

FINITENESS, IN GREEK, AND ELSEWHERE

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1. The nature of finiteness

Finiteness is an elusive concept that, curiously, is often presented as if its lineaments were clear to all, and agreed upon, and its application uncontroversial.¹ I argue here that the characterisation of finiteness has largely been mistakenly conceived, and its application, where there has perhaps been more agreement than in its precise definition, has to be somewhat different from that traditionally supposed, if we are to adequately reconstruct the basis for what is valid in this traditional application. With reference to the concept, or at least the term, I consulted, as a starting point, various writings on grammar which, however they differed, shared the relatively arbitrary property of being available to me in a summer bungalow in Greece; but I do not think they are untypical.

Thus, the glossary to the first volume of *CHEL* provides the following definition:

finite A term used to describe a verb which is marked for **tense** and **number**.

Hence **finite clause**, a clause which contains a subject and finite verb.

(Hogg 1992: 541)

This description applies the term to two different domains – “verb” and “clause” – and neither application – despite the “hence” – is simply derivable from the other. The clausal application introduces an element, “subject”, not made explicit in the verbal; and it cannot, in general, be regarded as implicit in e.g. the mention of “number”, since in a particular language, and in particular constructions, verbal number

¹ I am grateful to Fran Colman for enduring and influencing the evolution of the ideas on finiteness presented in what follows; that her influence had no better results is not her fault. Thanks too to Katerina Dimitriadou, Argyris Georgopoulos and Ursula Schmid for discussing with me some of the examples, and to Graeme Trousdale, who provided comments on an earlier version of the paper. I have also been reassured to find many of my misgivings concerning the application of “finiteness” shared independently by Nigel Vincent (1998).

does not necessarily reflect the number of the subject (however characterised).² This definition is not untypical in relating finiteness to the capacity for bearing certain categories, and (in the case of the finite clause) to license certain elements (subjects).

“Marked for” here presumably means “morphologically marked for”, or “inflected for”: this severely limits the application of the definition – to languages and constructions of the appropriate morphological type, whose verbal morphology reflects both tense and number.³ The definition is, to be sure, not offered as applicable outside the domain that is the concern of *CHEL*, English and its history. But its relation to, and derivability from, a general grammatical notion of finiteness should nevertheless have been made transparent. And, to go no further abroad than English, we would have to conclude on the basis of the definition that sentences like (1) contain no finite verb:

- (1a) Bouboulina must be in Paris.
 (1b) Bouboulina must have been in Paris.

None of the verbs in these sentences is morphologically marked for either tense or number. We must also conclude that these sentences do not involve finite clauses. Admittedly, “tense” is glossed (Hogg 1992: 547) as “a morphological and semantic temporal category”; but it is difficult to see how *must* in (1) – anymore than *have* in (1b) – can be regarded as “marked for tense” – even if one wants to argue that these verbs realise some “semantic temporal category”. This limitation in application of the term allowed by the definition is contrary to common parlance, whereby (1) would be said to contain finite clauses: the unmarked sentence type is traditionally assumed to contain at least one finite verb/clause, a tradition we return to below. But in terms of the above definition, finiteness is not a concept that can be applied generally to sentences, not even in a particular language.

I suggest that the consequence we have just drawn is very unsatisfactory. The suggested definition neither reconstructs the concept underlying traditional applications of the term, nor does it provide an account that can be applied even to the domain which is the concern of *CHEL*, the English language. And its unsatisfactoriness partly reflects what seems to me an even more profound failing in the tradi-

² Agreement with non-subjects is well-attested, as is agreement involving nonfinites, though it may differ in character (e.g. in involving number-gender-case rather than person-number, reflecting a non-verbal origin). Cf. the final footnote, and see again Vincent (1998: Section 2).

³ The requirement that finites must show both tense and number certainly allows for various (perhaps otherwise problematical) non-finites which share properties with finites, such as the tensed infinitives and person/number-agreeing gerunds of Turkish (George and Kornfilt 1981: 118). But this formulation can scarcely constitute a general definition. There are languages and sentences without the appropriate morphology, languages and sentences where agreement is not (just) with the subject, languages and sentences that lack subjects, in the conventional sense reconstructed in Anderson (1997a).

tional conceptual framework that the definition relies on, a failure in explanation: no account is offered of why the definition singles out tensed and numbered verbs.⁴ Why are these categories considered significant, even though they are clearly not definitional? It surely must be that tensed and numbered verbs quite commonly are associated with some property that – unlike tense- and number-marking – is criterial for finiteness, and renders it grammatically significant, as well as accounting for the common association with tensing and number. This explanatory property is strangely absent from the above definition. Let us see if other definitions get us any closer to it.

Here is one, again from a glossary, that makes the presence of a subject crucial for both finite verbs and finite clauses:

finite The term *finite verb/clause* denotes an auxiliary or nonauxiliary verb or clause which can have a subject with a nominative case like *I/we/he/she/they*.
 (Radford 1997: 507)

The use in the definition of the modal (“can”) avoids potential problems arising from the fact that most English sentences don’t have subjects with a nominative case, and that the element agreed with may not be the most obvious candidate for syntactic subjecthood:

- (2a) There is/*are one word that behaves like that.
 (2b) There are/*is several words that behave like that.

But such a definition is thereby scarcely operational. So that although the verb form in (3a) “can have a subject with a nominative case”, the same form in (3b) would not traditionally have been regarded as finite:

- (3a) They swim.
 (3b) They can swim.

But, more importantly, there is once more no explanation for why the components of the description are allegedly defining properties of finiteness, nor any way in which such a definition could be generalised outside (standard varieties of) Present-day English: it is, indeed, insistently parochial, in not merely invoking nominative and subject,⁵ but in also citing specific forms of English, again via a hedge,

⁴ The term “finite” derives from the notion that such forms are circumscribed. Thus the *OED* gives: “Of a verb: Limited by number and person; not in the infinitive mood”. The definitions considered here can be seen as variants of such a view.

⁵ Not only would generalisation of the definition require independent identification of nominativeness in the absence of morphology, it would condemn to nonfiniteness the not uncommon third-person-singulars known as impersonals that have no reconstructable nominative argument, despite the distribution they share with personal finites (cf. e.g. Denison 1993: ch.5; also fn.8, and Section 3 below). Cf. too fn.2.

“like”.⁶ And, again, there is a more profound failure to identify why the invoked defining properties are apparently in some way to be associated (in English) with finiteness but cannot in any way be regarded as criterial.

The reader may by now have contracted a feeling that it is rather unworthy and unscholarly of me to be pouncing for my purposes on definitions from the glossaries of works with primarily a pedagogical aim. Surely, this reader might suggest, an adequate characterisation of finiteness can emerge only within the framework of a fully worked-out formal theory of grammar? This is, no doubt, the case. But my point is that it is clear that the above definitions cannot form even the starting point for an adequate definition: however elaborated, they are simply looking in the wrong place; they are reconstructing in theoretical terms the wrong elements in traditional ideas about finiteness and nonfiniteness, and they cannot be related to an adequate generalisable characterisation. And (for example) the elaboration of the role of finiteness in various aspects of the framework expounded in some detail in Radford (1997) throws no further light on the character of finiteness itself. And such recent theoretical expositions as Chomsky (1995) follow a long tradition in apparently finding an account of finiteness unnecessary, even in the form of a gloss. Even Rizzi’s recognition of finiteness as (at least in some languages) “more rudimentary than tense and other inflectional specifications on the verbal system” (1997: 284) does not lead to a characterisation of its nature. We can at least conclude that finiteness cannot be reduced to the properties appealed to in the above definitions; but an adequate account of finiteness, even if not fully elaborated, should contribute to an explanation of their frequent co-occurrence with it: the recurrence of this co-occurrence is an explicandum, not the basis for a definition of finiteness.

Consider now, to widen slightly our linguistic basis, the following account of finiteness, formulated in relation to Greek:

Unlike English, Greek does not have infinitives and for this reason all embedded clauses are finite, i.e. they contain verbs which are fully inflected for person and number in agreement with their subject.

(Holton et al. 1997: 439 – no Greek summer bungalow should be without one!)

