Finite control. Finite control constructions (FCCs) are usually found in partial null-subject languages, such as Russian (1), Finnish (2), and Hebrew (3). Interestingly, the embedded null subject (Ø), which is controlled/bound by a matrix argument, is subject-oriented in (1), while it is not in (2)-(3). This paper seeks to reveal the nature of this restriction in Russian.

(1) Ivanı skazal ženui čto Øi/3g prigotovit' desert.
   Ivan said wife.DAT that will.prepare.3SG dessert.ACC
   ‘Ivan said to his wife that he/*she will prepare a dessert.’

(2) Pekkaı sanoo emännällej että Øi/3g hakkee ruusut kellarista.
   Pekka say.3SG wife.to that fetch.3SG roses.ACC cellar.from
   ‘Pekka says to his wife that he will get / she get the roses from the cellar.’

(3) Talilaı amra le-Itamarı Øi/3g she-tavo / she-yavo
   Talila said to-Itamar that-she.will.come / that-he.will.come
   ‘Talila said to Itamar that she will come.’ / ‘Talila said to Itamar to come.’

Based on previous analyses, I consider three options: (a) Ø is a null DP with an unvalued D-feature [uD] (Holmberg 2010); (b) Ø is PRO (Landau 2004); (c) Ø is an A-trace (Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010). I argue for the last option.

uD-feature. Holmberg (2010) proposes that consistent null-subject languages have a uD-feature in T. Coupled with a D-less pronoun (qP) by Agree, this feature receives a value (referential index) from a null Aboutness-shift topic in C-domain. Holmberg assumes that in partial null-subject languages T lacks [uD], which is the property of a null pronoun itself (pro is uDP). Thus, in languages like Brazilian Portuguese, Finnish and Marathi, uDP moves to SpecTP (forced by EPP) and receives its interpretation from a higher argument (Holmberg, Nayudu and Sheehan 2009, Holmberg and Sheehan 2010). Assuming that this is the right analysis for languages that have a generic 3sg pro (Finnish), we would need a stipulation that uDP in Russian is somewhat special. Moreover, Russian does not have a generic 3sg pro (only an arbitrary 3pl pro) and it might not have uDP either.

Obligatory control (OC). Landau (2004) argues that FCCs in Hebrew are possible only with subjunctive embedded clauses. As we see in (4), Russian does not allow the matrix object to control Ø even if the finite embedded clause is subjunctive.

(4) Ivan poprosil ženui čtoby *(onaı) prigotovila desert.
   Ivan asked wife.ACC that.SUBJ she prepared dessert.ACC
   ‘Ivan asked his wife to prepare a dessert.’

Landau’s calculus of control applied to subjunctive clauses in Hebrew and Balkan languages cannot be extended to Russian, where finite control is possible only with indicative clauses. But is it really OC? The following examples confirm that this is indeed the case. For example, sentence (5) has a de se reading (only Ivan λx [x remembers x being at the wedding]); in (6), only a sloppy identity reading is possible, and (7) shows that split antecedents are impossible.

(5) Odin Ivanı pomnit čto Ø byl na svad’be.
   only Ivan remembers that was on wedding
   ‘Only Ivan remembers being at the wedding.’

(6) Ivanı dumaet čto Ø vyigral poedinok, i Miša tože.
   Ivan thinks that won duel and Miša also
   ‘Ivan, thinks that he, won the duel and Miša; also (thinks that he-won the duel).’

(7) *Ivanı skazal ženei čto Øi/3g prigotovjat desert vmeste.
   Ivan said wife.DAT that will.prepare.3PL dessert together
   ‘Ivan said to his wife that they will prepare a dessert together.’

