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FROM TEMPORAL ANCHORING TO *LONG DISTANCE* ANAPHOR BINDING

ABSTRACT
In this talk I'm going to propose an account for the binding of long distance anaphors. The main idea I'll discuss is that Sequence of Tense (SoT) and Long Distance (LD) binding must be unified in a comprehensive theory. Namely, the information that at the interface level determines the temporal location of events also permits the identification of the antecedent of long distance anaphors. This proposal is not only motivated by the well-known interaction between verbal forms – for instance subjunctive/infinitive vs. indicative – and the distributional properties of LD anaphors, but also by the important role played by *subjects* in both domains.
Following this line of reasoning, I'll argue that the *mood effect* in Italian/Icelandic-like languages and the *blocking effect* in Chinese-like languages are one and the same phenomenon. The differences are determined by the peculiar morphological properties in the two language groups, in particular with respect to verbal morphology.
In this talk, I'll focus primarily on the prominent role of subjects and I'll show that most of the other properties of LD anaphors follow, once the question of subject orientation is properly addressed. To this purpose, I'll consider two main questions.
I. It has often been disregarded in the literature on the topic that the antecedent of a LD anaphor is not *always* a subject. With a psych-verb such as *worry* the antecedent can be the (surface) object. Consider for instance the following paradigm:

(1) Che la propria$_i$ figlia sia andata in campeggio da sola preoccupa molto Gianni$_i$
    That self's daughter is camping by herself worries Gianni a lot
(2) Che tutti ambiscano al proprio$_i$ incarico preoccupa molto il primo ministro$_i$
    That everybody aspires to self's office worries the Prime Minister a lot

In sentence (1) the long distance anaphor is embedded in the subject position of a sentential clause; in example (2) the LD anaphor appears in the object position of the subject clause. In both cases, the experiencer is available as an antecedent. Consider now the following examples:

(3) *Il primo ministro$_i$ preoccupa molto coloro che ambiscono al proprio$_i$ incarico
    The Prime Minister worries a lot those who whish self's office
(4) Coloro che ambiscono al proprio$_i$ incarico preoccupano molto il primo ministro$_i$
    Those who aspire to self's office worry the Prime Minister a lot

A LD anaphor embedded inside the experiencer cannot refer back to the subject: (3) contrasts minimally with (4). The unacceptability of (3) is a strong argument in favor of the idea that these cases should be accounted for by a theory of LD binding.
II. It is not the case that *every* subject – provided that it satisfies certain morphological conditions – is a good antecedent for the LD anaphor. Consider the peculiar distribution of anaphors in adverbial clauses:

(5) Il primo ministro$_i$ sperava che il dittatore$_j$ partisse prima che i rivoluzionari sequestrassero il proprio$_{i/*j}$ patrimonio
    The Prime Minister hoped that the dictator left before the revolutionaries sequestered self's patrimony

In this sentence, the anaphor has to skip the first available subject, and can refer only to the subject of the higher clause. This effect has been observed in many languages with LD anaphors and has been described both for Italian and for Icelandic. Why is that subject unavailable as an antecedent? The question is an interesting one, because the structural syntactic conditions for antecedenthood – i.e., c-command – seem to be met by both nominals, but only one qualifies as an antecedent.