This is similar to Hogg’s description of finite clauses, in invoking both “subject” and agreement morphology (despite Hogg’s unexplained neglect of person among these),

⁶ The definition also seems to be at odds with the first introduction of finiteness in the same book, which resorts to an explanation invoking tense: “... finite verbs (i.e. verbs which carry present/past etc. tense) ...” (Radford 1997: 17), and the presence of a subject is relegated to a question of “licensing” by such a finite (i.e. “tensed”) verb. Compare with this the appendage to the definition given above: “in general, finite verbs carry tense/agreement properties, whereas nonfinite verbs are tenseless and agreementless forms ...” (Radford 1997: 508), where “in general” seems (appropriately) to be being used as a hedge rather than a claim for universality. The sense of finiteness is further obscured by the claim that “the complementizers *that* and *if* are inherently finite in the sense that they can only be used to introduce a finite clause ...”, which latter turns out to be “a clause containing a present- or past-tense auxiliary or verb” (Radford 1997: 54–55).

but appeal to tense-marking is abandoned. And the same problems arise, compounded by the fact that many verbs in Greek show “agreement” but no subject (in the absence of theoretically parochial assumptions concerning alleged “empty” elements):

- (4a) Erhome.
I’m coming.
- (4b) Fisai.
It’s windy.

And similar questions pose themselves: why is there a special label for clauses containing “verbs which are fully inflected for person and number”, for clauses containing verbs that display a certain morphological characteristic? – particularly if it’s non-contrastive, and not even very useful comparatively?

But in this description we have a clue to what underlies the traditional deployment of “finite”. For this invocation of finiteness is applied to something that is being explained about embedded clauses, something unusual, particularly from the viewpoint of someone familiar with English: all embedded clauses in Greek are finite;⁷ we normally expect at least some embedded clauses to be nonfinite. This is associated with what I suggest is the major function of nonfiniteness, to signal that a particular clause is embedded: a nonfinite construction signals that it is dependent (except in certain, marked circumstances that I shall return to shortly). A finite verb may be dependent, but it may alternatively be non-dependent, specifically that verb which guarantees the well-formedness of the structure as a complete sentence. It is such a view, I suggest, that informs the traditional application of these terms, however they are defined. Consider, for example Jespersen’s (1924: 87) formulation: “The sentence-building power is found in all those forms which are often called ‘finite’ verb forms, but not in such forms as *barking* or *eaten* (participles), nor in infinitives like *to bark*, *to eat*”. And it is such a view that contributes to an explanation of the frequent association of finiteness with presence of various morphological categories (as deployed – mistakenly, I’m arguing – in the above definitions of finiteness).

One recurrent but not necessary characteristic of embedded structures is structural reduction: elements of embedded clauses which are shared with superordinate clauses – notably subjects – may not be given independent expression “within” the embedded clause; in an embedded clause terms of morphological categories like tense may not be marked in so far as they are shared with a superordinate verb or deduced from the lexical meaning of such a verb; etc. Thus some embedded verbs may show apparent syntactic incompleteness and, crucially, reduced (non-subordinate) morphological differentiation. The crucial morphosyntactic property missed by the above definitions is associated with nonfiniteness rather than finiteness. What is

⁷ I return below (Section 3, exemplified by (10) and (12)) to some marginal exceptions, one of them explicitly noted in the text by Holton et al. (1997).

of general significance is not what particular categories are signalled by finite verb forms but whether there are verb forms – nonfinites – that fail to carry these categories. The definitions focus on the wrong area.

However, there is more to finiteness than is suggested even by this refocusing. It is, I suggest, unhelpful to simply label such morphologically reduced forms as “nonfinite”, as is commonly done. For this is to fail to recognise that morphological reduction is just one potential way of signalling necessary embeddedness, absence of what Jespersen called a “sentence-building power”; it is part of a more general phenomenon of more grammatical significance than whether or not a language has morphologically reduced verb forms. I shall be defending here, partly on the basis of the grammar of Greek, such a more general notion of finiteness as a syntactic phenomenon, one which renders Greek less typologically odd than the above (not unrepresentative) description of Holton et al. (1997) would suggest. This is not to deny that a distinction between (paradigmatically) reduced and unreduced forms is relevant to the description of language, and that it may correlate with (syntactic) finiteness in the sense being proposed here; and I shall continue to refer to reduction in the full panoply of (non-subordinative) verbal morphology associated with particular circumstances as a reduction in morphological or morphosyntactic finiteness. It is simply that concern with this has obscured a more fundamental – or “rudimentary” – distinction.

What I am suggesting is this: a syntactically finite form – or (simply) finite form, as I shall henceforth use the term – is one that realises the category that can function as the essential core of any (non-elliptical) sentence; all other elements depend, directly or indirectly – and notably via subcategorisation – on such a finite form; the finite element that is the core licenses all other elements, directly or indirectly. Section 2 will make more explicit these notions of “core” and dependency, as well as outline a theory of syntactic categories which allows us to express finiteness. In (4) the finite forms that are the core occur alone; in the English glosses to these a typologically restricted syntactic restriction frustrates this, but sentencehood is again licensed by the finite form. A nonfinite form is one that cannot serve this function. It is marked in some way as being capable only of being embedded, and it appears under rection. This offers a maximally generalisable characterisation. Whether nonfinites are universally distinguished is another question. In Section 3 I shall argue that they are less endangered in Greek, at least, than is commonly supposed.

We should observe some caveats here. For instance, the German sentence in (5b), of a type familiar in instructions and regulations, suggests a possible non-embedded use for the otherwise nonfinite infinitive, beside the embedded (5a):

- (5a) Ich muss die Schuhe abtreten.
I must clean the/my shoes.
- (5b) Schuhe abtreten.
Clean (your) shoes!

Perhaps, then, we should make occurrence as the core of a declarative criterial for finite forms. Nonfinites are marked, then, as being restricted, either to embedded positions or to particular pragmatic functions.⁸

This would mean, for instance, that distinct imperative forms, despite showing number marking, as in the Greek example of (6a), and possibly a subject, as in the English of (6b), are nonfinite:

- (6a) Fige!
Go away-sg.
- (6b) You be quiet!

This is one respect in which Greek would have more nonfinite forms than allowed for by Holton et al. (1997). Indeed, even on their own terms, such forms are doubtful as finites, in that they can scarcely be said to be “fully inflected for person and number in agreement with their subject” (Holton et al. 1997: 439), as Holton et al. apparently concede elsewhere (1997: 206).⁹

However, such a suggestion concerning imperatives is not an appealing proposal on other grounds. Recall that imperatives are resolutely anti-nonfinite in normally failing to be embeddable, which renders a classification of them as nonfinite rather paradoxical. It seems best to not limit finiteness to forms that can occur as declarative cores. Rather, we should say that nonfinites are permitted exceptionally as cores in particular pragmatic circumstances. Imperatives, on the other hand, are typically sentential cores.

If imperatives are finite, then they illustrate the possibility of a reduction in the marking of morphological terms on verbs which does not entail nonfiniteness. Section 3 illustrates from Greek the possibility that, equally, non-finiteness need not be associated with such morphological reduction. Before that, as indicated, Section 2 describes the place of finiteness in the system of syntactic categories proposed in Anderson (1997a) and other works referred to there, and its relation to the class of auxiliaries.

What I have attempted to do in the present section is distinguish two aspects of “finiteness” which do not necessarily coincide: the definitions considered initially above highlight the morphosyntactic characteristics (though with a mistaken focus therein), while the syntactic property of guaranteeing sentencehood remains at most implicit. These different aspects are succinctly summed up in Matthews’ (1997) definition of “finite”, which recognises the linguistic parochialism of the morphological

⁸ I am trying here to consistently minimise appeal to ellipsis. Obviously, the argument would otherwise take a different shape. Whatever, examples like (5b) are a marked phenomenon.

⁹ As with Radford’s, their description of finiteness also seems to be incompatible with the finiteness of impersonal verbs, which Holton et al. characterise in Greek as “those which appear in the 3rd person singular and have no noun phrase or pronoun as their subject” (1997: 199).

aspect, though even it relates syntactic finiteness to the occurrence of particular verb forms:

Traditionally a verb, e.g. in Latin or Greek, inflected for person and number. Now more generally of any verb whose form is such that it can stand in a simple declarative sentence.

Many verbal forms in English, for example, are indifferently finite or nonfinite.

Quirk et al. (1972: 71-72) attempt a comprehensive definition based on English whose morphological aspects (their (1) and in part (2) and (4)) also remain ineluctably language-particular. For instance, where Matthews appeals to “person and number”, Quirk et al. invoke “tense” and “mood”. They characterise “finite verb phrases” as follows:

- (1) Finite verb phrases have tense distinctions, *ie* present and past tense to express grammatical time relations ...
- (2) Finite verb phrases can occur as the verb phrase of a main clause. There is person and number concord between the subject and the finite verb ...
- (3) Finite verb phrases have mood, which indicates the speaker’s attitude to the predication.
- (4) Finite verb phrases have a finite verb form, *ie* an operator or a simple present or past tense form.

