

Towards a Unified Account of the Force Triggering Subjunctive Complements

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1. Introduction

In some languages, there are predicate classes licensing only subjunctive complement clauses instead of indicative ones.¹ In this talk we will cover the languages Polish, Kamtok (a creole language of Cameroon) and German. The examples in (1) and (2) demonstrate that the indicative complements are ungrammatical with volitional predicates in Polish and directive predicates in Kamtok.

(1) Polish

- a. *pragnąć* ('desire, wish')²
Pragnął, [CP że(by) syn kontynuował rodzinną*
 wish.3SG.M.l-PTCP that.SUBJ son.NOM continue.3SG.M.l-PTCP family
tradycję.]
 tradition.ACC
 'He wanted his son to continue the family tradition.' NKJP, *Powidoki*, 2010
- b. *chcieć* ('want')
Chcemy, [CP że(by) był ukarany.]*
 want.1PL that.SUBJ was.3SG.M.l-PTCP punished
 'We want him to be punished.' NKJP, *Dziennik Zachodni*, 16/7/2002

(2) Kamtok

- a. *koman* ('command')
*Yu devul, A koman yu, [CP sei *(meik) yu komot fo yi.]*
 2SG devil 1SG command 2SG that SUBJ 2SG come.out PREP 3SG
 'You spirit, I command you to come out from him.' Gud Nyus, *mar* 9,25
- b. *oda* ('order')
*Jesus e oda dem [CP sei *(meik) dem no tok de ting.]*
 J. 3SG order 3PL that SUBJ 3PL NEG talk the thing
 'Jesus charged them not to tell anyone.' Gud Nyus, *mar* 9,9

1. We leave aside the role of non-finite complement clauses here.

2. The following abbreviations are used in this handout: 1/2/3 - 1st/2nd/3rd person, ACC - accusative, DAT - dative, GEN - genitive, IMPERS - impersonal, INDC - indicative, l-PTCP - participle inflected for number and gender, LOC - locative, M - masculine, NEG - negation, NOM - nominative, N-VIR - non-virile, PERF - perfect, PL - plural, POSS - possessive, PREP - preposition, PST - past tense, SG - singular, SUBJ - subjunctive, VIR - virile. This work was supported by Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung (BMBF) (Grant Nr. 01UG0711).

In both languages a subjunctive marker, *by* in Polish and *meik* in Kamtok, must occur in the CP domain of the embedded clause.

A similar strategy can be found in German:

(3) a. *bedauern* ('regret')

"Le Monde" *bedauerte*, [CP *man **habe**/*hat* *sich* *damit*
 L.M. regret.3SG.PST one have.3SG.SUBJ/INDC oneself with it
begnügt, Buchwissen *in eine Wurst zu füllen.*]
 contented book knowledge into a sausage to fill
 "Le Monde" expressed its regret that they were content with filling book
 knowledge into a sausage.'

DWDS, *Berliner Zeitung*, 29/11/1997

b. *kritisieren* ('criticize')

Renate Künast *kritisierte*, [CP *das **sei**/*ist* *kein*
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST this be.3SG.SUBJ/INDC no
Ruhmesblatt des Parlaments *gewesen.*]
 glorious chapter the.GEN parliament.GEN been
 'Renate Künast complained that this has been no credit to the parliament.'

DWDS, *Berliner Zeitung*, 9/11/2005

Bedauern 'regret' and *kritisieren* 'criticize' are ambiguous between a factive and an assertive reading. To obtain the latter the embedded verb has to be marked for the subjunctive mood ('reportive subjunctive' following Fabricius-Hansen & Sæbø 2004)³ and has to move to C.

Outline of the talk

2. Motivating the Illocutionary Force

- Polish: volitionality
- Kamtok: directivity
- German: assertivity

3. Towards a unified account

4. Concluding remarks

3. Notice, however, that the indicative is not ungrammatical. It is used in direct speech complements which we will not dwell on in the following.

