

Two flavors of control in Georgian: *decide* and *try*

Richard Luo
Yale University

The puzzle

In Georgian, there are two manners of establishing Obligatory Control: either with finite subjunctive clauses, or with nominalized predicates (*masdars*).

- Both 'decide' and 'try' allow Partial Control with finite subjunctives (1).
- Only 'decide' permits Partial Control with *masdars* (2).

- (1) a. *šota-m gada-c'qv-it'-a, rom PRO saseirno-d ertad c'a-v-sul-i-qav-i-t*
Shota-ERG decided.3SG that walking-ADV together PVB-1-go-TS-be.PLUPERF-NOM-PL
'Shota decided for us to go walking together.'
b. *šota cdil-ob-d-a, rom PRO saseirno-d ertad c'a-v-sul-iq-av-i-t*
Shota try-TS-IMP-3SG that walking-ADV together PVB-1-go-TS-be.PLUPERF-NOM-PL
'Shota tried for us to go walking together.'
- (2) a. *šota-m gada-c'qv-it'-a PRO ertad saseirno-d c'a-svl-a*
Shota-ERG decided.3SG together walking-ADV PVB-go-NMN.NOM
'Shota decided to go walking together.'
b. *šota cdil-ob-d-a PRO (*ertad) saseirno-d c'a-svl-a-s*
Shota try-TS-IMP-3SG (together) walking-ADV PVB-go-NMN-DAT
'Shota tried to go for a walk (*together).'

Table 1. Types of OC with Georgian control predicates

	Finite subjunctive clause	Masdar (nominalized predicate)
<i>gada-c'qv-et'-s</i> <i>decide</i>	PC	PC
<i>cdil-ob-s</i> <i>try</i>	PC	EC

Proposal

- Clause size:** *Masdar* complements are derived from tenseless TPs; finite clauses have nontrivial tense features and resist nominalization (i.e., they can be no smaller than TP).
- Selectional restrictions:** Attitude predicate 'decide' requires future/irrealis TMA; non-attitude predicate 'try' naturally accepts tenseless complement (albeit not incompatible with irrealis).
- Synthesis approach to complementation:** syntax builds up structure freely, so long as the result satisfies the semantic requirements of the clause-embedding predicate.
→ *Masdars* are tenseless, but may project additional structure like *wollP*.

Georgian *masdars*

Note: All clauses are *finite* in Georgian, main verb bears inflectional agreement.

Caveat: a restructuring method for non-finite complementation by nominalizing the main verbal predicate – these will be called *masdars*.

Both 'decide' and 'try' display the OC signature with *masdar* complements:

- (3) **Obligatory sloppy readings of PRO**
- a. *šota-m gada-c'qv-it'-a PRO c'ign-is c'a-k'itx-va, maia-ma-c*
Shota-ERG PVB-decide-AOR.3SG book-GEN PVB-read-NMN.NOM, Maia-ERG-also
'Shota_i decided [PRO_i to read a book], and so did Maia_j decide [PRO_j to read a book].'
b. *mariam-i cdil-ob-d-a PRO k'ar-is ga-g'eb-a-s, otar-i-c*
Mariam-NOM try-TS-IMP-3SG door-GEN PVB-open-TS-NMN-DAT, Otar-NOM-also
'Mariam_i was trying [PRO_i to open the door], and so was Otar_j trying [PRO_j to open the door].'
- (4) **Non-c-commanding control disallowed**
- a. *šota-s deda-m gada-c'qv-it'-a PRO c'ign-is c'a-k'itx-va*
Shota-GEN mother-ERG PVB-decide-AOR.3SG book-GEN PVB-read-NMN.NOM
'[Shota_i's mother]_j decided [PRO_{i/j} to read a book].'
b. *mariam-s megobar-i cdil-ob-d-a PRO k'ar-is ga-g'eb-a-s*
Mariam-GEN friend-NOM try-TS-IMP-3SG door-GEN PVB-open-TS-NMN-DAT
'[Mariam_i's friend]_j was trying [PRO_{i/j} to open the door].'