These statements, and even sub-parts of each, apply at different levels of generality. The first sentence of (2) comes closest to the notion of syntactic finiteness. The rest of (2) and all of (1) specify morphosyntactic categories that in English are absent from nonfinites. (3) reflects the restriction of e.g. imperatives to finites, as discussed above. (4) offers a non-explanatory and non-generalisable definition of “finite verb”, which partly repeats (1) and partly appeals to the distinctive syntactic (“operator”) behaviour of the modals, *be*, *have* and “periphrastic *do*”. All of these distinctions will figure in what follows, though not necessarily as definitional with respect to finiteness.

I summarise the position on finiteness being adopted here as:

The syntactic category of finiteness licenses independent sentencehood; the occurrence of nonfinites is rectionally determined.

Morphosyntactic finiteness maximises non-rectional verbal inflexional morphology.

Syntactic and (relative) morphosyntactic finiteness often, but need not, coincide.

2. Finiteness as a category

As a functional category, finiteness may be manifested morphologically and/or syntactically and/or as an independent lexical item. Morphologically, it is manifested in particular languages by the presence with a verb of particular morphological catego-

ries (as in the bases for the definitions discussed in Section 1) and/or by the absence of some morphological marking (e.g. absence of infinitival *-an* in Old English). It may be manifested positionally, in relation to, particularly, the subject in criterial constructions, as in (1), in which, as observed, the finite form lacks positive morphological marking as such. Syntactic nonfiniteness may not be accompanied by morphological reduction. Thus, Anderson (1997a: 287-288) argues that in German nonfiniteness should be associated not only with the sentence-final participle in (7a) but also with the final morphologically finite forms in (7b) and (7c):

- (7a) Er hat einen besonderes Preis gewonnen.
He has won a special prize.
- (7b) Er erzählt mir, daß er einen besonderes Preis gewonnen hatte.
He told me that he had won a special prize.
- (7c) Sie hat mir erzählt, daß sie fünf Jahre lang studierte.
She has told me that she studied for five years.

Nonfiniteness is expressed positionally only, with no morphological reduction: finite verbs in German occur in second position; verbs in other positions cannot license a simple sentence.

In some languages, finiteness is limited to a particular class of items, often distinguished, as “co-verbs”, or “converbs”, from (ordinary) verbs. Recognition here of a parochial word class quite distinct from verbs is unwarranted, given the close association between verbs and finiteness elsewhere, and also the frequent overlap between the two classes in the languages in which they have both been recognised. The *yala* verb in (8a) (from the Australian language Wunambal – see e.g. Blake 1987: Section 7.2) must always be accompanied by one of a small set of items including *wanban*, the latter can appear independently, as in (8b):

- (8a) Yala ngu-wanban.
hunt I-present.
‘I hunt’
- (8b) Ngu-wanban.
I-fall.
‘I fall’

(One might want to argue, though, that the *wanban* form in (8b) is a combined finite and nonfinite, along the lines of (10a) below.) In other languages, there is a set of items which have a privileged relation with respect to finiteness, but in certain circumstances (ordinary) verbs may also be finite. This is the case with English, where (ordinary) verbs may be finite only in “not-NICE” environments (cf. e.g. Huddleston 1979 on the “NICE properties” – ability to attract sentential Negation, to Invert, to Code ellipses, to carry propositional Emphasis etc. – distinguishing auxiliaries), such as (3a). (9) illustrate some of the familiar “NICE” environments from which finite (ordinary) verbs are excluded:

(9a) They can't swim./*They swimn't./They don't swim.

(9b) Can they swim?/*Swim they?/Do they swim?

I shall distinguish both types of privileged items – whether uniquely privileged, as in Wunambal, or not – as auxiliaries, and group them with (ordinary) verbs as verbals. Accordingly, we can talk about finiteness in such cases being auxiliarised – fully or partially: it is (at least in part) manifested as a syntactic class of items, a part of speech. In English the very occurrence of a modal (rather than its form, which is largely invariable) manifests finiteness. Let us now look at the characterisation of some of the immediately preceding key terms which is suggested by Anderson (1997a).

Different basic syntactic categories are distinguished by how the two notional features P (predicability) and N (referentiability) are combined: the combinations determine the semantic character of the category and its syntax. Thus, P is associated with dynamicness and relationality, and is prominent in the representation of verbals, which are prototypically dynamic and subject to a wider range of valencies than the prototypical members of other parts of speech. A part of speech is a categorial combination that is lexicalised: there is a set of items with a unique distribution which can be determinately characterised categorially on the basis of the semantic properties of the prototypical members. Certain categories may be absent as parts of speech from particular languages, as with adjectives, or auxiliaries; a language may lack auxiliarisation. Table 1 presents representations for the most basic categories, and the names for their lexicalisation as parts of speech.

Table 1. Notional features, categories and parts of speech.

features	{P}	{P;N}	{P:N}	{N;P}	{N}	{ }
category	finite				referential	functor
part of speech	auxiliary ¹⁰	verb	adjective	noun	determiner	adposition

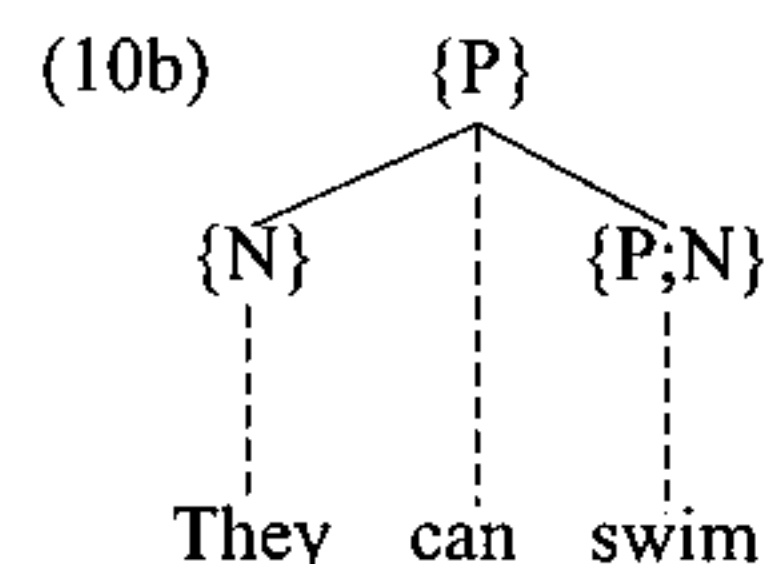
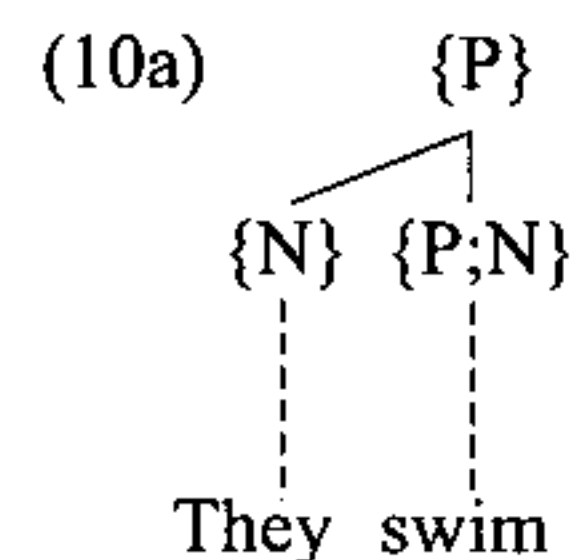
Table 1 shows various combinations of N and P, including the null combination, realised when independently lexicalised by simple adpositions (*at*, *of*, etc. in English). As a functional category, i.e. a category with no more than one feature present, a functor may also be realised morphologically, as case, in particular. The semi-colon indicates that the feature to the left is predominant: thus, the verbals – auxiliaries and verbs – share the prominence of P, the nominals (determiners/pronouns and nouns), the prominence of the N feature, which is associated notionally with stability and discreteness. Adjectives are represented, by the colon, as combining P and N in equal proportions. These complex (thus non-functional-category) combinations are

¹⁰ Application of the label “auxiliary” to English is slightly more complex: while modal auxiliaries in English are uniquely {P}, the non-modals are both {P} and {P;N}, in as much as they occur in both “NICE” and nonfinite positions.

normally lexicalised, but languages may lack an adjective part of speech. This is not the place to dwell on this proposal and its justifications (which are discussed at some length in Anderson 1997a), except in the area of the functional categories, the simple combinations {P}, {N} and { }.

These functional categories are “syntactically active” at the expense of lexical content, particularly compared (where applicable) with the category with which they share prominence of a feature. Thus, the auxiliaries are more widespread in finite positions in English, but are closed-class, semantically restricted and subcategorisationally impoverished, typically taking only a nonfinite as an argument. As observed, functional categories may be realised independently, or as part of the morphology or positional syntax of a lexical (non-functional) category, as with finiteness in English. Likewise, often a referential category is determinerised – realised independently as a determiner. Definiteness in Swedish is realised both morphologically and as a determiner. Relevant to our present concerns is the observation that the unmarked sentence has a {P} element at its root, whether the {P} is realised independently or morphologically.

