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Межъязыковая загадка сослагательного наклонения¹

Цель этой статьи – исследовать дистрибуцию сослагательного наклонения в матричных и зависимых предикациях. Опираясь на недавние достижения в исследовании означивания временных признаков, мы предлагаем критическое обсуждение описанных в литературе характеристик этого наклонения. Основная часть работы посвящена межъязыковому варьированию в области кодирования сослагательности, наблюдаемому в романских, славянских и балканских языках. Особое внимание уделяется поведению сослагательного наклонения в матричных клаузах, которое существенно различается в исследуемых языках.

Ключевые слова: сослагательное наклонение, означивание временных признаков, пропозициональная установка.

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A crosslinguistic puzzle for Subjunctive²

The goal of the paper is to examine the intriguing behavior of the subjunctive mood in matrix and embedded clauses. Relying on recent studies on tense-features valuation, we will first discuss some well-known properties of this

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mood namely tense dependency, event and obviation effects. Then we will turn to crosslinguistic variation focusing on the way three groups of languages, namely Romance, Slavic and Balkan, codify subjunctive. Special attention will be paid to the selection of subjunctive in main clauses and to some discrepancies displayed by the languages under scrutiny.

Key words: subjunctive mood, tense-valuation, evaluation.

1. Introduction

The subjunctive mood has been subject to numerous discussions in the generative literature.³ However, some aspects of its characterization across languages remain unsettled.

As the label itself suggests, *subjunctive* encodes dependency. As a corollary it has been traditionally considered the mood of subordination *par excellence*. In the generative framework a now well-known line of inquiry has capitalized on the idea that in subjunctive clauses the tense of the embedded domain is anaphoric with respect to the tense of the matrix domain [Picallo, 1984; Raposo, 1985; Ambar, 1988; Borer, 1989; a.o.]. In a sense the selection of subjunctive in complements to volitional predicates has been therefore associated with tense defectiveness. We will refer to this line of inquiry as the *anaphoric* or *dependent tense* view, typing the C domain of subjunctive as [-T].

A different line of inquiry that may be extended to subjunctive clauses is advocated in Martin (1996) and Bošković (1997), who argue that clausal complements to volitional predicates are [+T(ense)], inspired in Stowell (1982) and Enç (1991). Stowell observed that the temporal interpretation of Control infinitival structures under volitional predicates is independent with respect to the matrix tense; it is unrealized, future. Let's label this approach the *non-anaphoric* or *independent tense* view, typing the C domain of subjunctive as [+T].

Clearly, the two lines of inquiry conflict. Assuming that each of them captures different properties of the structures under study, it is desirable to solve that tension.

Our first goal in this paper is to examine to what extent a system designed to derive subjunctive clauses and to solve the tension between the dependency vs independency of the Tense analyses still keeps doing good predictions after broadening of its initial empirical domain. We are referring to the tense-features valuation system proposed in [Ambar, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2016] according to which t-features enter the derivation as bundles

³ For criticism on the *realis-irrealis* dichotomy in the study of indicative vs. subjunctive see [Farkas, 1992; Giannakidou, 1998], a.o.

[Chomsky, 2001].⁴ The distinction between t_i -features, related to the highest morphological tense phrase (responsible for nominative), and t_{ev} -features, related to the lower tense object phrase⁵ (responsible for accusative), correctly captures the arguments of both views.

In addition, our second goal is to shed some light on the behavior of subjunctive in other contexts such as main clauses and *unselected* subjunctive clauses [Ambar, 2016]. Particularly important here will be the data from Russian and Balkan languages. As widely discussed in the literature [Dobrovie-Sorin, 1994, 2001; Giannakidou, 2009; a.o.] and differently from Portuguese, which we take as representative of Romance languages, Slavic and Balkan languages such as Russian, Greek and Bulgarian do not exhibit verbal subjunctive morphology and use special particles (*by*, *na* and *da*, respectively) for the expression of subjunctive. Still, Russian sharply diverges from Greek and Bulgarian with respect to the tense of the embedded verb and to obviation. Thus, focusing on the three groups of languages (Romance vs Slavic vs Balkan) we aim at a better understanding of subjunctive by attempting to complete some puzzles concerning its expression across languages.