Finite control

Common misconception: OC is limited to non-finite complements.

Landau (2004) gives examples of OC from Hebrew and the Balkan languages (5). Crucially, they require their controlled predicates to be inflected for TMA:

- (5) a. *Lo darašti me-Gil₁ še- PRO₁ yedaber im*
not demanded.1sg to-Gil that- PRO speak.fut.3sg with
af-exad
anybody
'I didn't demand of Gil that he speak to anybody.' (Hebrew)
- b. *Ivan₁ uspja PRO₁ da ostane pri nego*
Ivan managed.3sg PRO PRT stay.3sg with him
'Ivan managed to stay with him.' (Bulgarian)

Georgian finite subjunctives

Georgian also exhibits finite control: 'decide' and 'try' both license OC with finite subordinate clauses (see (6)-(7)), given that

- the embedded predicate has **subjunctive morphology** (e.g., pluperfect);
- the subject of the embedded clause is **null PRO**.

- (6) [*šota-s_i deda-m_j gada-c'qv-it'-a, rom {PRO_{i/j}/k/mas_{i/j/k}} c'ign-i c'a-e-k'itx-a*
[Shota-GEN mother-ERG] PVB-decide-AOR.3SG, that {PRO/3SG.DAT} book-NOM PVB-PV-read-PLUPERF.3SG
'[Shota_i's mother]_j decided {PRO_j to read a book/that someone_{i/j/k} should read a book}.']
- (7) [*maia-s_i megobar-i_j cdil-ob-d-a, rom {PRO_{i/j}/k/mas_{i/j/k}} šejibr-i mo-e-g-o*
[Maia-GEN friend-NOM] try-TS-IMP-3SG, that {PRO/3SG.DAT} competition-NOM PVB-PV-win-PLUPERF.3SG
'[Maia_i's friend]_j was trying {PRO_j/for someone_{i/j/k} to win the competition}.'

Note: These are necessary conditions for finite control across all OC predicates in Georgian ('intend', 'continue', 'manage', 'promise', 'want', 'desire', etc.).

- embedded predicate marked for indicative mood (when grammatical) → no control;
- overt embedded subject, e.g. 3sg dative pronoun *mas* → no bound reading required.

Two types of OC

- Exhaustive control (EC):** controller and controllee MUST be co-referential.
(8) *The chair_i *dared* [PRO_i to gather during the strike].
- Partial control (PC):** controllee is allowed to be semantically plural, denoting a set of individuals which includes the controller.
(9) The chair_i *was afraid* [PRO_{i+} to gather during the strike].

Two important distinctions between EC and PC (Landau 2000):