We can represent the different possibilities for the realisation of finiteness illustrated by (3) in this respect as in (10):



The solid lines are dependency arcs, the discontinuous are lines of association. In (10a) the nodes joined by the dependency arc are not different in syntactic precedence; the dependency is internal. This configuration is allowed for by a redundancy rule which, in English and other languages which are not fully auxiliarised, allows finiteness to a verb (lexically {P;N}) as a morphological/positional property. The {P} element which is not dependent on any other node – the root – is what I called the “core” of the sentence structure; all else depends on it, no matter how elaborated that structure may be compared with the simple structures used for illustration in (10).

I have labelled the nodes above *they* in (10) as {N}, the representation for referentials, and for determiners when independently realised (lexicalised). This embodies the claim that pronouns – and names, indeed, which are also {N} – are intransitive determiners: that is, there are three types of environments associated with referentials that are manifested substantively (i.e. not merely positionally) as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Varieties of referential.

{N}	{N/...}	{N}
...		
<i>inflexion</i>	<i>transitive</i> <i>(determiner)</i>	<i>intransitive</i> <i>(pronoun)</i>

The slash in the representation “{N/...}” is meant to indicate that the element takes a complement of some sort (not specified here). We can recognise an analogous three-way possibility for functors, as shown in Table 3, and for finiteness, given in Table 4, both of which likewise expand on Table 1.

Table 3. Varieties of functor.

{ }	{ /...}	{ }
...		
<i>inflexion</i> <i>(case)</i>	<i>transitive</i> <i>(adposition)</i>	<i>intransitive</i> <i>(adverbial particle)</i>

Table 4. Varieties of finite.

{P}	{P/...}	{P}
...		
<i>inflexion</i>	<i>transitive</i> <i>(auxiliary)</i>	<i>intransitive</i> <i>(sentential particle)</i>

The first two possibilities in Table 4 are exemplified in (10). Again the slash introduces a complement. The prototypical complement for {N} is {N;P}, and for {P} {P;N}. Complements to { } are typically {N}, with {P} being prototypically non-dependent (not a complement). By “sentential particle” I intend such elements as *yes* in English, which alone can constitute a sentence, one that is admittedly heavily context-dependent but which can scarcely be said to be syntactically incomplete: hence, it manifests intransitive finiteness. This last suggestion, admittedly, but deliberately, somewhat extends the traditional scope of finiteness.

However that may be, I turn now to the question of more conventional manifestations of finiteness – or rather nonfiniteness – in Greek, where I argue, however, that the traditional alignments of verbal forms are unhelpful, particularly in the light of an attempt to provide a substantial universal basis for finiteness.

3. Finiteness in Greek

3.1. A traditional view

Greek seems, on the basis of traditional accounts, to be a language in which finiteness is not auxiliarised. Holton et al. (1997: part II, §7.1.4) – and others – do describe the first verbal in (11) as an “auxiliary”:

- (11) *Eho pai sta Trikala.*
I-have gone to-the Trikala.
I have been to Trikala.

But they introduce this notion in the part of the book devoted to morphology, and the formation of the “perfect” with *eho* – illustrated in (11) – is presented in the context of a survey of the conjugational system. I take it, then, that they intend that *eho* in this construction is what has been called (Anderson 1989, 1990, 1991) a “periphrastic auxiliary” (or “morphosyntactic” – vs. “syntactic” – “auxiliary”), i.e. a form that can be interpreted as supplementing the semantic distinctions made within the paradigm of the verb with which it is in construction; Greek has no morphological perfect, but other tense/aspect distinctions are drawn morphologically (as illustrated in what follows). But there is no syntactic motivation for establishing a word class auxiliary for Greek composed of the item *eho*. The syntax and morphology of *eho* is like that of other verbs, except that in this use it requires to be complemented by a unique form of the verb, signalled by the *-i* ending on *pai* in (11).¹¹ But this morphosyntactic peculiarity in the shape of the dependent nonfinite is scarcely a warrant for

¹¹ Clitic pronouns precede *eho* rather than the *i*-form: *Tou to eho dosi* (‘To-him it I-have given’ – Holton et al. (1997: 229)), as is appropriate for a periphrasis. The clitic seeks the agreement-bearing form to which it is most immediately subordinate. Clitic positioning reflects morphosyntactic finiteness.

Eho also combines with the “passive participle” to form a “resultative perfect”: see Holton et al. (1997: part III, Section 1.6.9). See also fn.11.

the establishment of a class of syntactic auxiliaries. As far as this evidence is concerned, then, we can take it that finiteness in Greek is manifested inflexionally, as on the left of Table 4, and not as an independent item, a member of a distinct part of speech. Greek verbs can occur as either finite, so represented as in (12a), or non-finite, (12b):

- | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| (12a) | {P} | (12b) | {P;N} |
| | | | |
| | {P:N} | | |

Our task is apparently to determine which occurrences are which.

Holton et al. (1997: 439) overtly recognise as nonfinite, in the context of the passage quoted above, only the “gerund”. They characterise this form as describing “an action which takes place in parallel with the action of the verb it modifies”, and as expressing “either the manner in which something is done or the means or the time during which something is done or taking place” and they provide examples including (13):

- (13) O Giannis irthe trehontas otan akuse ta nea.
 The Giannis he-came running when he-heard the news.
 Giannis came running when he heard the news.

(see too Joseph 1983: 2-3, Sections 3.4-5). This is clearly a nonfinite form used only in circumstantial elements (adjuncts). But in discussing the perfect exemplified in (11) above, Holton et al. specifically label the *-i* form which is associated with perfect *eho* as “the **non-finite** verb form” (1997: 229). And this clearly is another nonfinite form. The *eho* form is the core of the sentence; it realises (whatever else – as represented in, say, (12a)) the finiteness category, and the *i*-form is dependent on it.¹² These apparently exhaust the clear cases of nonfinite forms in the traditional sense, interpreted as being marked positively (by distinctive, dedicated inflexions) and by morphological reduction (absence of at least some of the usual verbal distinctions). And as such they are certainly the most striking examples of nonfinites. But I want to try to make a case for including as nonfinite some forms which do not show morphological reduction, though amongst them there is a subset positively marked as dependent. This grouping seems to me more fundamental than the traditional one, and it renders the occurrence of finite and nonfinite forms in Greek rather less “unbalanced”.

¹² Greek is also described as showing passive present and passive perfect “participles” (see e.g. Holton et al. 1997: Section 7.1.6). And in their glossary (under “finite verb” – “a verb form that displays person and number”) Holton et al. include as nonfinite “the *gerund*, the *participles*, and the *non-finite*” (1997: 508). But the “participles” appear to be deverbal adjectival formations rather than nonfinite forms. For some discussion, however, see Laskaratou and Warburton 1984, Laskaratou 1988-9, Kakouriotis 1989.

3.2. A proposal concerning auxiliaries and non-finiteness

I am concerned in the first place with those forms that Holton *et al* (1997) describe as “dependent” (sometimes known elsewhere as “subjunctive”) – thereby recognising the property I want to insist on here. They comment on the “dependent” form: “... the basic difference between the dependent and the other verb forms is the fact that the dependent normally requires one of the particles *θα* [*tha*], *να* [*na*] or *ας* [*as*] while the other verb forms may occur either after the same three particles or independently of them” (1997: 221). It is my contention that this observation reflects the nonfinite status of “dependent” forms; the “dependent”¹³ is a perfective non-past that cannot occur as the core of the sentence. A typical example of its occurrence is (14):

- (14) Thelo na dokimaso to fagito.
 I-want I-try-*dep* the food.
 I want to try the food.

The subordinating “particle” *na* licenses the dependent form *dokimaso*.¹⁴ The corresponding imperfective, which may function as a core, as well as in construction with *na*, is *dokimazo*. I return to non-“dependents” in a moment. At this point we are merely observing that the “dependent” form does not occur unlicensed, which is incompatible with finiteness, given the assumption made here that a finite must be able to occur as a root, dependent on no other element.

Na plus “dependent” does also occur without a governing verb, as a sort of optative, as in (15a), and this is the regular pattern with the hortative/concessive (etc.) *as* of (15b):

- (15a) Na plirosume.
 We-pay-*dep*.
 We’d like to pay.
- (15b) As ton enohlisume tora.
 Let him we-bother-*dep* now.
 Let’s bother him now.

(Holton et al. 1997: 205). Holton et al. (1997: part III, Sections 1.3.2.1.1, 1.5.2.1) record various circumstances involving “dependents” where the “particles” can be omitted, but this is always (apart from in some idioms) in the environment of other items (such as *an* ‘if’, *opu* ‘wherever’) indicating a subordinate status for the “de-

¹³ For clarity, I shall continue to put instances of this (morphological) use of “dependent” in quotes.

