

## Null Subjects

24.951, Fall 2003, Oct 31

**Due Date: Nov 7**

- (1) Manzini (1983) argued that impersonal passives don't license long-distance control on the basis of the contrast in (a-b). Examples like (c-d) appear to contradict this claim.
- Mary said that it would help Bill [PRO to behave herself in public].
  - \* Mary said that it had been decided [PRO to behave herself in public].
  - Mary said it had been recommended [PRO to behave herself in public].
  - Mary said it had been prohibited [PRO to reveal herself in public].

Propose an explanation for the contrast between (b) and (c-d), and provide data to support your proposal.

- (2) Some languages appear to license OC into finite complements:

*Greek* (same for other Balkan languages)

- a. I Maria<sub>1</sub> prospathise **ec**<sub>1/\*2/\*arb</sub> na divasi.  
the Mary tried.3sg PRT read.3sg  
'Mary tried to read'

*Hebrew*

- b. Rina civta al Gil<sub>1</sub> še- **ec**<sub>1/\*2/\*arb</sub> ya'azov et ha-ir be-karov.  
Rina ordered on Gil that- will-leave.3sg.M ACC the-town soon  
'Rina ordered Gil to leave town soon'

What are the implications for the major theories of null subjects discussed in class? A good way of approaching the problem is to list the advantages and disadvantages of analysing the null subject as either *pro* or PRO. Then try to come up with predictions (with or without data) that each analysis makes, based on the tests we discussed in class.

- (3) a. John proposed to Mary to help each other.  
b. John proposed to Mary to talk about himself, and Bill did too.  
[only sloppy reading]  
c. \* Mary thought that John proposed to us to introduce herself.

What kind of problem does this triplet create for Lebeaux (1984)? Be explicit about the assumptions that are at stake. Bonus: Can you think of a (relatively modest) modification in Lebeaux's system that could accommodate these facts?