2. Motivating the Illocutionary Force

Based on Sibsà (2001) we consider the illocutionary force to have different degrees of strength. Imperative speech acts, for example, can vary in degree:

- (4) a. *Get off!*
 b. *Have a cookie!*

While (4a) is to be thought of as a command, (4b) is usually uttered as an invitation to perform *p*. A similar situation holds for embedded subjunctive clauses. All of them are of type [+declarative], but they differ from each other with respect to the degree of force (volitionality vs. directivity vs. assertivity).

How do we know that the subjunctive mood in embedded clauses and illocutionary force have something in common?

2.1. Polish: volitionality

Argument I: In Polish the subjunctive clitic *-by* can move to the preverbal position adjoining to a C head or it can stay in the TP domain::

- (5) *Poszedłbym do kina, [CP jeśli**by** [TP miał czas]].*
 go.l-PTCP.SUBJ.1SG to cinema if.SUBJ.1SG have.3SG.M.l-PTCP time.ACC
 ‘I’d go to the cinema, if I had time.’

- (6) *Poszedłbym do kina, [CP jeśli [TP miał**by** czas]].*
 go.l-PTCP.SUBJ.1SG to cinema if have.l-PTCP.SUBJ.1SG time.ACC

A similar situation holds in embedded non-volitional environments:

- (7) *Nie uważam, [CP że**by** [TP to przejście [T° było źle zrobione]]]*
 NEG think.1SG that.SUBJ this pedestrian.crossing be.3SG.N.l-PTCP
 wrongly made.PTCP
 ‘I don’t think that this pedestrian crossing would be made wrongly.’

NKJP, *Mazowieckie To i Owo*, 27/11/2008

- (8) *Nie uważam, [CP że [TP to przejście [T° byłoby źle zrobione]]]*
 NEG think.1SG that this pedestrian.crossing be.3SG.N.l-PTCP.SUBJ
 wrongly made.PTCP

Notice, however, that *-by* must be base-generated within the CP domain if the complement clause is embedded under a volitional predicate. It cannot be base-generated in a lower position and then move to CP (see Bański 2000; Borsley & Rivero 1994; Migdalski 2010):

- (9) *Chcemy*, [_{CP} *żeby* [_{TP} *był* *ukarany*]].
 want.1PL that.SUBJ be.3SG.M./-PTCP punished
 ‘We want him to be punished.’
- (10) **Chcemy*, [_{CP} *że* [_{TP} *byłby* *ukarany*]].
 want.1PL that be.3SG.M./-PTCP.SUBJ punished
 Intended: ‘We want him to be punished.’

Argument II: Polish possesses two impersonal passive suffixes, *-no* and *-to*, attaching to the verb:

- (11) a. *Grano, śpiewano, tańczono.*
 played.IMPERS sang.IMPERS danced.IMPERS
 ‘They played, sang, danced.’ NKJP, *Gazeta Poznańska*, 1/12/2005
- b. *Przebito mu oponę w samochodzie.*
 punctured.IMPERS him.DAT tire.ACC in car.LOC
 ‘They punctured a tire in his car.’ NKJP, *Dziennik Łódzki*, 26/8/2005

Note that both of the suffixes always anchor the embedded event prior to the speech time ($t_1 > t_{\text{speech}}$):

- (12) a. *Twierdzi, że przeczytano ten list.*
 claim.3SG that read.IMPERS this letter.ACC
 ‘He claims that this letter was read.’
- b. *Twierdzi, że przebito mu oponę.*
 claim.3SG that punctured.IMPERS him.DAT tire.ACC
 ‘He claims that they punctured a tire in his car.’

However, if they are embedded under a volitional predicate, a future-oriented reading is forced:

- (13) a. *Pragnie, żeby przeczytano ten list.*
 wish.3SG that.SUBJ read.IMPERS this letter.ACC
 ‘He wants us to read this letter.’
- b. *Pragnie, żeby przebito mu oponę.*
 wish.3SG that.SUBJ punctured.IMPERS him.DAT tire.ACC
 ‘He wants (them) to puncture a tire in his car.’