Crucially, the relation with evaluation and with the concept of (non)veridicality [Giannakidou, 1998] will be accounted for under the speaker's projections EvaluativeP and AssertiveP, independently proposed in [Ambar, 2000, 2003] for other phenomena.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 we discuss data from subjunctive in embedded clauses referring to Ambar's system of tense-features valuation. In section 3 we focus on unselected subjunctive clauses and main subjunctive clauses pointing out to their relation with evaluation. In section 4 the data from Russian, Greek and Bulgarian will be discussed. Section 5 sets up the conclusion remarks.

2. Subjunctive embedded clauses, t-valuation and obviation effects

The distribution of subjunctive in Romance and other European Languages has been thoroughly discussed in the literature [Picallo, 1984; Raposo, 1985; Ambar, 1988; Giannakidou, 1998; Quer, 1998, 2006; Kempchinsky, 2009; a.o.]. Taking European Portuguese as representative of the languages that display subjunctive morphology in the verb, examples (1a)–(1c) illustrate the selection of subjunctive vs. indicative in clausal complements to volitional (1a), directive (1b) or emotive factive (1c) predicates:

⁴ Pesetsky and Torrego (2004) also extend valuation to tense-features. For technical differences between their proposal and Ambar's one see the works cited.

⁵ As proposed in Ambar (1996, 1998) and in Pesetsky and Torrego (2001).

(1) Portuguese

- a. *A Maria quer que a filha fique / *fica*
 the Mary wants that the daughter stays.SUBJ / stays.IND
em casa.
 at home

‘Mary wants that her daughter stays at home.’

- b. *O João pediu que a secretária escrevesse / *escreveu*
 the John asked that the secretary writes.SUBJ / wrote.IND
o relatório.
 the report

‘John asked the secretary to write the report.’

- c. *O Pedro lamenta que os filhos cheguem / *chegam*
 the Peter regrets that the children arrive.SUBJ / arrive.IND
tarde.
 late

‘Peter regrets that his children will arrive late.’

In (1) indicative is infelicitous under such predicates. The reverse scenario is observed with complements to epistemic verbs such as ‘know’. In these contexts indicative but not subjunctive is selected:

(2) Portuguese

- O João sabe que a Maria vem / *venha mais*
 the John knows that the Mary comes.IND / comes.SUBJ more
tarde.
 late

‘John knows that Mary is coming later.’

The indicative-subjunctive divide roughly illustrated above can be then related to the [$\pm$ Tense] on C. Accordingly, on the one hand, volitional, directive and emotive factive predicates, as in (1), with [-T] on C, are only compatible with subjunctive which has been therefore associated with the defectiveness of the embedded tense. A note on complements to emotive factive verbs is mandatory here (even if limitations of space preclude a full discussion on the topic). The clausal complements of this class of predicates are tense domains [Ambar, 1998; Martins, 2001]. Thus, indicative, rather than subjunctive, should occur in this context. This is the case in languages like

Russian, Bulgarian or Greek, though not the case of Romance languages such as Portuguese, French or Spanish. Ambar (1998) proposed those verbs select DP whose D is [+T]; in turn D selects C [-T]. The generalization that subjunctive occurs in structures whose C is [-T] can then be maintained.

Epistemic predicates such as *saber* 'know' in (2), on the other hand, have [+T] on C and, consequently, select indicative which has been considered independent of the matrix tense. Note that the *anaphoric or dependent tense* analysis of subjunctive readily accounts for one of the central properties of this mood: obviation, exemplified in (3) below:

(3) Portuguese

*O João_i quer que ele_{*ij} vá às aulas.*
 the John wants that he goes.SUBJ to-the classes
 'John wants that he goes to the classes.'

The obviation effects straightforwardly follow from the anaphoric tense approach: with [-T] on C the binding domain of the embedded clause is extended to the matrix. Then Principle B of the Binding theory applies with the effect that the overt or null embedded subject pronoun (coindexed with Tense (or I), cf. Borer (1989)) cannot be bound by the matrix subject in its own binding domain.

The analysis of tense as anaphoric however conflicts with the *non-anaphoric or independent tense* view held by Bošković (1997) and Martin (1996), as we saw above. This view is in line of Stowell's (1982) insight that control infinitives (though not ECM structures) are specified for tense. Enç (1991) supports Stowell's hypothesis by arguing that eventive verbs contain a temporal argument that needs to be bound. Tense is a binder for that argument, reason why eventive predicates can occur in these structures (though not in ECM: *John tried to buy the book* vs. **John believed Peter to buy the book*). Thus, just as the *anaphoric or dependent tense* view elegantly accounts for the obviation phenomenon, the *non-anaphoric or independent tense* view also accounts for other phenomena.

