Contents

2. Dorian Roehrs. *High floating quantifiers: syntactic or ‘delayed V2?’*
4. Michael Wagner. *And, or and $\emptyset$.*
1.

Marco Nicolis – Georgetown University - Queen’s University
On case marking of PRO in Italian

nicolis@gmail.com

Cecchetto and Oniga (2004) -- whose concern is specifically with Latin -- take sentences (1) and (2) to show that PRO bears regular case in Italian and a Null Case approach should be dispensed with.

(1) a. (Io) promisi [di PRO essere io/*me il vincitore]
I promised COMPL to-be I / *me the winner
‘I guaranteed that the winner would be me’

b. (Io) ordinai a lui [di PRO essere me/*io nel film]
I ordered to him COMPL to-be me/*I in-the movie
‘I asked him to play me in the movie’

(2) a. (Io) dissi a lui [di PRO essere io nel film]
I told to him COMPL to-be I in-the movie
‘I told him that the person in the movie was me’

b. (Io) dissi a lui [di essere me nel film]
I told to him COMPL to-be me in-the movie
‘I told him to play me in the movie’

The authors propose that the case on the pronoun in the embedded clause in (1)-(2) ultimately comes from the Controller (via the mediation of PRO). Hence, in Subject control contexts (1a) the Nominative form of the pronoun io surfaces, while in an oblique control context like (1b) the accusative form me is used. The authors further show that with a verb like dire (‘to say’) ((2)), which allows for both a subject control and an object control complement, both a NOM and an ACC pronoun are grammatical.

The analysis of (1b), (2b) as Case transmission structures is questionable.

The verb essere (‘to be’) in (1b), (2b) is used transitively with the meaning “to play,” “to interpret.” The accusative object in fact also surfaces in finite matrix clauses, where no Case transmission can be postulated. ACC is assigned by the verb “essere” (‘to be’).

(3) Nel prossimo film di Gianni, tu sarai me/*io
In-the next movie of Gianni, you will-be me/*I
‘In the next movie by Gianni, you will play me’
The controller in (1b), (2b) is a PP, but the authors “do not discuss whether and how the whole PP a lui is assigned dative” (Cecchetto and Oniga 2004: 145, fn. 3) “since it is irrelevant for our purposes” (ibid.). What matters is that “lui checks accusative through the preposition a” (ibid.). However, if the PP is cliticized, the clitic is dative marked, as shown is (4), but the pronoun in the embedded clause can still only be Accusative marked.

(4) Io gli ordinai di [PRO essere me/*a me/*essergli nel film]  
I to-him ordered COMPL to-be me/ to me/ to be.to-me in-the movie  
‘I asked him to play me in the movie’

I conclude that the structures in (1b), (2b) cannot be analyzed as Case transmission structures and therefore PRO cannot be taken to be ACC marked in these sentences. Since Nominative is the default Case in Italian, the NOM on the embedded clause pronoun in (1a) and (2a) is expected under both a Case transmission analysis and under a Null Case approach to PRO.

References