The speech time coincides with the matrix event time (= wishing) and its volitional illocutionary force shifts the embedded event time (= reading) into future.

2.2. Kamtok: directivity

2.2.1. A brief note on Kamtok

An English-based creole language spoken in Cameroon (ca. 50 % of the population).

Cameroon: diverse language setting with 278 living languages (Ethnologue (2013))

Main characteristics:

- isolating language⁴ with SVO word order
- tense/aspect are marked preverbally
- language possesses ~150 clause-embedding predicates

Subjunctive-embedding predicates:

- directives (*bek* 'beg') including speech verbs (*tok* 'say' or *hala* 'scold'),
- permissives (*gri* 'agree, allow'),
- volitionals (*wan* 'want'),
- intentionals (*chek* 'mean to do'),
- factives (*laik* 'like, love'),
- necessitatives (*nid* 'need').

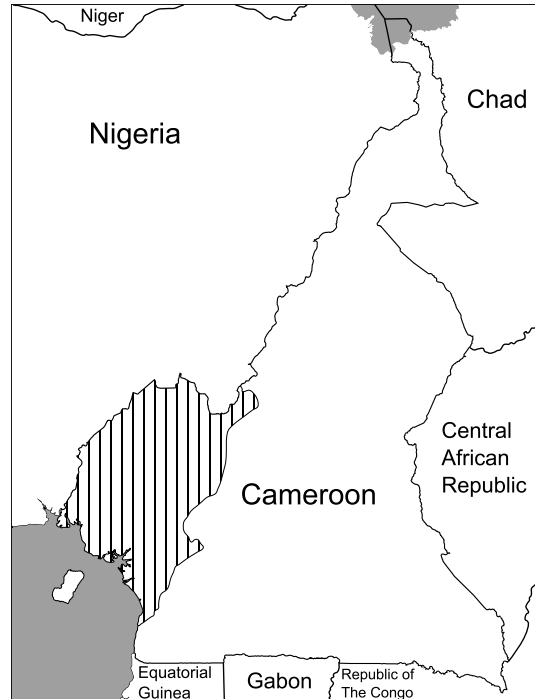


Fig. 1: Main distribution area of Kamtok

2.2.2. On the uniqueness of directive predicates

Many subjunctive-embedding predicates also license indicative complements, e.g. *sho* 'show, indicate':

- (14) *Yi lanboi dem kam sho yi sei meik e si de God-haus.*
3SG.POSS disciple PL come show 3SG that SUBJ 3SG see the temple
'His disciples came and signalled him that he should see the temple.'

Gud Nyus, *mat* 24,1

- (15) *A sho wuna sei A nova du bad.*
1SG show 2PL that 1SG NEG.PERF do crime
'I will show you that I did not do anything bad.'

Gud Nyus, *act* 22,1

As (15) shows, these predicates easily allow a coreference between the matrix subject and the embedded subject.

4. The only bound morpheme in this language is an object pronoun *-am* being cliticized to the verb. It also serves as a correlate to an embedded object clause.

Argument I: Kamtok directive predicates form two subgroups, the group of requestives (*bek* ‘beg’) and the group of non-requestive directive predicates (*oda* ‘order’) (see figure 2).