¹⁴ These forms show no reduction in person-number agreement. The dependent stem cannot be combined with morphological tense-marking, though it does form the basis for the formation of the past perfective and perfective imperative.

pendent” form. The “dependent” form is always syntactically dependent: it is therefore always syntactically not finite.

But, in that case, what does this tell us about the “particles” in (15)? Consider in the first place the *as* of (15b). This is an item that does not appear in subordinate clauses: it is always, as in (15b), the licensing element in a main clause. It is not morphosyntactically finite, but it meets the criterion for syntactic finiteness. It guarantees potential for main-clause status, for non-dependence. And it constitutes, I propose, one member of a part of speech auxiliary in Greek: it is privileged with respect to finiteness compared with verbs (i.e. non-auxiliary verbals). We can characterise it categorially as in (16):

(16) {P/{P:N}}

i.e. a finite item that takes a nonfinite verb (indicated to the right of the slash) as an argument: the standard auxiliary categorisation. Finiteness is after all partially auxiliaryised in Greek.

The auxiliary *as* licenses the “dependent” in (15b). But this nonfinite position is not limited to “dependents”, with an interesting further consequence: it is not just “dependents” that realise the nonfinite category in these circumstances. All verbs (lexically {P;N}), not just “dependents”, are eligible as complements to *as*, other things being equal. But although morphologically identical non-“dependent” verbs can also themselves be finite – thus can appear in either of the positions given in (12) (repeated here) – “dependents” can occur only in the first, as established above:

(12a) {P} (12b) {P;N}
 |
 {P:N}

In other words, “dependent” forms are an exception with respect to the syntactic redundancy (17) which equips verbs to appear as finites:

(17) P
 |
 P;N ⇒ P;N

On the other hand, not all occurrences of non-“dependents” (imperfectives or pasts) are finite. Finite occurrence of a non-“dependent” is illustrated by, say, *thelo* in (14) above; nonfinite by *eleges* in (18):

(18a) As tu to eleges.
 To-him it you-told.
 You should have told him that.

(18b) As min tu to eleges.
 Not to-him it you-told.
 You shouldn't have told him that. (Holton et al. 1997: 205)

Despite the lack of morphological marking of such a status, the verb in a sequence *as* plus non-“dependent” – as in (18) – is nonfinite, and thus satisfies the auxiliary requirement embodied in (16). It is, after all, not just “dependent” forms that are nonfinite; they are simply the ones that are morphologically marked as such. Placement after the auxiliary *as* is (syntactically) a nonfinite position, whatever the morphological marking of the verb; given its categorisation, *as* marks the position and the form that fills it as nonfinite. That is, a form may be marked as nonfinite by its syntactic position; as I have already observed in relation to English and German, a form may in itself be ambivalent with respect to whether it realises a finite or a nonfinite category: Greek non-“dependent” forms realise finiteness only in the absence of “particles” such as *as*. As in German (recall (7)), finiteness is manifested here syntactically rather than (also) morphologically. Thus, “dependent” forms in Greek are both morphologically and syntactically nonfinite (at least, morphologically they are relatively nonfinite by virtue of their distinct morphology), but non-“dependents” are morphologically finite but syntactically either finite or nonfinite.¹⁵

This distinction between finite and non-finite occurrence of non-“dependents” is also reflected in a difference in possible interpretation. Non-“dependents” that complement *na* etc. – i.e. nonfinite non-“dependents” – are necessarily semantically imperfective (as are all past non-“dependents”); they contrast with perfective forms, as illustrated by (19):

(19a) Tha ithela na tu grafis sihna.
 I would like you to write (*non-dependent*) to him often.
 (19b) Tha ithela na tu grapsis avrio.
 I would like you to write (*dependent*) to him tomorrow.

Present finite non-“dependents” are not in contrast with a perfective, however, and they can thus be given perfective interpretations (though the scope for this is limited, as suggested by the absence of a specifically finite present perfective form), as in the performative and historic narrative uses illustrated by (20):

¹⁵ This is different from what is advocated in Anderson (1997a: 286-7), where, among the forms inflected for person-number, only the dependents (i.e. forms morphologically marked as subordinate) are regarded as nonfinite. I suggest now that, rather, this situation characterises Rumanian, wherein morphological subjunctives allow argument-sharing with a superordinate verb (Vincent 1998: 151-2): see below on this as a characteristic of (syntactic) nonfinites. “Subjunctives” in language are typically morphosyntactically finite but syntactically nonfinite.

- (20a) Leo na pame oli mazi se kanena nisi.
I-say we-go all together to an island.
I say we should all go together to an island.
- (20b) Mia fora, mia alepu me to alepopulo tis kathotan bros sti
One time, a vixen with the cub her were sitting in front of-the
folia tis, psofia apo tin pina ki' apo to krio. Aksafina i alepu
den her, worn-out from the hunger and from the cold. Suddenly the vixen
arhise na trivi ta dio brostina tis podia grigora-grigora
began to rub-together the two front her paws quickly-quickly
ke na kani a! a! a! – “Ti ine, Mana” tis lei t'alepopulo ...
and to go ah! ah! ah! – “What is-it, mummy” to-her says the cub ...
- Once upon a time, a vixen and her cub were sitting in front of her den, worn out from hunger and from cold. Suddenly the vixen began to rub together very quickly her two forepaws and to go Ah! Ah! Ah! “What is it, Mummy?” says the cub to her ...

The first two (underlined) verbs in (20b) are past imperfective and perfective respectively, but the third, formally present, non-“dependent” *lei* is to be interpreted perfectly (cf. Paraskevas (1994) on the discourse functions of the “historical present”). This capacity for perfective interpretation is a property of present finites as defined here, and distinguishes them from morphologically identical (non-“dependent”) non-finites.

Notice too that these same imperfective non-finites also occur under a rectional relation that excludes “dependents”, in that they are selected by some verbs which cannot occur with a “dependent” form in the accompanying *na*-clause. These are aspectual verbs such as *arhizo* ‘start’, *sinehizo* ‘continue’, *stamato* ‘stop’, which conform to the pattern *arhizo* + *na* + imperfective (non-“dependent”): see e.g. Holton et al. (1997: 219). Here the imperfectives are specifically selected by the superordinate verb, as we expect of non-finites. This confirms that non-“dependents”, despite showing no morphological signal of this, may be either finite or non-finite.

We derive some further support for this analysis of finiteness in Greek from the syntax of negation. Clausal negation is signalled by the element *de(n)*¹⁶ which precedes the verb in (21):

- (21) Den ilthe.
S/he didn't come.

¹⁶ The presence of the final *-n* is phonologically conditioned in the relevant circumstances, though there is some variation; so too with negator *mi(n)*, discussed below.

However, after *as* the negator is *mi(n)*, as in (18b), whether the verb that follows is “dependent” or, as in (18b), non-“dependent”. A simple generalisation governs the choice between *de(n)* and *mi(n)*: *de(n)* negates finite clauses, *mi(n)* negates nonfinite. Note that *mi(n)* also negates gerund structures (Holton et al. 1997: 423), the gerund being the only Greek nonfinite according to (at one point) Holton et al. (1997: 439). This generalisation is available only if the finite/nonfinite distinction is drawn as proposed here, such that the nonfinites include forms which are not morphologically distinct from finites. Philippaki-Warburton (1994: particularly Section 2.1) analyses the *na* + verb construction as a periphrastic subjunctive, and associates *mi(n)* with negative subjunctives; however, *mi(n)* occurs with other non-finites, not merely the proposed “subjunctives”. I am suggesting here that expression of negation is sensitive to the finiteness distinction even though the latter is partially morphologically covert, given this ambivalence of non-“dependents”. We return to a further consequence of this conception of the distinction below. At this point let us consider further members of the part of speech auxiliary in Greek.

3.3. Negation and some more auxiliaries

The negative *mi(n)* itself is another item that licenses the “dependent” form. And a consideration of one aspect of its syntax provides us with some rather striking support for associating with various particles the auxiliary categorisation given in (16). We have seen that Greek has a morphologically distinct imperative, illustrated by the (perfective) form in (6a) above. But if the command is a negative one, the imperative form is not used, and, instead, in the negative equivalent of (6a) the negator is followed by a “dependent form”, as in (22a); (22b) shows a negated imperfective (non-“dependent”):

- (22a) Mi figis.
Don't go-away.
- (22b) Min kolibas ti nihta.
Don't swim at night.