As mentioned above, we will adopt Ambar's system for t-features valuation which solves the apparent paradox between these two views. Her system shares with Pesetsky and Torrego's (2001, 2004) proposals the extension of valuation to t(ense)-features (for technical differences, namely on bundles of features and on the combinations [$\pm$ interpretable] and [$\pm$ valued] of features, see the works cited and also Duarte et al. (2005)). Adopting the probe-goal system [Chomsky, 2001; Ambar, 1998, 2005, 2007, 2016] assumes that features enter the heads C, T, v, V as bundles. She distinguished between two types of tense-features – t_i -features, (related to the high morphological

Tense (TP), responsible for nominative case) and t_{ev} -features (associated with the tense object (ToP), responsible for accusative and properties of event and Aktionsart). Much like Chomsky's (2001) interpretable *vs* uninterpretable features, features in Ambar's system enter the derivation as *valued* or *unvalued*, the latter receiving a value by Agree. In subjunctive embedded clauses both t_t -features and t_{ev} -features are unvalued in T and C. However, only t_{ev} -features are valued in V; t_t -features being unvalued. Therefore, the unvalued t_{ev} -feature of v probes the t_{ev} -feature of V and receives a value. Accordingly, the t_{ev} -feature of v is probed by T and later by C, which also get valued. The t_t -feature however remains unvalued and, as a consequence, must be valued by the matrix verb or, for concreteness, by a given feature responsible for selection.

This system can be moreover extended to languages that exhibit other strategies for satisfying the selection-requirement. Russian is one such language. As the other Slavic and Balkan languages, Russian does not display subjunctive morphology on the verb. Instead, the verbal tense of subjunctive clauses is Past Indicative which is therefore specified for both t_t -features and t_{ev} -features. Since all features are valued, the domain is *t-complete* and *čto* is merged to satisfy EPP (as generally in indicative structures). The particle *by* is then merged in EvaluativeP, *čto* moves and adjoins to it (plausibly for clause typing):

(4) Russian

<i>Иван</i>	<i>хочет,</i>	<i>чтобы</i>	<i>он</i>	<i>поцеловал</i>	<i>Надю.</i>
Ivan _i	hočet	čto by	on _{*i/j}	potseloval	Nadju.
John	wants	that-SUBJ	he	kissed.past.3SG	Nadja
'John wants that he kisses Nadja.'					

According to the system we adopt here, *by* is the goal of the probe of the matrix verb which values the unvalued feature responsible for selection of subjunctive. The obviation effects in (4) are accounted for in a principled way: the embedded domain extends to the matrix one via incorporation of *by* into *čto* and the probe goal relation between the unvalued feature in the matrix verb and *by*.

Note that the system for t -features valuation adopted here solves the conflict between the dependency *vs.* independency views discussed above:

(i) t_{ev} -features, responsible for event, enter the derivation with a value which successfully accounts for Stowell's observations regarding the interpretation of unrealized future event;

(ii) the t_t -features get valued by the matrix verb which captures the view according to which the embedded domain extends to the matrix one.

3. Unselected subjunctive clauses and main clauses

3.1. Unselected subjunctive clauses

Different works [Giorgi, Pianesi, 1997; Quer, 1998; Giannakidou, 1998, 2009, 2016; Ambar, 2005, 2007, 2016; Oliveira, 2008; Marques, 2009; a.o.] have pointed out that the selection of indicative and subjunctive is not so well-defined as it might seem at first glance when we consider verbs like *acreditar* ‘believe’ (5a) and *imaginar* ‘imagine’ (5b). As shown below, these verbs are compatible with both indicative and subjunctive:

(5) Portuguese

a. *Acredito que ele consegue / consiga chegar a tempo.*
believe.1SG that he manages.IND / manages.SUBJ arrive.INF
on time

‘I believe that he will manage to arrive on time.’

b. *Imagino que o Pedro está / esteja cansado.*
imagine.1SG that the Peter is.IND / is.SUBJ tired

‘I imagine that Peter is tired.’

According to Marques (2009) the subjunctive mood in (5a) and (5b) associates with the speaker’s lower degree of commitment to the truth of the proposition. Ambar (2016) claims that the occurrence of subjunctive with such predicates is not a result of selection, hence the label *unselected subjunctive clauses* that we adopt. Thus, in contrast to the structures described by (1) and (2) above where subjunctive is *selected* by the matrix predicate which values the unvalued t_i -features of the embedded verb, with predicates such as *acreditar* ‘believe’ or *imaginar* ‘imagine’, that typically select indicative, it is an Op(erator) merged in CP that does the job of assigning a value to the unvalued t_i -features. As will be discussed below, the Op is an instantiation of some features of the Left Periphery in need of valuation, namely those of EvaluativeP.