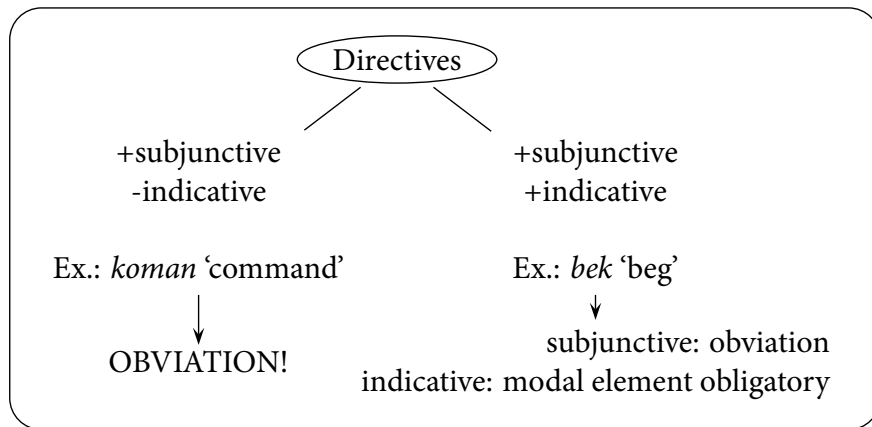


Fig. 2: Classification of directive predicates

Predicates of the latter group only license subjunctive complement clauses which exhibit a quasi-imperative force. Therefore, a coreference reading between the matrix subject and the embedded subject is out.

Consider the example (16), slightly changed from (2b):

- (16) *Jesus e_i oda Paulus_j sei meik e_{*i,j} tok de ting.*
 J. 3SG order 3SG that SUBJ 3SG talk the thing
 Intended: ‘Jesus charged Paulus to be allowed to tell everyone.’

This ‘obviation’ effect (also called ‘disjoint reference effect’), see Costantini (2009); Farkas (1992); Kempchinsky (2009) is common with predicates of the former group, too:

- (17) *So i brohda_i behg i_j sei mek i_{*i,j} tek mohni.*
 So 3SG brother beg 3SG that SUBJ 3SG take money
 ‘So his brother begged him to take the money.’ Todd 1979:104

However, this subgroup allows indicative complements on one condition:

Argument II: Obviation with directive predicates of the requestive type can be absorbed by modal verbs.

This absorption effect is exemplified in (18):

- (18) *He_i came beg Pilate_j say he_{i,*j} want take Jesus He body*
 3SG come beg P. that 3SG want take J. 3SG body
 ‘He begged Pilate for permission to take Jesus’ dead body with him.’

Molindo bible, *joh* 19,38

It has been noted that in Romance languages modal verbs in subjunctive clauses are responsible for a shift of reference from the matrix object to the subject (Costantini 2006). In Kamtok such a shift with modal verbs is strictly bound to a shift of the embedded clause type.

Note that with directive predicates of the non-requestive type, modal verbs are ungrammatical:

- (19) **King_i don oda minista_i sei e_i want si e_j.*
King PERF order minister that 3SG want see 3SG
Intended: ‘The king ordered the minister that he wants to see him.’

These data are in analogy to control shift cases in infinitive clauses in languages such as English or German. Jackendoff & Culicover (2003) suggest that predicates of the first group denote the report of an imperative whereas predicates of the second group denote the report of a request for permission. They state:

“An asker [...] is a beneficiary of the addressee’s action, and the character to whom permission is granted is also a beneficiary.”

Jackendoff & Culicover (2003:545)

To conclude, non-obviative uses of a directive predicate are possible in the presence of a modal verb, triggered by the requestive illocutionary force of the matrix event, whereas they are never possible when the matrix event has an imperative force.

2.3. German: assertivity

In German a specific class of predicates can be used in two different ways, e.g. *bedauern* ‘regret’, *ablehnen* ‘reject’, *anklagen* ‘complain’.

Argument I: On the one hand such predicates can be employed as factive predicates, on the other hand as verba dicendi, expressing an assertive illocutionary force. We can observe a gradual scale of assertivity between these two poles:

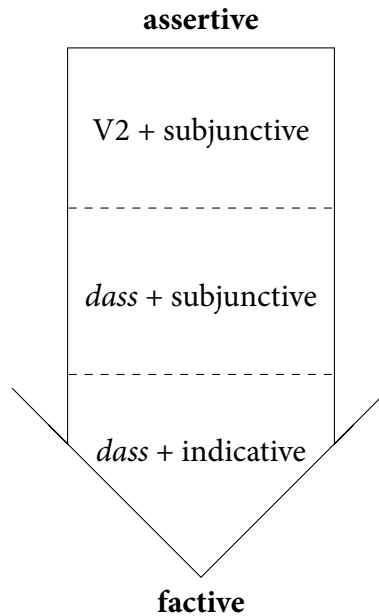


Fig. 3: Assertivity-factivity scale

As the figure shows, the interpretation of the matrix predicate depends on what type of embedded clause it selects for. The three types are illustrated below:

(20) a. V2 + subjunctive

Renate Künast kritisierte, [CP das sei kein Ruhmesblatt
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST this be.3SG.SUBJ no glorious chapter
des Parlaments gewesen.]
 the.GEN parliament.GEN been
 ‘Renate Künast complained that this has been no credit to the parliament.’

DWDS, *Berliner Zeitung*, 9/11/2005

b. *dass* + subjunctive

Renate Künast kritisierte, [CP dass das kein Ruhmesblatt des
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST that this no glorious chapter the.GEN
Parlaments gewesen sei.]
 parliament.GEN been be.3SG.SUBJ
 ‘Renate Künast complained that this has been no credit to the parliament.’

c. *dass* + indicative

Renate Künast kritisierte, [CP dass die Parlamentarier Lothar Bisky
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST that the parliamentarians L. B.
nicht gewählt haben.]
 NEG voted have.
 ‘Renate Künast criticized that the parliamentarians did not vote for Lothar Bisky.’

In (20a) the assertive force is connected to V-to-C movement of the verb marked for subjunctive mood in the selected clause. The speaker has no access to the truth values of *p* and

thus distances herself from what is asserted. In contrast, in (20b) the verb remains in situ, but it is still marked for the subjunctive mood. The speaker's distance to what is asserted cannot be inferred as easily as in the former sentence. Finally in (20c) the embedded verb stays in situ and exhibits indicative morphology, together presupposing the truth of *p*. No distance on the part of the speaker is conveyed.

This is also in concord with Wiklund et al. (2009) who put forward the following hypothesis:

- (21) *The Assertion Hypothesis:* Wiklund et al. (2009)
 The more asserted (the less presupposed) the complement is, the more compatible it is with V2 (and other root phenomena).

Note that in (20c) the complement proposition is fact-like, i.e. it denotes a verifiable event.

Argument II: If a predicate of the factive-assertive type is combined with an indicative clause, it cannot take a complement clause containing an element expressing an evaluation. Such elements are restricted to subjunctive clauses expressing assertive force.

Compare (22) to the example in (20c):

- (22) ?*Renate Künast kritisierte,* [CP *dass das kein Ruhmesblatt des*
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST that this no glorious chapter the.GEN
Parlaments gewesen ist.]
 parliament.GEN been be.3SG.INDC
 'Renate Künast criticized that this has been no credit to the parliament.'

Unlike the former, the latter is clearly degraded, due to the presence of the evaluative noun *Ruhmesblatt* 'glorious chapter'.

