binding domain of the pronominal subject of the embedded clause is the embedded clause itself, due to the presence of the operator [+TENSE] in the embedded C.

The second factor involved in the creation of an opaque domain is the presence of a subject, which accounts for the fact that the object of a subjunctive complement clause corefers freely outside the clause itself (Raposo 1985, example (22)b):

(31) O Manel, deseja que a Maria o insulte.
    The Manel wishes that the Maria him insult.
    ‘Manel wishes that Maria insulted him’.

The availability of a coreferential interpretation between the embedded object and the matrix subject is unexpected if a binding domain was defined only in function of the presence of a [+TENSE] operator in the embedded C: the subject of the matrix clause should be inside the binding domain of the object of the embedded clause. Then, they should be disjoint in reference, due to Principle B of Binding Theory.

Thus, Raposo argues that the presence of the subject in the embedded clause closes the binding domain of the embedded object, which is therefore free to corefer with the matrix subject.

The presence of the subject closes even the binding domain of a subject in a doubly embedded clause: (Raposo 1985, example (24)):

(32) O Eduardo deseja que o Manel queira que ele compre um automóvel novo.
    The Eduardo wishes that the Manel wants( that he bus subj) a car new.
    ‘Eduardo wishes that Manel wanted him to buy a new car’.

The intermediate subject creates an opaque domain for the most embedded subject, which is therefore free to corefer outside its binding domain.
RAPoso also observes that the characterization of a binding domain in terms of the c-commanding domain of a subject and of the operator [+TENSE] in an embedded C is not sufficient to account for the examples discussed by Ruwet (see paragraph 2.1.2). In these examples the subject of an embedded clause whose form bearing the subjunctive morphology is a modal or an auxiliary is free to corefer with the matrix subject. Take for instance the following examples (RAPoso 1985, examples (29)b, (31)a, (32)a):

(33) a. O Manel deseja que pro seja admitido no concurso.
The Manel wishes that is(subj) admitted in-the contest.
‘Manel wishes to be admitted to the contest’.

b. O Manel exige que pro possa ver o seu advogado.
The Manel requires that can(subj) see(inf) the his lawyer.
‘Manel wants to be able to leave’.

c. A Maria preferia que pro não tivesse encontrado o Manel.
The Maria preferred that NEG had(subj) met the Manel.
‘Maria preferred she had not met Manel’.

As for these examples RAPoso claims that auxiliary verbs do not have to be bound to a [+TENSE] operator. In particular, he argues that “tense” auxiliaries (cf. (33)c) are not dependent on the time frame of the matrix predicate. The same holds for modal verbs and passive auxiliaries. RAPoso claims that this may be due to the fact that the operator [+TENSE] in C, “tense” auxiliaries, passive auxiliaries, and modals may be regarded as “verbal” operators that take a proposition as an argument. Then, he generalizes that not only the operator [+TENSE] in C induces domain opacity for pronouns, but all the verbal operators do so.

2.2.2.3. Suñer (1986)

As Kempchinsky’s and RAPoso’s theories, Suñer’s crucially relies on a lexical property of the subjunctive clauses complementizer in order to account for the disjoint reference effect. She claims that both theories which try to explain obviation in terms of a violation of the Principle B, and those exploiting the notion of mood competition cannot be sufficient on an empirical basis. As for the Binding-Theoretical proposals, she argues that the property of being tenseless of the complement clauses with a subjunctive verb is contradicted by many data in
Spanish. For instance the following example (Suñer’s (6)a), with a directive verb:

(34) La(i) invitamos a que pro, defienda su hipótesis.  
    Her(cl) invited(past, 1pl) A that defend(subj, pres) her hypothesis.
    ‘We invited her to defend her hypothesis’.

Example (34) does not follow the sequence of tenses, hence the tense of the verb in subjunctive cannot be taken to be dependent on the tense of the matrix predicate.

As for Bouchard’s theory, Suñer argues that it cannot account for the lack of complementary distribution between subjunctive and infinitive clauses when the main verb is a directive verb (cf. examples (12) for Catalan), when the matrix verb is a verb expressing denial, doubt, or is a factive verb (Suñer 1986 (11), (12), (13)) 10:

(35) a. Pedro, negó PRO, saber/ que pro_vj supiera la verdad.  
    Pedro denied know(inf)/ that knew(subj) the truth.  
    ‘Pedro denied knowing/thet he knew the truth’.

b. Yo, sentí mucho PRO, no haberlo visto/que pro_vj no lo haya visto.  
    I regret much not have(inf)-him(cl)/that not him(cl) have(subj) seen.  
    ‘I deeply regret not having seen him/thet I/he/she have/has not seen him’.

c. Pro, dudo PRO, haberlos/que pro_vj lo hubiera pagado.  
    Doubt(1sg) have(inf)-him(cl)/that them(cl) had(subj) paid.  
    ‘I doubt having paid them/thet I/he/she had paid them’.