The imperative form is only finite (cf. section 1), unlike the indicative verb. We can account for why it cannot occur in negative commands and why the “dependent” form can in terms of the negator being another auxiliary requiring a nonfinite complement; it too has the categorisation shown in (16), involving a subcategorisation that cannot be satisfied by the necessarily finite imperative.¹⁷

The combination *tha* plus “dependent” can occur, other things being equal, wherever a non-“dependent” can, to express future perfective, crucially in a main clause, as in (23a):

- (23a) Stis dio tha etimaso to fagito.
At two fut I-prepare-*dep* the food.
At two I shall prepare the food.

- (23b) Stis dio tha etimazo to fagito.
 At two fut I-prepare the food.
 At two I shall be preparing the food.

Compare the future imperfective in (23b), involving *tha* plus the non-“dependent” present.

Tha too is thus an auxiliary specified as in (16); and both of the agreement-bearing verbs in (20) are non-finite in accordance with that categorisation, although only the first, the “dependent”, is morphologically marked as such. Again, confirmation of this comes from negation. Although *as* (and *na*) is not negatable, *tha* is, and the negator is *de(n)*, which precedes *tha* as it precedes any other finite (with the latter possibility being illustrated in (21)):

- (24) Den tha erthi.
 Not will she-come-*dep*.
 S/he won't come.

In (24) *de(n)*, the negator in finite clauses, as opposed to *mi(n)*, which requires a nonfinite, cannot be licensed by the verb following the *tha*, which is nonfinite, and specifically (in this case) “dependent”. The auxiliary *tha* is the licensing finite for *de(n)*.¹⁸

Let us take up *na* again. Is it too, as suggested by the parallelism between (15a) and (15b), another auxiliary? *Na*, however, also appears to function as what has been regarded as a “complementiser”, selected by certain governing predicators in preference to or as an alternative with other “complementisers” such as *oti* and *pu* – though the categorial status of *na* has been controversial (cf. here e.g. Ingria 1981, Agouraki 1991, Philippaki-Warburton 1994: particularly Section 3, Tsoulas 1994). This usage is illustrated in (14). Otherwise, the syntax of the two occurrences is similar, particularly in licensing the dependent form. In terms of the system of categorisation proposed by Anderson (1990, 1997b), it may be, then, that *na* is like *have* and *be* in English in being lexically both {P} and {P;N}. As observed in fn. 9, Anderson (1990) proposes this categorisation as the basis for allowing these verbals to show

¹⁸ Failure to recognise this complicates Holton et al.’s formulation of the positioning of *de(n)*: “... the negative morpheme δε(v) [*de(n)*] is added before the verb (1a) if there are no other verbal particles, θα [*tha*] or clitic pronouns, accompanying the verb; otherwise δε(v) is added before the first particle” (1997: 418), which they illustrate with (i):

- (ia) I musiki den akugotan poli kala.
 The music could not be heard very well.
 (ib) I siggenis tu de tha tu dosun kamia voithia.
 His relatives are not going to give him any help.

(1997: 419). (ib) again illustrates attraction of the clitic pronoun to the most immediate superordinate verbal displaying morphological finiteness; cf. fn.10. The “grammaticalisation” of an inflected finite construction that eventuates in the *tha*-construction is illustrated in Pappas (1999).

the combined distributions of modals and (ordinary) verbs. *Na* in Greek would be an item that may occur as an auxiliary which of course takes a nonfinite complement or as a nonfinite like *to* in English which has been analysed as a verbal that also takes a nonfinite complement – so, in the latter case it is categorised as in (25a):

- (25a) {P;N/{P;N}}
 (25b) { /{P;N}}

(Anderson 1997a: Section 3.6.2). Like *have* and *be*, *na* combines (16) and (25a) (cf. here Joseph 1988; and see too Joseph 1994 on “presentational *na*” – *Na o Petros* ‘Here’s Peter’ etc. – as also “verbal”). Various proposals have been made concerning the semantic character of *na* as a whole (see e.g. Delveroudi, Tsamadou and Vassilaki 1994); this is not our concern here.

Alternatively to the proposal embodied in (25a), the *na* of (14) is simply a functor that takes a non-finite complement, as represented in (25b); so that, overall, *na* is categorised as “{(P)/{P;N}}”. In either case the categorisation does not entail the problems contingent on an analysis of *na* as a complementiser. I suggest either of these possibilities rather tentatively, however, particularly given the discussion of the German infinitive above, though the latter’s “finite” distribution is much more restricted.

We should note too that we find (26) as an alternative to (22):

- (26) Na mi figis.
 Don't go-away.

suggesting that *mi(n)* should (also) be categorised as both {P} and {P;N}, if *na* is here the subordinating auxiliary/functor that it is elsewhere: *mi* in (26) is nonfinite complement to *na*.

Philippaki-Warburton (1994: Section 2.3) regards forms such as (22) as “a reduced form of a negative subjunctive”, i.e. as “reduced” from *na* + *mi(n)* + verb, in which case *mi(n)* need not be treated as verbal at all, and it is *na* which exercises rection directly on the verb in both (22) and (26). However, I am unsure of the syntactic status of such a “reduction”, whereby (22) lacks an overt marker of finiteness responsible for exercising rection.

3.4. Finiteness and shared arguments

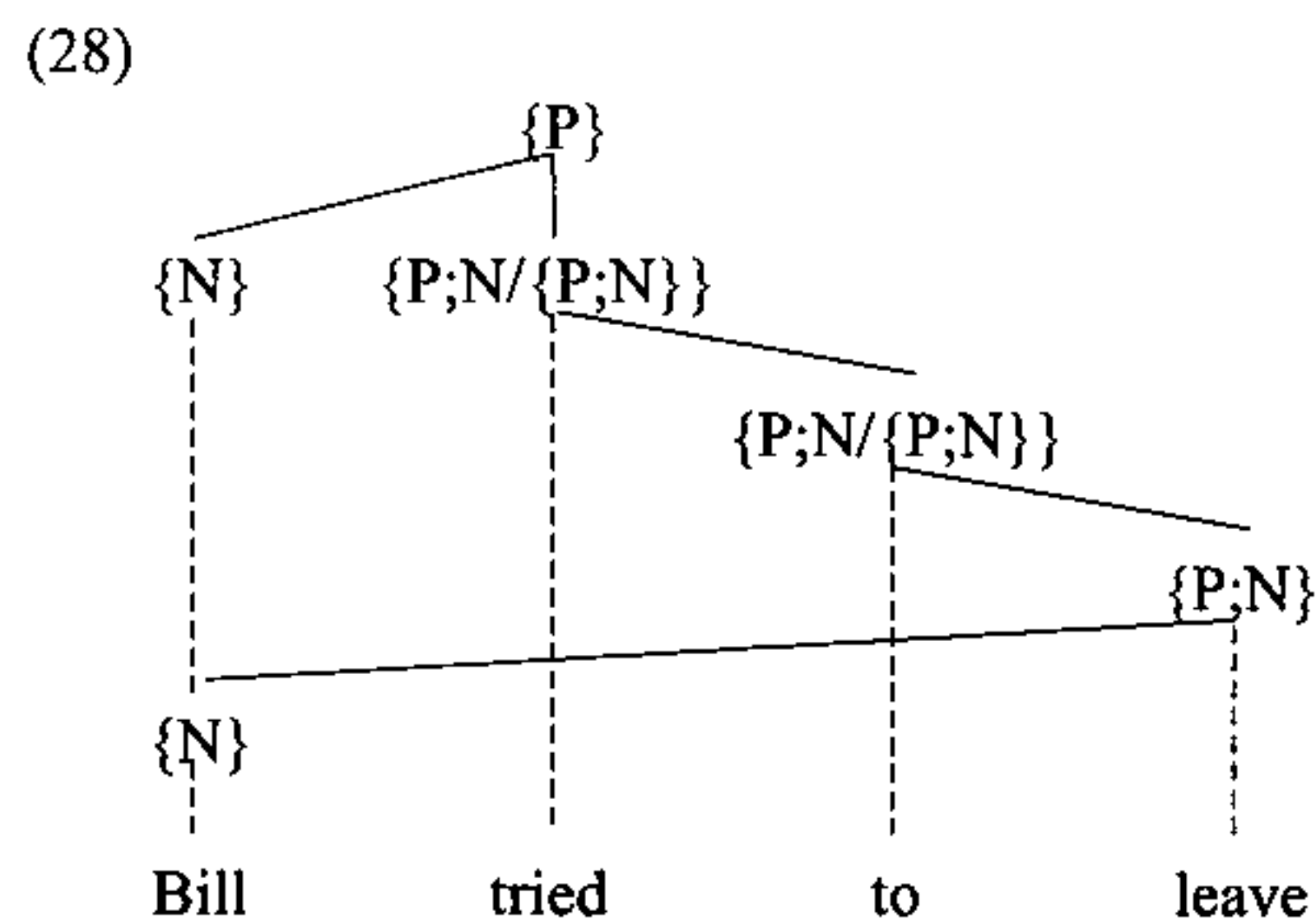
I have outlined a distribution of (syntactic) finiteness and auxiliarihood in Greek very different from the conventional, based on morphology. Specifically, I have proposed, in the first place, a small set of auxiliaries, which (not unusually in language) do not bear any morphological stigmata of finiteness, and, on the other hand, I have argued that many agreement-and-tense/aspect-bearing forms are nonfinite, including ones, the non-“dependent”, which are morphologically indistinguishable from their finite congeners. The first proposal, involving the auxiliaries, is consistent with their distribution and with their notional characters, which are expressed in other systems by an auxiliary or in the morphology of a verb.¹⁹ The proposal concerning the extent of nonfinite forms follows from the syntax of these auxiliaries, which require a nonfinite complement, and is supported by the syntax of negation; and it receives further support from a consideration of what is otherwise a major anomaly in Greek syntax. This concerns the distribution of shared arguments.