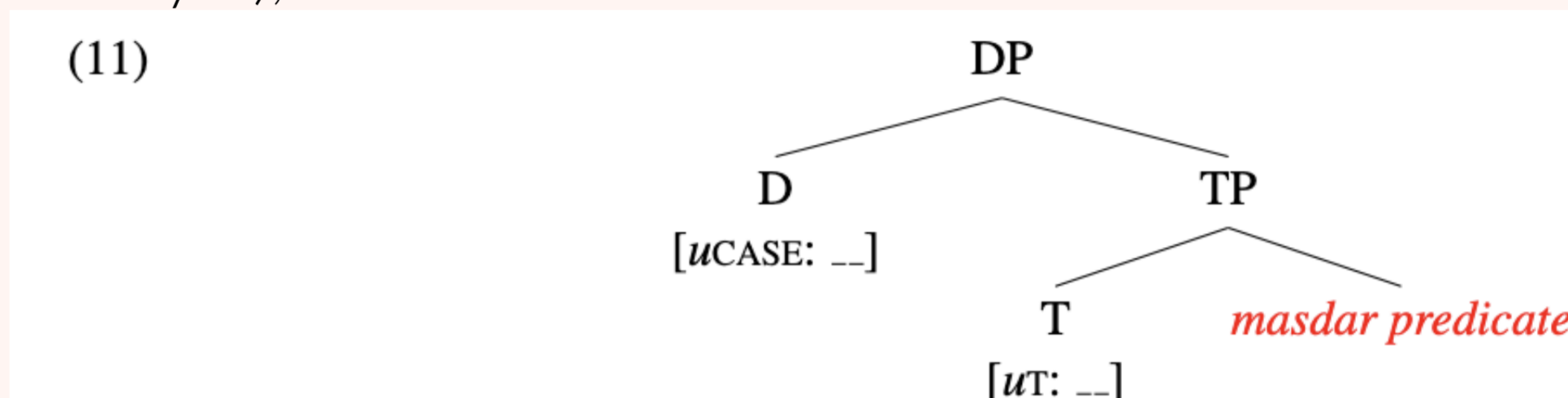
- Tense:** PC can produce tense mismatch between the matrix/embedded eventualities; EC must receive simultaneous interpretation.
(10) a. **Yesterday**, John *was afraid* to solve the problem (**tomorrow**).
b. **Yesterday**, John *dared* to solve the problem (??**tomorrow**).
- Collective predicates:** Only PC predicates are compatible with embedded collective predicates like *gather*, not EC predicates (see (8)-(9)).

Analysis

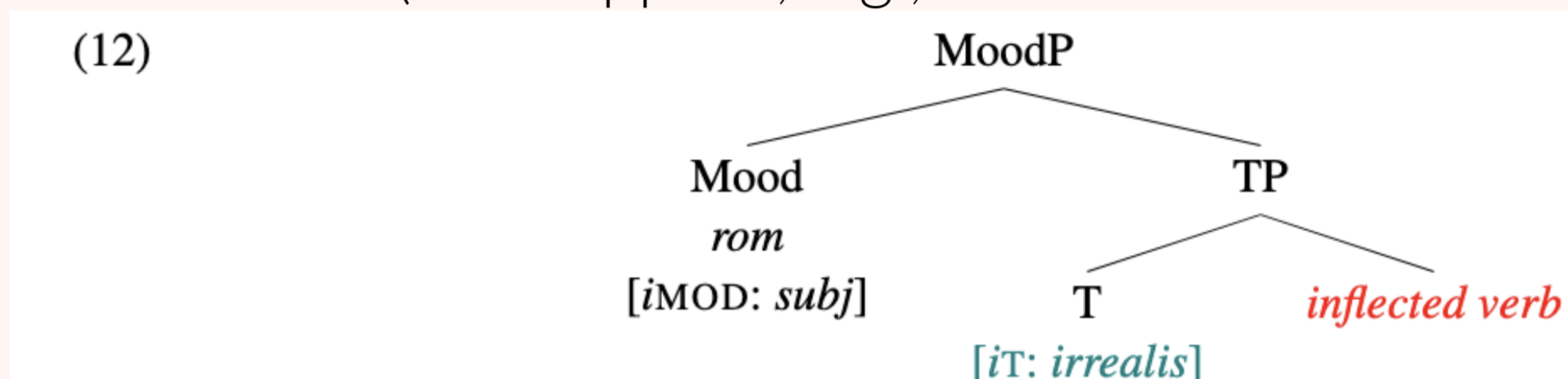
Sizes of complements

The key defining feature of a Georgian clause is **tense**; if the T head is not independently marked for tense, the TP will be restructured as a *masdar* → *masdars* lack tense, finite clauses are tensed.

- Generalization #1:** *Masdar* complements only project up to TP (below the DP layer), but their T head is unvalued.



- Generalization #2:** Finite embedded clauses project up to CP; truncation is also possible, so long as the result is not any smaller than TP and has valued tense (this happens, e.g., when T carries *irrealis* tense → MoodP).