The alternative proposal worked out by Suñer is that obviation is due to a lexical feature of volition and influence verbs (the only ones which show the disjoint reference effect), which she calls “WILL”. She assumes that indexing of nominal constituents has no restrictions – which means that there is nothing in itself which prevents pro from being coreferent with the matrix subject – and that Binding Theory checks at Logical Form that the pronouns be not coindexed by an antecedent within their binding domain. Finally, she postulates that the

10 Notice, however, that examples (35)b and (35)c involve an auxiliary bearing the subjunctive morphology. Then, they are included among the cases noticed by Ruwer, in which the coreferential reading is available in spite of the subjunctive complement clauses.
feature WILL prevents the embedded and the matrix subject from being coreferent. The feature WILL, however, does not require that the embedded subject and the matrix object be referentially disjoint, as the following examples illustrate:

(36) José lo animó/exhortó/persuadió a que pro\textsubscript{i} apagara la TV.  
José him(cl) encouraged/exhorted/persuaded A that turned-off subj the TV.  
‘José encouraged/exhorted/persuaded him to turn off the TV’.

Furthermore, the feature WILL only prevents the matrix and the embedded subject from being strictly coreferent, but it does not prevent overlapping reference:

(37) Lía animó Julián a que pro\textsubscript{ij} escribieran algo juntos.  
Lía encouraged Julián to that wrote subj something together.  
‘Lía encouraged Julián to write something together’.

2.2.2.4. Avrutin - Babyonyshev (1997)

Avrutin and Babyonyshev’s theory, which is based on data in Russian basically analogous to those in Romance, also relies on the idea that the subjunctive complementizer can be conceived as an operator. What distinguishes their idea from the most of the theories illustrated so far (with the exception of Suñer’s) is that they argue that a complement clause is actually a binding domain for pronouns within it. Thus, obviation does not follow from a revision of the notion of binding domain, as Picallo (1985) and similar proposals claim. Rather, the interaction of LF requirements on the embedded subjunctive C and the Binding Theory determine obviation.

Avrutin and Babyonyshev follow this line of reasoning: first, they assume that at LF V moves to I and to C, with no cross-linguistic variation. Second, they claim that “the event described in the subjunctive clause is necessarily interpreted as taking place later than the event of the matrix clause” (p. 241) – volitional verbs are assumed to be “future oriented”. They also claim that “there exists a relationship of temporal ordering between the two events [the one of the matrix clause and the one of the embedded clause], which determines that the second event necessarily takes place after the first one” (ib.). Given this argument, they propose that an event operator that co-binds the events of the embedded and of the matrix clause determines the temporal ordering. They recognize the embed-
ded clause C as this operator, and argue that it moves at LF to a position where it can c-command both the matrix VP and the embedded VP, where VPs are EventPs. Thus, both events are bound by the operator. Finally, they propose that AgrS is pronominal, thus it undergoes Principle B of the Binding Theory, and is coindexed with the nominal elements in their specifier.

This theoretical apparatus should be able to explain the data Avrutin and Babyonyshnev consider. In particular, it can account for the fact that in Russian, and in some Romance languages as well, volitional predicates instantiate obviation, while epistemic or declarative predicates do not; furthermore, it accounts for the fact that obviation involves pronominal subjects of subjunctive clauses, but it does not involve embedded objects or embedded quirky subjects, which are assumed not to be in [Spec, AgrS]; finally, it explains why pronominal subjects in an embedded clause in the subjunctive are referentially disjoint from the matrix subject, whereas they are free to corefer with matrix objects.