If postulating PRO is not an option for FCCs in Russian, their OC properties can be derived from A-movement.
Movement. Additional evidence for movement comes from island effects. For example, it is impossible to have \( \emptyset \) inside the relative clause in (8).

\[ \begin{align*}
8. & \quad *\text{Ivan skazal čto [NP pirog [CP kotoryj \( \emptyset \), s’jel]] byl nevkusnyj.} \\
 & \quad \text{Ivan said that cake which ate was not good} \\
 & \quad \text{‘Ivan said that the cake that he ate was not good.’} \\
\end{align*} \]

In this respect, Russian is similar to Brazilian Portuguese, discussed in Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes (2010). The only problem we face in Russian is that the NP moves from one case position to another. In Brazilian Portuguese, this problem does not arise, since the embedded \( T \) in FCCs is \([T^+, \emptyset]\); i.e., it has an incomplete (deficient) \( \emptyset \)-set (Boeckx, Hornstein and Nunes 2010:65-66). This \( T \) does not value noun’s case feature, which is valued by the matrix \( T \) \([T^+, \emptyset]\). Russian, however, makes a clear distinction between \([T^+, \emptyset]\) and \([T^+, \emptyset^+]\), and this is the latter that is used in FCCs. The former can be found in impersonal constructions, as in (9), where none of the overt arguments agrees with the verb and, as expected, there are no nominative NPs. A deficient \( \emptyset \)-set is signaled by neutral -o in (9a) and by 3sg -it in (9b).

\[ \begin{align*}
9(a). & \quad \text{Menja 1sg hit-neu current instr.} \\
 & \quad \text{1sg ACC hit-3sg current inst.} \\
 & \quad \text{[Lit.: ‘I was hit by the electric current.’]} \\
9(b). & \quad \text{Menja 1sg sejčas udar-it tokom.} \\
 & \quad \text{1sg ACC now will hit-3sg current inst.} \\
 & \quad \text{[Lit.: ‘I will be hit by the electric current now.’]} \\
\end{align*} \]

This is not the type of inflection we have in FCCs. As shown in (10), the 1sg pronoun controls \( \emptyset \) and we have 1sg inflection on both, matrix and embedded, verbs.

\[ \begin{align*}
10. & \quad J\acute{a} 1sg govor-ju čto \( \emptyset \), sejčas udar-ju po mjaču. \\
 & \quad 1sg NOM say-1sg that now will hit-1sg on ball \\
 & \quad ‘I am saying that I will hit the ball now.’ \\
\end{align*} \]

It seems that Russian allows movement from one case position to another as long as there is no case mismatch (a [+nominative] NP is targeted by an upper [+nominative] \( T \)). However, an NP cannot move if its case value does not match the case of the targeting head. It is thus not surprising that a dative subject cannot control \( \emptyset \) in (11). Note that control into a non-finite clause is possible (12), since the NP does not have its case feature valued by the infinitive.

\[ \begin{align*}
11. & \quad *\text{Ivan-u, neobxodimo znat’ čto \( \emptyset \), postupil v universitet.} \\
 & \quad \text{Ivan-DAT necessary to know that entered to university} \\
 & \quad ‘It is necessary for Ivan to know that he was accepted to the university.’ \\
12. & \quad \text{Ivan-u, neobxodimo \( \emptyset \), postupit’ v universitet.} \\
 & \quad \text{Ivan-DAT necessary to enter to university} \\
 & \quad ‘It is necessary for Ivan to be accepted to the university.’ \\
\end{align*} \]

To conclude, movement analysis provides a straightforward explanation to many peculiarities of FCCs in Russian. If this analysis is on the right track, we have to admit that movement from one case position to another should not be excluded as long as feature matching is respected. It could be a parametric choice of Russian that it has finite OC movement, but it does not have subject-to-subject raising (\( \text{John} \) \( \text{seems} \) \( t_i \) \text{to win the race})), whereas English does not have finite OC movement (*\( \text{John} \) \text{is happy that} \( t_i \) \text{wins the race})), but it has raising. Nevertheless, both languages have non-finite OC movement (\( \text{John} \) \text{wants} \( t_i \) \text{to win the race}).

References