Tense/mood affects control

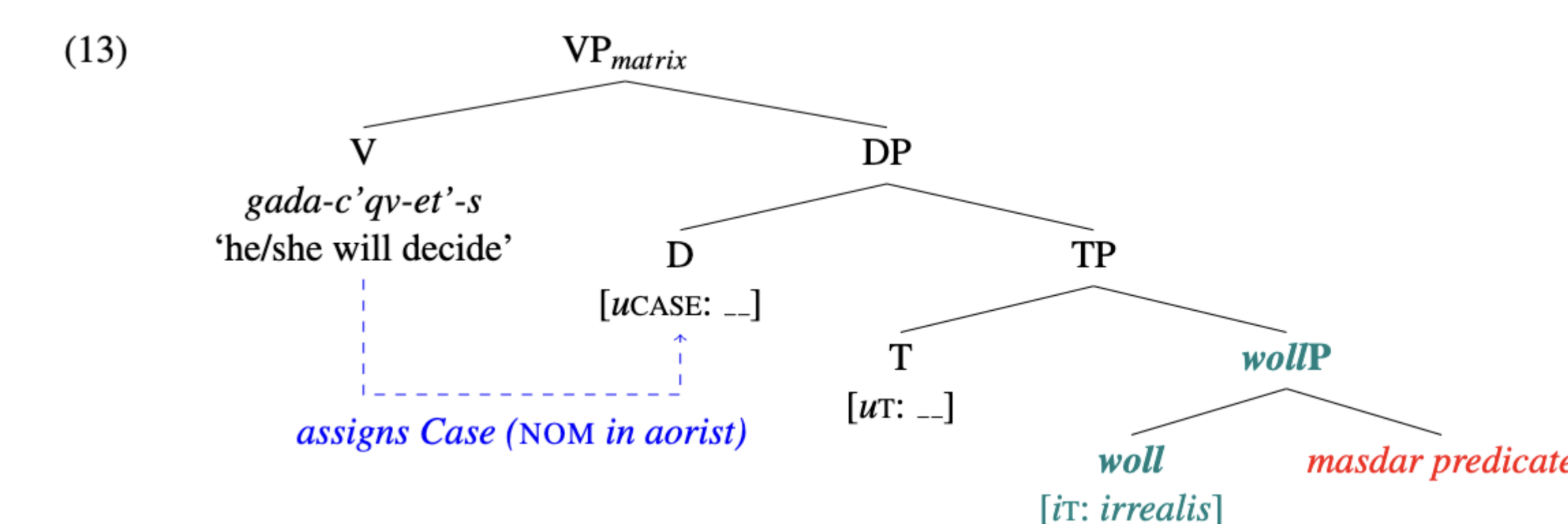
Landau (2004, 2015): If the complement is tenseless (*anaphoric tense*), EC applies. If the complement has *dependent tense/mood*, PC applies.

Predictions

- Finite subjunctive clauses have future/irrealis TMA → compatible with both 'decide' and 'try'
- Masdars* are tenseless → compatible with 'try'

Q: What about 'decide' – why is it compatible with *masdars*? By the **synthesis approach** to clausal complementation (Wurmbrand & Lohninger 2020).

Since 'decide' requires future/irrealis TMA on its complement, Georgian syntax projects a **covert modal woll** below the TP nucleus of the *masdar* to fulfill this requirement (cf. Condoravdi, 2001; Wurmbrand, 2014a):



Q: Why doesn't 'try' project *wollP* in its *masdar* complements?

Principle of Economy: 'try' has a clear way of expressing future/irrealis complements with finite subjunctive clauses, and it has a clear way of expressing tenseless complements with *masdars*. Thus, using *masdars* with *wollP* to express future/irrealis meanings is strongly dispreferred.

→ creates ambiguity, and derived meaning is already expressible by other means