2.3. Final remarks

A quick comparison among the theories illustrated reveals that no theory takes into account the whole set of data. Even the most complete analysis of the subjunctive disjoint reference effect, i.e. the analysis made by Picallo, does not include all the data – Rwet’s examples are not taken into account. Furthermore, these data would be problematic for Picallo’s theory, because there is no obvious way to explain why in these examples obviation does not occur or, if it does, it is weaker than in the “prototypical” cases, as for instance, in Italian Gianni vuole che parta, ‘Gianni wants him to leave’. In fact, if obviation is due to a violation of Principle B and to the properties of the subjunctive mood, one should expect that it occurs in any subjunctive clause, no matter what the form bearing subjunctive morphology is – a modal, an auxiliary or a lexical verb.

On the other hand, if obviation is due to competition principles, it is not clear why in some contexts in which both an infinitive and a subjunctive clause are available obviation obtains, while in other it does not.

Another problematic question for most of the theories is that obviation is supposed to involve the grammatical subject
of the matrix clause and the grammatical subject of the embedded clause. Actually, Piccallo shows uncontroversially that this is not the case – see example (19). It is not clear how the theories of Rizzi (1991), Avrutin - Babyonyshnev (1997), and Manzini (2000) can resolve this problem – those theories include the agreement of the subject (AgrS) as a crucial part.

3. Obviation in Italian

3.1. Preliminary considerations

The following sentence is a prototypical example of obviation of an embedded null subject:

(38) Gianni vuole che pro_{i,j} parta domani.
    Gianni wants that leaves(subj) tomorrow.
    ‘Gianni wants to leave tomorrow’.

As we have seen, analogous examples are the starting point of all studies on obviation.

We will analyze sentence (38) in order to single out the syntactic and semantic properties of obviative sentences. The question is, which factors can be singled out in this sentence? We will consider the question in detail.

3.1.1. Properties of the matrix verb

The matrix verb in sentence (38) is a volitional verb. Volitional verbs select subjunctive (and infinitive) complement clauses in Italian and in the other Romance languages considered here. Then, two questions arise:
- do verbs which do not select subjunctive complement clauses show disjoint reference effects?
- do other verbs which select subjunctive complement clauses show disjoint reference effects?

Furthermore, the matrix verb has indicative mood and present tense. The question then is, does obviation occur when the verb of the matrix clause has another mood – conditional,

11 Another question that may be asked concerns the matrix subject. Proper names refer to individuals, and other expressions referring to individuals are definite descriptions, pronouns, and, in a broad sense, quantifiers. These types of expressions, however, do not seem to make relevant differences in this context.
for instance – or another tense. Notice that changing the mood and the tense of the matrix verb has consequences for the embedded subjunctive verbs due to sequence of tense effects, as explained in the next section.

3.1.2. Properties of the embedded verb

The embedded verb in example (38) is a present subjunctive. The other verbal forms of subjunctive mood in Italian are the following:

(a) past subjunctive, which is formed by means of an auxiliary ('avere 'to have' or 'essere 'to be') in the present subjunctive plus the past participle of the lexical verb. For instance, the past subjunctive of the verb partire, 'to leave', has the following form:

(39) che io sia partito
     that I be(subj, pres, 1sg) left

(b) imperfect subjunctive:

(40) che io partissi
     that I leave(subj, impf, 1sg)

(c) ‘trapassato’ (pluperfect), which is formed by means of an auxiliary ('to have' or 'to be') in the imperfect subjunctive plus the past participle of the lexical verb:

(41) che io fossi partito
     that I be(subj, impf, 3sg) left

The question arises whether the disjoint reference effect occurs independently from the tense of the subjunctive verb.

Notice that the choice of the embedded subjunctive form is dependent on the tense of the matrix verb, due to sequence of tense requirements. If the matrix verb is present (or future), then present or past subjunctive has to be selected.

(42) a. Gianni spera che Maria parta/*partisse domani.
     Gianni hopes(pres) that Maria leaves(subj, pres/*impf) tomorrow.
     ‘Gianni hopes that Maria will leave tomorrow’.

     b. Gianni spera che Maria sia/*fosse già partita.
     Gianni hopes(pres) that Maria is(subj, pres/*impf) already left.
     ‘Gianni hopes that Maria has already left’.

If the matrix verb is in the past, imperfect or pluperfect have to be generally selected:

(43)  

a. Gianni sperava che Maria partisse/*parta domani.  
Gianni hoped(impf) that Maria left(subj, impf/*pres) tomorrow.  
‘Gianni hoped that Maria would leave tomorrow’.

b. Gianni sperava che Maria fosse/*sia già partita.  
Gianni hoped(impf) that Maria was(subj, impf/*pres) already left.  
‘Gianni hoped that Maria had already left’.