The subject arguments of the two verbs in each of (27) are shared via (obligatory) control (27a) or raising (27b):

(27a) Bill tried to leave.

(27b) Bill seemed to hesitate.

We can represent the argument-sharing in (27a) as in (28):



This greatly simplifies the kinds of full representations argued for at some length

¹⁹ Auxiliaries of mood, tense and negation are well attested: see e.g. Anderson, S. R. (1985).

in Anderson (1997a).²⁰ But my aim here is simply to illustrate the crucial instances of argument-sharing, and its essential property: only the highest predicator involved in argument-sharing can be finite. Control is “into” a nonfinite clause, one headed by a nonfinite predicator; raising is “out of” a nonfinite.

As is very familiar, sentences in English like those in (29), with finite subordinates and argument-sharing, are non-viable:

(29a) *Bill tried that left.

(29b) *Bill seemed that hesitated.

and the finite subordinate in (30) does not share its subject argument with the superordinate, which, rather, has an expletive subject:

(30) It seemed that Bill hesitated.

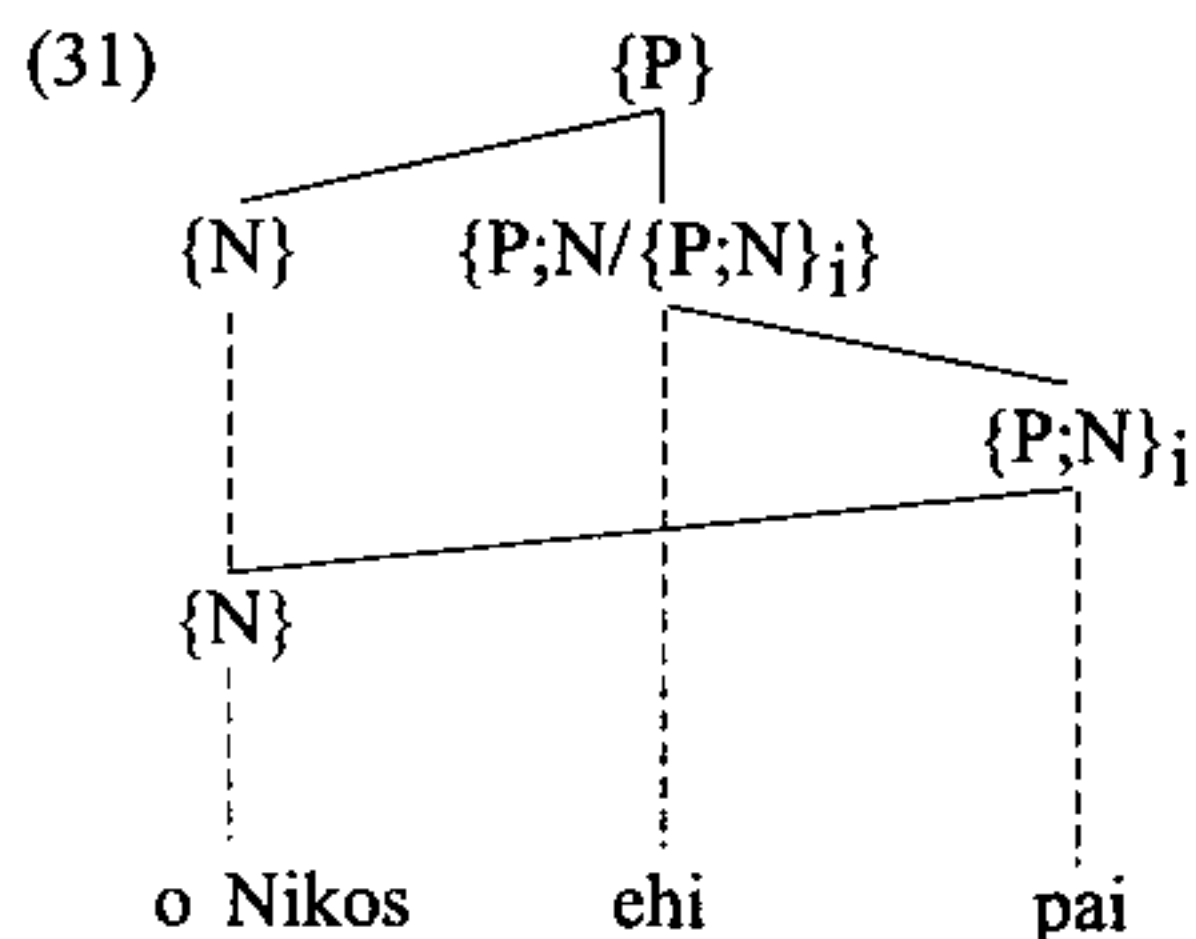
This is a pervasive property of control/raising shared-argument structures: only the topmost verb is finite; only nonfinites share their subject with an argument of a higher verb.²¹

We can also observe this in relation to the Greek perfect discussed above in relation to (11), as illustrated in (31), which instantiates a raising construction with shared arguments and a nonfinite lower predicator:

²⁰ In particular I ignore here the crucial distinction between raising and control structures, namely the status of the upper of the shared arguments. In the case of raising this is an “empty” argument – in terms of Anderson (1997a), an absolutive argument present only by virtue of the universal requirement that every predicator have an absolutive (roughly “theme” in terms of familiar versions of the theory of θ -roles) argument even if it is not subcategorised for one. (This requirement can be seen as an analogue of clause two of the extended projection principle of Chomsky and others.) The subject of *seemed* in (27b) and (30) is such an unsubcategorised-for absolutive. With instances of control, the shared argument has a subcategorised-for role in both the subordinate and the superordinate clause. See further Anderson (in press).

(25) omits such functor nodes, as well as instances of argument-sharing other than those holding between the highest (finite) node and the lowest {P;N}: for instance, for simplicity, I have suppressed in (28) and in (34) below the shared argument that would be dependent on *to* and *na*, if they are categorised as in (25a) – i.e. as raising predicators – rather than as in (25b). (28) etc. also omit any indication of subcategorisation for nonverbal arguments, as well as any representation of morphologically-expressed categories.

²¹ It does not make any difference to the present discussion whether or not argument-sharing is the most appropriate way of representing the syntax of the apparently missing subjects in these sentences: what is important is the association of such structures with nonfinite subordinates.



Here “{P;N}_i” designates the particular form of nonfinite required by *ehi*; its precise categorial character is not at issue here.

But there are, further, instances of apparent argument-sharing involving, in the most relevant instance, semantically “modal” verbs, both personal and impersonal, where both the superordinate modal and its subordinate are fully furnished with agreement and tense/aspect marking, though the person-number marking on an impersonal “modal” is, of course, invariant. These constructions contain subordinate forms which may be either “dependent” or non-“dependent”, as illustrated by the impersonal “modal” construction in (32):

(32a) O Nikos prepi na me voithisi.
The Nikos ought to me he-help-*dep.*
Nikos ought to help me.

(32b) O Nikos prepi na me voithi.
The Nikos ought to me he-help.
Nikos ought to help me.

(32a) is perfective (“dependent”), (32b) is imperfective (non-“dependent”: see Holton et al. 1997: part III, Section 1.2.2.1). As noted, the superordinate verb is impersonal, and thus is always inflected as for third-person-singular.