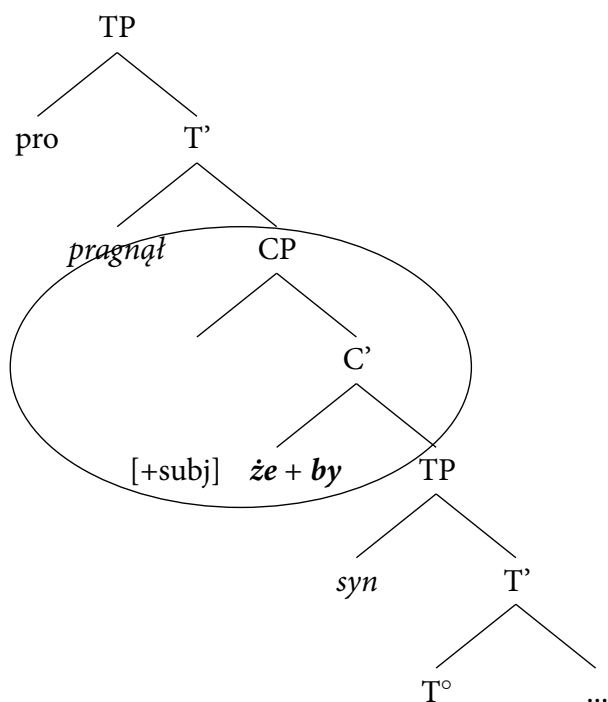
3. Towards a unified account

What we have seen so far is that Polish, Kamtok and German obligatorily use subjunctive complement clauses selected by different matrix predicate groups. Our main goal in this section is to bring down all these three languages to a common denominator. What they have in common refers to two internal properties of subjunctive clauses in general.

First, although we can identify three different syntactic structures, the subjunctive marker has always to be present in the CP domain, or, to be more precisely, it must be a C°.

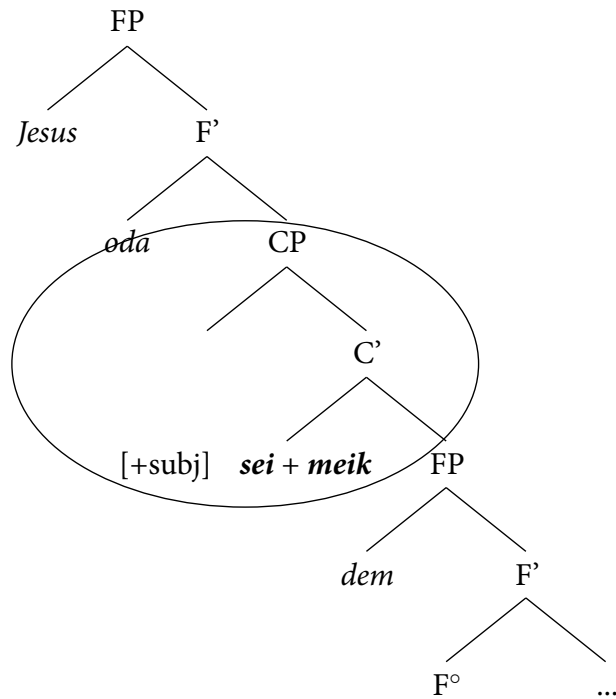
Polish: since the verbal clitic *-by* cannot attach to the complementizer *że* 'that' from a lower position by a movement operation if it is embedded under volitional predicates, it has to merge with *że* via External Merge:

(23)



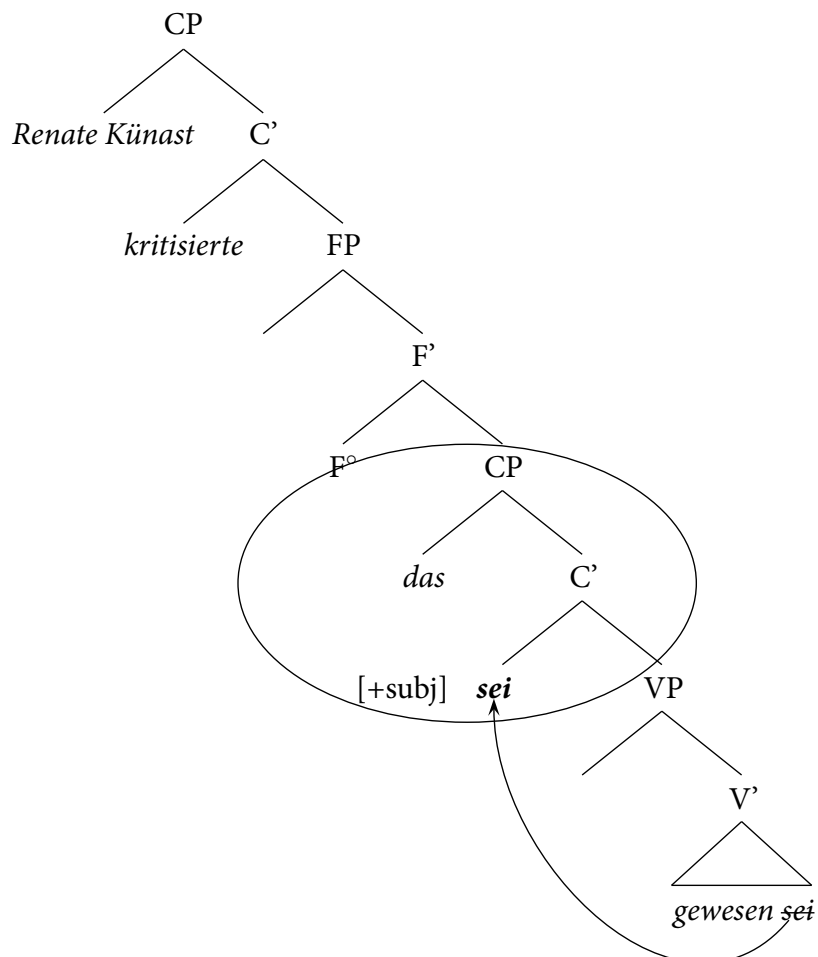
Kamtok: like in Polish, the subjunctive marker *meik* externally merges with the canonical complementizer *sei* 'that' occupying the same syntactic slot:

(24)



German: since dependent verb second clauses are not fully integrated clauses (in the sense by Reis (1997)), they are supposed to attach to a FP located lower in the structure. Nonetheless, the finite verb moves to C:

(25)



Second, independently from the predicate class subjunctive complements semantically presuppose a restriction of the accessibility relation, a relation between the real world (w_0) and an alternative world (w_1) or a set of alternative worlds ($w_1, w_2, \dots w_n$):

- (26) a. *Chcemy*, [_{CP} *że*(by) był ukarany.*]
 want.1PL that.SUBJ was.3SG.M./PTCP punished
 ‘We want him to be punished.’
- b. $\lambda w_0 [D^{w_0}(\text{pro}) \subseteq \lambda w_1 (\text{he is punished in } w_1)]$

Let us assume that $D^{w_0}(\text{pro})$ pertains to pro ’s desires in w_0 and that they are linked to the set of alternative worlds quantified over. Additionally, these worlds must also be compatible with pro ’s desires. Kamtok does not differ from Polish with respect to the availability of alternative worlds. The only difference being that the possible worlds are compatible with requests of the matrix subject (abbreviated in (27b) as C):

- (27) a. *Yu devul, ... A koman yu,* [_{CP} *sei *(meik) yu komot fo*
 2SG devil 1SG command 2SG that SUBJ 2SG come.out PREP
yi.]
 3SG
 ‘You spirit, I command you to come out from him.’
- b. $\lambda w_0 [C^{w_0}(a) \subseteq \lambda w_1 (\text{the spirit is coming out from him in } w_1)]$

Finally, German represents another type of restriction of the accessibility relation. Here, neither desires nor requests on the speaker’s site trigger the presence of alternative worlds. Instead speaker’s beliefs in w_0 are characterized and represented as possible alternatives (see Truckenbrodt 2006):

- (28) a. *Renate Künast kritisierte,* [_{CP} *das sei/*ist kein*
 R. K. criticize.3SG.PST this be.3SG.SUBJ/INDC no
Ruhmesblatt des Parlaments gewesen.]
 glorious chapter the.GEN parliament.GEN been
 ‘Renate Künast complained that this has been no credit to the parliament.’
- b. $\lambda w_0 [B^{w_0}(\text{rk}) \subseteq \lambda w_1 (\text{this has been no credit to the parliament in } w_1)]$

Now, what we have to account for are three different predicate groups selecting for the same complement type.

Following Portner (1997, 2009) and Matthewson (2010), we assume that subjunctive clauses contain a modal operator that is, similar to modal verbs, evaluated against a modal base and further narrowed down by a conversational background (in the sense claimed by Kratzer 1981, 1991).