Present and imperfect subjunctive are needed when the event of the embedded clause is simultaneous or posterior to the event of the matrix clause. Past and pluperfect subjunctive are needed when the event of the embedded clause is anterior to the event of the matrix clause.

The question arising from these facts is if there is any difference with respect to obviation depending on the tense of the verb in the subjunctive.

3.1.3. Properties related to both the matrix and the embedded verb

In example (38) the disjoint reference effect concerns the matrix and the embedded subject. We already know from the analysis of some theories (Picallo 1985, Raposo 1985, but cf. also Avrutin 1994 and Avrutin - Babyonyshhev 1997) that in some Romance languages no disjoint reference effect occurs between the matrix subject and the embedded object. This seems to hold for Italian as well 13. More generally, the phenomenon at issue does not seem to involve embedded objects at all. But, what about the relations between the matrix object and the embedded subject?

To sum up, the questions to be addressed are the following:

(44)  

a. Which moods does obviation occur with?  
b. Which matrix verbs does obviation occur with?  
c. Which embedded verbs does obviation occurs with?

---

13 Consider, for instance, the following sentences:

(i)  

a. Gianni, spera che Maria gli/i telefoni.  
Gianni hopes that Maria him(cl) calls(subj).  
‘Gianni hopes Maria will call him’.

b. Gianni, spera che la torta gli/i piaccia.  
Gianni hopes that the cake him(cl) pleases(subj).  
‘Gianni hopes he will like the cake’.
In the next paragraphs we will try to answer the questions formulated above.

3.2. Obviation and mood choice

As to question (44)a, the possibility of coindexation between the embedded and the matrix subject distinguishes subjunctive complement clauses, which do not allow coindexation, from indicative complement clauses, which may allow coindexation:

(45) Gianni ha detto che pro_i partirà domani.
Gianni has said that will leave(ind) tomorrow.
‘Gianni said he will leave tomorrow’.

Notice that the coindexation between the two subjects is not sensible to the tense of the embedded clause:

(46) a. Gianni ha detto che pro_i ha già letto il giornale.
Gianni has said that has(ind) already read the newspaper.
‘Gianni said he has already read the newspaper’.

b. Gianni ha detto che pro_i legge il giornale ogni giorno.
Gianni has said that reads(ind) the newspaper every day.
‘Gianni said he reads the newspaper every day’.

Coindexation is also allowed when the embedded verb is in the conditional mood:

(47) Gianni, aveva detto che pro_i sarebbe partito il giorno dopo.
Gianni had said that would be left on the following day.
‘Gianni said he would leave on the following day’.

Finally, as we have already seen, infinitive requires coindexation, at least in cases of obligatory control (both partial or exhaustive, examples from Landau 2000):

(48) a. The chair managed PRO to gather the committee at 6. (exhaustive control)

b. The chair preferred PRO to gather at 6. (partial control)

We conclude, then, that disjoint reference effects occur only in complement clauses in which the verb is in subjunctive mood.
3.2.1. Obviation and subjunctive mood

As is well known, the classes of predicates which select subjunctive complement clauses varies across Romance languages. Volitional predicates (to want, to wish, to prefer, etc.) select subjunctive complement clauses uniformly across languages. Other attitude predicates may select subjunctive complement clauses or indicative complement clauses: predicates expressing hope, doubt, concern, regret select subjunctive clauses in every language; belief predicates select subjunctive clauses in Italian (though intra-linguistic variation is observed), indicative clauses in French, Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan.

Going back to disjoint reference effects, it seems that it does not occur exclusively within volitional complement clauses, but also with non-volitional. Take for instance the following examples in Italian (compare also example (5)a):

\[(49)\]
\[(49a)\] Gianni teme che pro\(_i\) faccia molti errori.
Gianni fears that makes(subj) many mistakes.
\('Gianni is afraid to make many mistakes'\).

\[(49b)\] Gianni dubita che pro\(_i\) faccia pochi errori.
Gianni doubts that makes(subj) few mistakes.
\('Gianni doesn’t think he will make few mistakes’\).

\[(49c)\] Gianni si rammarica che pro\(_i\) parta domani.
Gianni regrets that leaves(subj) tomorrow.
\('Gianni regrets that he will leave tomorrow’\).

Thus, it seems that, at least in Italian, the disjoint reference

---

14 Only cases involving intensional subjunctive will be considered, whereas cases involving polarity subjunctive will be ignored (following a distinction made by Stowell 1933 and followed by Quer 1998).