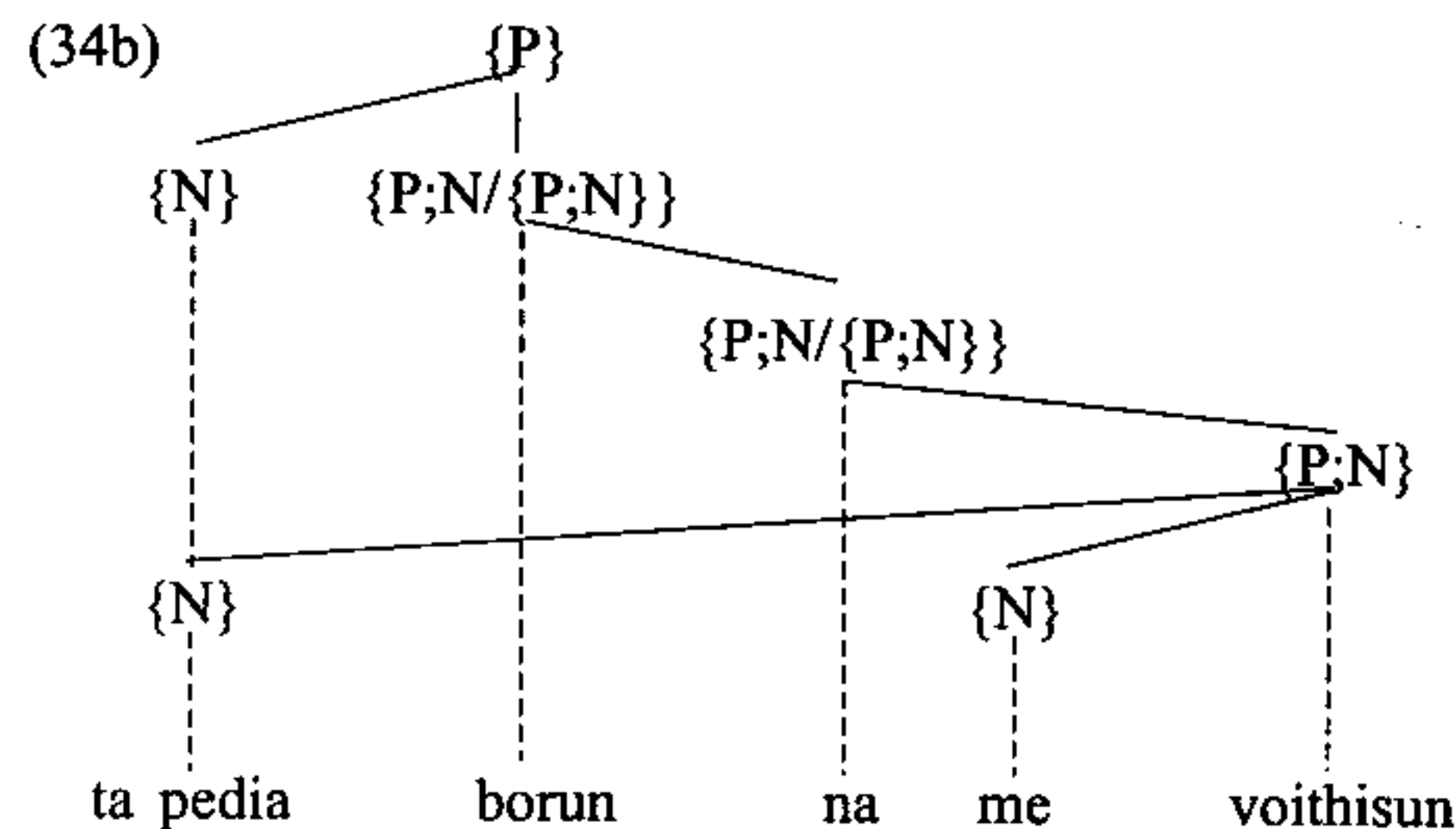
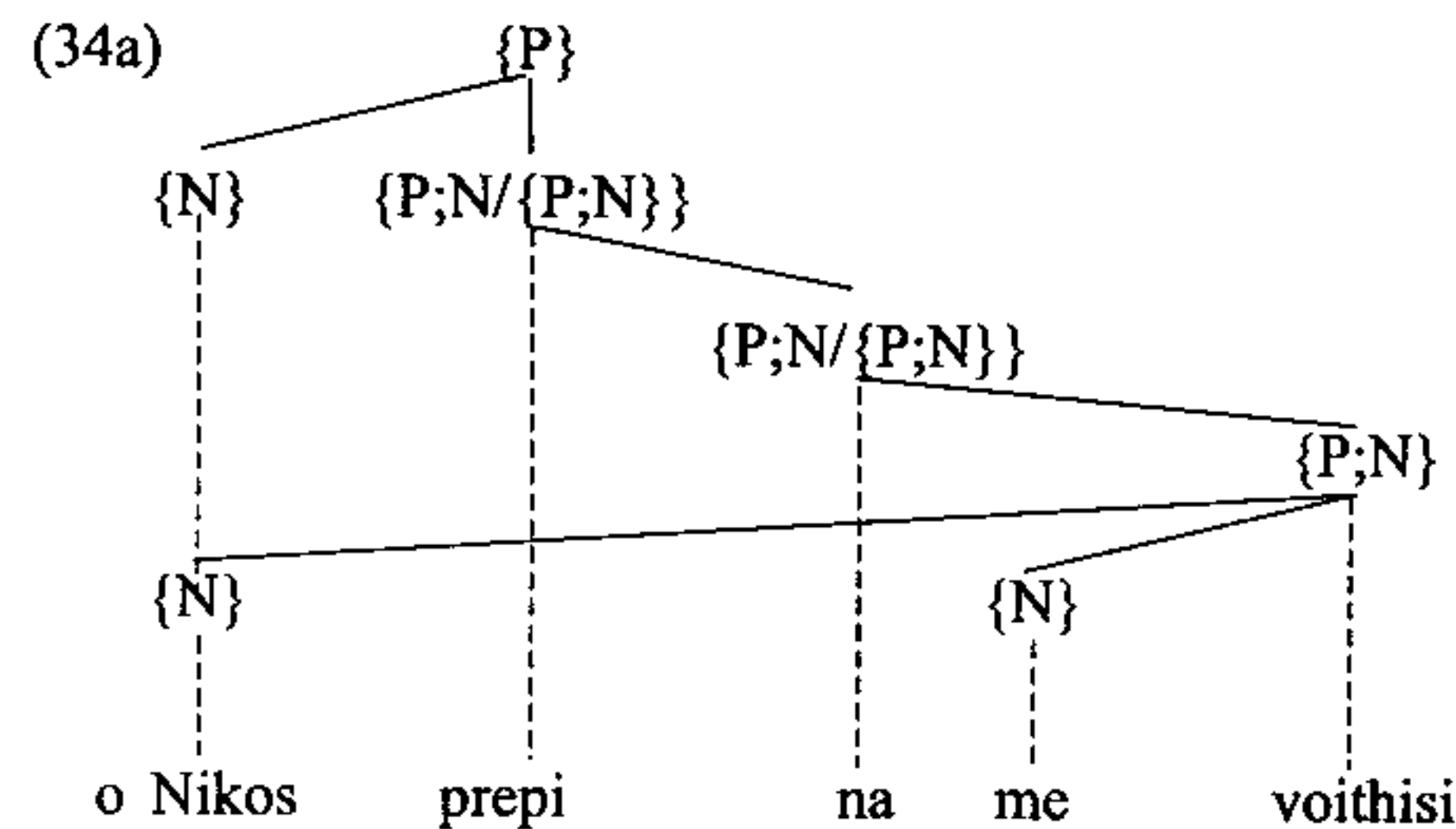
(33a), however, involves a personal construction (though *bori* can also be impersonal), and (33b) involves both:

(33a) Ta pedia borun na me voithisun.
The children can help me.

(33b) Ta pedia prepi na borun na voithisun.
The children must be able to help me.

In (33) both *borun* and *voithisun* agree with *ta pedia*.

Suppose that (32) and (33) show argument-sharing, via obligatory control, raising, or both, depending on the interpretation;²² such sentences are not uncommon, and this is on the other hand not a normal position for subordinate subjects²³ – unless, as I am suggesting, they are also arguments of the superordinate verb, as in (31). I represent this for (32a) and (33a) in (34):



²² *Prepi* etc. also occur in structures lacking shared arguments. Holton et al. provide examples like (i):

(i) Prepi na ton ide sti dialeksi.
Must (to) him see-*imp.past* at-the lecture.
S/he must have seen him at the lecture. (1997: 202)

with the subordinate verb inflected for past and with a necessarily epistemic reading for the modal.

²³ Their syntax is difficult to reconcile with Holton et al.’s claim (1997: 200) that “the initial noun phrase... is only the subject of the embedded verb”, with apparently no status in the main clause, given that they go on to say that the subject of the main clause “is the whole embedded clause”. I see no motivation for assigning subjecthood to the *na*-clause, either here or in the sentence in the preceding footnote. Such putative subjects scarcely conform even to their own glossary definition of such: “the *noun phrase* denoting the person or thing doing the action of an *active verb* ... or undergoing the action of a *passive verb*” (Holton et al. 1997: 515).

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