The type of the conversational background is restricted by the matrix predicate class and each sentence is analyzed with respect to a reference situation, a modal force, and a modal context. The operator [subj] gives rise to the modal assertion with appropriate modal force and modal context. Its flavors are relativized via the embedding predicate:

Polish:

For any reference situation r , modal force F , and modal context R , $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$ is only defined if R is a bouletic accessibility relation.

When defined, $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R} = [[(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$

Kamtok:

For any reference situation r , modal force F , and modal context R , $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$ is only defined if R is a deontic accessibility relation.

When defined, $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R} = [[(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$

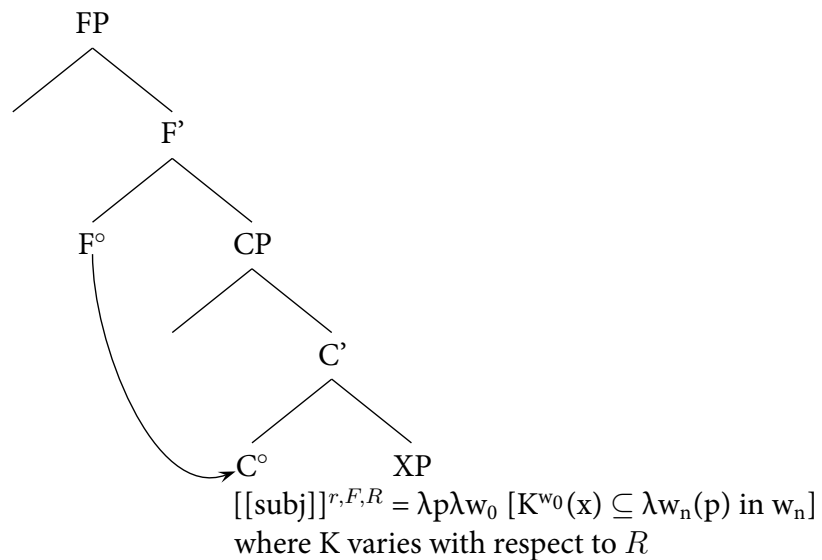
German:

For any reference situation r , modal force F , and modal context R , $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$ is only defined if R is a non-factive accessibility relation.

When defined, $[[\text{subj}(\phi)]]^{r,F,R} = [[(\phi)]]^{r,F,R}$

Mapping syntax and semantics:

(29)



4. Concluding remarks

In our talk we examined the illocutionary force of subjunctive complements of typical subjunctive-embedding predicates in Polish, Kamtok and German respectively. It has been shown that volitive predicates in Polish and a subgroup of directive predicates in Kamtok exclusively license clauses of the subjunctive type, whereas in German a particular class of predicates embeds indicative as well as subjunctive clauses - the former triggers a factive reading, the latter an assertive reading.

All three languages provide arguments for assuming a link between illocutionary force and the subjunctive mood in embedded clauses. In Polish a volitional context forces the subjunctive clitic *-by* to appear exclusively in CP, and it forces a future-oriented reading

with the two passive suffixes *-no* and *-to*. In Kamtok a [-req] directive context leads to an exclusively obviative reading, whereas a [+req] directive context additionally licenses modalised indicative clauses. In German a predicate which is otherwise understood factively, expresses an assertive reading when embedding a clause where the embedded verb is marked for the subjunctive mood and appears in second position. Moreover, evaluative elements are only permitted in assertive contexts.

Despite different internal syntactic structures and different embedding predicates, the dependent subjunctive clauses have two main properties in common. First, they are always associated with the pragmatic CP domain. Second, the presence of the subjunctive morphology - be it a verbal element, be it a complementizer - presupposes a set of alternative worlds with respect to the real world. The quantification is due to a covert modal operator that is restricted by the subjunctive-embedding class. We have illustrated this for bouletic modality in Polish, deontic modality in Kamtok as well as non-factivity in German.

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