15 Unfortunately, there are not many hints in the literature on the question whether the other Romance languages show the same behavior as Italian. KEMPCHINSKY (1985) argues that only volitional subjunctive triggers obviation in Spanish. PICALLO (1985: 30) presents at least one example from Catalan, in which obviation occurs under an emotive verb:

\[(i)\] Tu sents que pro, telefonis al Joan.
You regret that phone(subj, 2sg) to-the Joan.

As for French, SCHLENKER (2004) observes that “verbs that select both the infinitive and the subjunctive yield much weaker or no disjoint reference effect with the subjunctive” (cf. the examples in (11)).

Notice, however, with SCHLENKER, that both examples involve passive subjunctive verbs. As mentioned above, passivization is one of the contexts where Ruwet observed that disjoint reference effects are “weakened”.

I22
effect is strictly linked with the subjunctive selected by the matrix verb.

It must also be noticed that when a verb selects either a subjunctive complement clause or an indicative complement clause, obviation occurs only within the subjunctive complement clause:

\[(50)\]
\[a. \quad *\text{Penso che } \text{io/pro } \text{parta domani.}\]
Think(1sg) that I leave(subj) tomorrow.

\[b. \quad \text{Penso che } \text{pro } \text{partirò domani.}\]
Think(1sg) that leave(ind, fut, 1sg) tomorrow.
‘I think I will leave tomorrow’.

3.2.1.1. Obviation, auxiliaries and modals

Auxiliaries or modals bearing subjunctive morphology do affect the disjoint reference effect. We will repeat here the crucial data in Italian:

\[(51)\]
\[a. \quad \text{Gianni spera che } \text{pro}_{\text{subj}} \text{ parta domani.}\]
Gianni hopes that leaves(subj) tomorrow.
‘Gianni hopes that he will leave tomorrow’.

\[b. \quad \text{Gianni spera che } \text{pro}_{\text{subj}} \text{ sia autorizzato a partire domani.}\]
Gianni hopes that is(subj) authorized A leave(inf) tomorrow.
‘Gianni hopes to be allowed to leave tomorrow’.

\[c. \quad \text{Gianni spera che } \text{pro}_{\text{subj}} \text{ possa partire domani.}\]
Gianni hopes that can(subj) leave tomorrow.
‘Gianni hopes to be able to leave tomorrow’.

\[d. \quad \text{Gianni spera che } \text{pro}_{\text{subj}} \text{ abbia fatto pochi errori.}\]
Gianni hopes that has(subj) made few mistakes.
‘Gianni hopes to have made few mistakes’.

Example (51)\(a\) is obviative, (51)\(b\) and \(c\) are not, and (51)\(d\) is marginal under a coreferential reading. The coreferential reading of the latter examples is possible, although it is less natural than the disjoint reference reading.

Other examples in which the lexical verb does not bear subjunctive morphology, yet a coreferential interpretation is available, involve the modal verb *dovere* ‘must’, and the progressive auxiliary *stare*, literally ‘to stay’:

\[(52)\]
\[a. \quad \text{Gianni teme che } \text{pro}_{\text{subj}} \text{ debba partire domani.}\]
Gianni fears that must(subj) leave tomorrow.
‘Gianni fears that he has to leave tomorrow’.
b. Gianni spera che pro_{ij} stia facendo pochi errori.
   Gianni hopes that stays(subj) making few mistakes.
   ‘Gianni hopes that he is making few mistakes’.

Furthermore, if one combines the relevant factors, for instance a modal verb and a passive or a past infinitive, obviation seems to be even weaker:

(53) a. Gianni spera che pro_{ij} possa essere autorizzato a partire domani.
   Gianni hopes that can(subj) be(inf) authorized A leave(inf) tomorrow.
   ‘Gianni hopes that it will be possible for him to be authorized to leave tomorrow’.

   b. Gianni spera che pro_{ij} possa essere già partito alle 6.
   Gianni hopes that can(subj) be(inf) already left at-the 6.
   ‘Gianni hopes that it will be possible for him to have left at 6 p.m.’.

Given that modal verbs in Italian are restructuring verbs, one may ask if the possibility of coreference between the matrix and the embedded subjects in subjunctive contexts is present with all the restructuring verbs. As a matter of fact this does not seem to be the case.

16 This conclusion is based on the following examples involving restructuring verbs in Italian:

(i) *Aspectual verbs*
   Gianni vuole che pro_{ij} cominci/continui a/finisca di leggere il libro.
   Gianni wants that begins(subj)/goes-on(subj) A/finish(subj) read(inf) the book.
   ‘Gianni wants him to begin to read/goes on/give up reading the book’.

(ii) *Motion verbs*
    Gianni vuole che pro_{ij} vada/venga a prendere il libro.
    Gianni wants that goes(subj)/comes(subj) A bring(inf) the book.
    ‘Gianni wants him to go/come to bring the book’.

(iii) *Conative verbs*
    Gianni vuole che pro_{ij} provi a leggere il libro.
    Gianni wants that tries(subj) A read(inf) the book.
    ‘Gianni wants him to try to read the book’.

(iv) *Implicative verbs*
    Gianni vuole che pro_{ij} riesca a leggere il libro entro domani.
    Gianni wants that manages(subj) A read(inf) the book by tomorrow.
    ‘Gianni wants him to manage to read the book by tomorrow’.

Thus, it seems that the improvement of the coreferential reading when the subjunctive verb is a modal does not involve the whole class of restructuring verbs.
3.2.1.2. Obviation and subjunctive forms

In example (38) the matrix verb is present and the embedded verb has present subjunctive morphology. This is an effect of sequence of tense, as illustrated in (42) and (43).

It has been already shown (compare example (51)d) that obviation may occur to a weaker degree than in example (38) if the verb in the subjunctive is not present. In example (51)d, for instance, it is past, and coreference is marginally possible – in (38) it is completely excluded. Two other subjunctive tenses have still to be considered, imperfect and pluperfect.

As for the former, it seems that obviation does occur:

(54) Gianni voleva che pro\textsubscript{ij} partisse il giorno dopo.
Gianni wanted that left(subj) the day after.
‘Gianni wanted to leave on the following day’.

Example (54) is obviative, and no difference is detectable between it and example (38).

As for the subjunctive pluperfect, it seems to be non-obviative:

(55) Gianni sperava che pro\textsubscript{ij} avesse fatto pochi errori.
Gianni hoped that had(subj) made few mistakes.
‘Gianni hoped to have made few mistakes’.

Furthermore, in some minimal pairs including a sentence in which a modal or an auxiliary has present subjunctive morphology and a sentence in which a modal or an auxiliary has imperfect subjunctive morphology, a nuance in the degree of grammaticality can be observed. In particular, the latter sentence seems to be more acceptable than the former under a coreferential reading. Compare, for instance, sentences (51)b and c with the following ones:

(56) a. Gianni sperava che pro\textsubscript{ij} fosse autorizzato a partire il giorno dopo.
Gianni hoped that was(subj) authorized to leave the day after.
‘Gianni hoped to be allowed to leave on the following day’.

b. Gianni sperava che pro\textsubscript{ij} potesse partire il giorno dopo.
Gianni hoped that was-able(subj) leave(inf) the day after.
‘Gianni hoped to be able to leave on the following day’.

Examples in (56) seem to be more natural than examples (51)b and c. This would mean that a slight difference between
sentences with present subjunctive morphology and sentences with imperfect subjunctive morphology does exist.

3.3. Obviation and matrix arguments

We have seen that disjoint reference effect may occur between the matrix subject and the embedded subject. We have also seen that obviation does not occur between the matrix subject and the embedded object.

Nothing has been said so far on the question whether the phenomenon at issue may involve the matrix object. The question concerns only directional verbs, whose argument structure counts three arguments – two of them denoting individuals, the third is a clausal argument in which the verb may be in the subjunctive, although this is not the more natural choice. We have seen that in Catalan (Picallo 1985) and Spanish (Suñer 1986) coreference between the embedded subject and the matrix object (either direct or indirect) is possible. The same situation seems to hold in Italian as well:

(57) ?Gianni ha chiesto a Maria che pro parti domani.
     Gianni has asked to Maria that leaves(subj) tomorrow.

‘Gianni asked Maria to leave tomorrow’.

Then, while the matrix and the embedded subjects cannot be coreferential, no restrictions seem to exist on the referential properties of the matrix object and the embedded subject, at least in the case of directive verbs.

If we extend the analysis to some epistemic verbs like preoccupare ‘to worry’ or sembrare ‘to seem’, we observe a different picture. These predicates take two arguments: one of them is assigned the experiencer theta-role, while the other is a clause. The experiencer does not serve as subject. Then, if these sentences parallel the sentences with a directive verb, coreference between the embedded subject and the matrix argument denoting an individual should be available. Actually, facts are contrary to this expectation:

It is not clear to me why this difference occurs.

Suñer (1986: 190-195) observed some differences between directive verbs (sometimes also called “influence verbs”) taking a direct object and those taking an indirect object. Given that these differences are not crucial for this contribution, we refer to this article for details.
(58) a. Che pro_{vi/j} parta domani preoccupa Gianni.
   That leaves(subj) tomorrow worries Gianni.
   ‘Gianni is worried that he will leave tomorrow’.

b. A Gianni sembra che pro_{vi/j} parta domani.
   To Gianni, seems that leaves(subj) tomorrow.
   ‘It seems to John that he will leave tomorrow.’

Notice, however, that if the subjunctive verb is a modal, or if it has passive voice or perfective aspect, then coreference is not completely excluded, as noticed at the previous paragraph:

(59) a’. Che pro_{vi/j} debba partire domani preoccupa Gianni.
   That must(subj) leave tomorrow worries Gianni.
   ‘Gianni is worried that he has to leave tomorrow’.

a’’. Che pro_{vi/j} sia obbligato a partire domani preoccupa Gianni.
   That is(subj) obliged A leave(inf) tomorrow worries Gianni.
   ‘Gianni is worried that he is obliged to leave tomorrow’.

a’’’. Che pro_{vi/j} abbia fatto molti errori preoccupa Gianni.
   That has(subj) made many mistakes, worries Gianni.
   ‘Gianni is worried that he has made many mistakes’.

b’. A Gianni sembra che pro_{vi/j} possa partire domani.
   To Gianni, seems that may(subj) leave tomorrow.
   ‘It seems to Gianni that he may leave tomorrow’.

b’’. A Gianni sembra che pro_{vi/j} sia obbligato a partire domani.
   To Gianni, seems that is(subj) obliged A leave(inf) tomorrow.
   ‘It seems to Gianni that he is obliged to leave tomorrow’.

b’’’. A Gianni sembra che pro_{vi/j} abbia fatto molti errori.
   To Gianni, seems that has(subj) made many mistakes.
   ‘It seems to Gianni that he has made many mistakes’.

Furthermore, if in these cases the matrix verb is in the past and the embedded verb has imperfect subjunctive morphology as a sequence of tense effect, the degree of acceptability improves:

(60) a’. Che pro_{vi/j} dovesse partire il giorno dopo preoccupava Gianni.
   That must(subj, impf) leave(inf) the day after worried Gianni.
   ‘Gianni was worried that he had to leave on the following day’.

a’’. Che pro_{vi/j} fosse obbligato a partire il giorno dopo preoccupava Gianni.
   That was(subj) obliged A leave(inf) the day after worries Gianni.
   ‘Gianni was worried that he was obliged to leave on the following day’.

127
3.4. Obviation and degrees of embedding

The examples illustrated so far involve cases of embedding of one clause into the matrix clause. Nothing has been said on cases of double embedding. It has been noticed in the literature (see paragraph 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.2.) that obviation does not occur between the matrix subject and the most deeply embedded subject. This seems to hold in Italian, too:

(61) Gianni sperava che Maria desiderasse che pro[^i] partisse.
Gianni hoped that Maria wanted(subj) that left(subj).
‘Gianni hoped that Maria wanted him to leave’.

When the logical subject of the highest embedded clause does not correspond to the grammatical subject, Catalan allows the coreferential reading between the matrix and the most embedded subject. Italian behaves analogously:

(62) Gianni sperava che a Maria piacesse che pro[^i] partisse.
Gianni hoped that to Maria pleased(subj) that left(subj).
‘Gianni hoped that it pleased Maria that he would have left’.

Italian seems to contrast with Catalan in another respect, i.e. the availability of the coreferential reading between the matrix and the most embedded subject when the most embedded clause is a subject clause. In this case the subject of the intermediate clause is supposed to be an expletive:
4. Open Questions

As we have already seen at the end of section 2, none of the existing theories is able to account for the whole set of data. Two kinds of phenomena seemed to be particularly problematic, that is the fact that, when modals or auxiliaries bear subjunctive morphology, obviation may not occur, and the fact that obviation may involve matrix arguments that do not serve as grammatical subjects.

Furthermore, some examples in Italian contribute to make the framework even more unclear. In fact, obviation does not occur only in clausal arguments of volitional and directive verbs. Epistemic and factive predicates instantiate obviation in their clausal complements, as well. This is an unexpected fact for most of the existing theories. In this respect, the theories that refer crucially to the properties of subjunctive mood in itself (as those by Bouchard, Picallo, Raposo, Rizzi, Manzini, and Schlenker) seem to be more adequate to explain the Italian paradigm than those based on the properties of volitional subjunctive (Kempchinsky, Suñer, Farkas, Avrutin - Babyonyshev).

In addition, one may add to the already mentioned problematic data the unpredicted fact that imperfect subjunctive morphology seems to allow the coreferential reading more easily than present subjunctive.

Finally, a set of data which have not been considered so far is completely unexpected. It seems that left dislocation in the embedded clause may affect obviation in some cases:

(64) a. Gianni spera che pro$_{ij}$ abbia fatto pochi errori all’esame di linguistica.
Gianni hopes that has(subj) made few mistakes at-the exam of linguistics.
‘Gianni hopes that he has made few mistakes at the exam of linguistics’.

b. Gianni spera che, all’esame di linguistica, pro$_{ij}$ abbia fatto pochi errori.
Gianni hopes that at-the exam of linguistics has(subj) made few mistakes.
‘Gianni hopes that he has made few mistakes at the exam of linguistics’.

Example (64)b is more acceptable than (64)b under the coreferential interpretation. This fact is not easily explicable under existing theories, which do not foresee any interaction between the informational structure and the interpretation of pro in the relevant contexts.\(^{19}\)

Having all these particularities in mind it seems that an explicative theory for the subjunctive disjoint reference effects should have the following characteristics.

First it should be able to define the arguments of the matrix clause that subject pro in a subjunctive complement clause cannot corefer with. Most of the theories claim that obviation involves the matrix and the embedded subjects. As for the matrix subject, many of the theories do not specify what has to be understood as “subject” – whether the grammatical subject, the “logical” subject, or the subject of the predication. Some theories argue that the embedded grammatical subject is involved in obviative sentences. But many examples show that this is not the case. Picallo (1985) argues that obviation involves the first accessible argument for pro. But this hypothesis seems to be too powerful, since it predicts that pro may not corefer with the object of a directive verb and may corefer with the grammatical subject of a directive verb, which is contrary to facts.

Second, an explicative theory should be able to understand why obviation tends to disappear when the verb in the sub-

\(^{19}\) Notice that Italian is not the only Romance language showing such an interaction. According to Gemma Rigau (personal communication), Catalan presents the same phenomenon (the following examples involve a negative polarity subjunctive, but this is irrelevant, since obviation occurs in examples with a negative polarity subjunctive as well), even though the topicalized constituent has to be heavy:

(ii)  

\(a\). En Joan no es pensa que \(pro_{vi}\) hagi fet molts errors a l’examen.  
The Joan not it(cl) thinks that has(subj) made many mistakes at the exam.  
‘John doesn’t think he has made many mistakes at the exam.’

\(b\). En Joan no es pensa que a l’examen de lingüística computacional \(pro_{vi}\) hagi fet molts errors.  
The Joan not it(cl) thinks that at the exam of computational linguistics has(subj) made many mistakes.  
‘John doesn’t think he has made many mistakes at the exam of computational linguistics’.
The subjunctive is a modal, when the subjunctive verb is passive, or when its form is composite, like Italian past or pluperfect subjunctive.

Third, it should be able to explain how the reference of pro is sensitive to the presence of topicalized constituents, a fact which has not been noticed in the literature on obviation.

Finally, it should be able to explain why obviation is sensitive to the tense morphology of the verb in the subjunctive, that is, why an embedded clause in which the subjunctive verb has imperfect morphology seems to be more acceptable than those in which the subjunctive verb has present morphology.

Bibliography

Many Romance linguists have been concerned with a grammatical phenomenon that has often been called “subjunctive disjoint reference effect”, or “obviation”. These terms usually refer to the fact that the null subject of an embedded clause in the subjunctive cannot be interpreted as coreferent with the subject of the matrix clause. The main explicative theories, which are based on data in Catalan, Spanish, Portuguese, French, are able to account for a cross-linguistically uniform set of data; nevertheless, some important predictions deriving from these theories do not seem to be borne out.

**KEY WORDS**