3.2. Subjunctive main clauses

Let us now take a look at subjunctive main clauses. Here, we arrive at another controversy. Subjunctive has been considered the mood of subordination *par excellence* and therefore ruled out from assertions such as (6):

(6) Portuguese

*Ele vai / *vá ao cinema.*
he go.IND.3SG / go.SUBJ.3SG to movies

‘He goes to the movies.’

However, it appears that it is productive in those main clauses in which the speaker's evaluation or kind of attitude are expressed, the indicative being ruled out here:

(7) Portuguese

<i>Vá</i>	/ * <i>Vai</i>	<i>ele</i>	<i>as</i>	<i>aulas!</i>
go.SUBJ.3SG	/ go.IND.3SG	he	to-the	courses

'Let him go to the courses!'

Importantly, the data in (6) and (7) show that the indicative-subjunctive divide is more sophisticated: besides the divergences concerning tense-valuation in complements to given predicates, indicative and subjunctive differ with respect to the type of illocutionary force they associate with. Indicative is the mood of assertions, compatible with epistemic and factive predicates denoting 'knowledge', while subjunctive codifies the speaker's evaluations and kind of attitude [Ambar, 2016]. In Giannakidou's (1998) terms the properties of indicative and subjunctive are captured under the notion of (*non*) *veridicality*, the subjunctive being the mood of the nonveridical domain. In order to account for the interplay between indicative and subjunctive, we will consider two projections of the Left Periphery: the speaker's projections AssertiveP and EvaluativeP [Ambar, 2000, 2003, 2016]. We assume that these projections take part in the derivation of subjunctive:

(8) [EvaluativeP [AssertiveP [XP [WhP [FocP [XP [TP

The syntactic representation of subjunctive main clauses will then pattern with that of unselected subjunctive clauses, selection being a result of merging Op in EvaluativeP. In languages such as Portuguese, Op values the unvalued t_i -features of V. In the next section we observe how the system proposed here extends to other languages, namely Russian and the Balkan languages.

4. More on the cross-linguistic puzzle

As shown in section 2, the system we adopt for Portuguese convincingly captures the data from Russian: since t_i -features and t_{ev} -features are valued, the particle *by* is merged. *By* is the goal of the probe of the matrix verb responsible for selection and associated with evaluation. Moreover, Russian patterns with Portuguese by displaying obviation (see (4) above) which is derived accordingly.

Consider now Balkan languages such as Greek and Bulgarian. At first glance, they seem to pattern with Russian: a particle, *na* and *da* respectively, is inserted in subjunctive clauses. However, this similarity is only *apparent*. Balkan languages diverge from Russian in the following aspects:

(i) the subjunctive particles are obligatorily verb-adjacent (9); (ii) the tense of the subjunctive verb is Present Indicative (perfective non-past (PNP) in [Giannakidou, 2009]) (10); (iii) the obligatory obviation effects are voided (11a-b). Observe the following data from Bulgarian:

(9) Bulgarian

<i>Iskam</i>	<i>Ivan</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>(*Ivan)</i>	<i>kupi</i>	<i>knigata.</i>
want.1SG	John	SUBJ	John	buy.PNP.3SG	the-book

‘I want John to buy the book.’

(10) Bulgarian

<i>*Iskax</i>	<i>Ivan</i>	<i>da</i>	<i>kupuvaše</i>	/	<i>beše</i>	<i>kupil</i>
wanted.1SG	John	SUBJ	buy.PAST.3SG	/	have.PAST.3SG	bought

knigata.
the-book

(11) Bulgarian

- a. *Ivan iska Petar da otide na kino.*
John want.3SG Peter SUBJ go.PNP.3SG to movies
‘John wants Peter to go to the movies.’
- b. *Ivan iska da otide na kino.*
John want.2SG SUBJ go.PNP.3SG to movies
‘John wants to go to the movies.’

The structural position of Balkan subjunctive particles is a challenging matter. On the one hand, they behave like complementizers [Roussou, 2000], on the other, the strict verb-adjacency and the lack of obviation suggest that they are generated in a lower position, possibly MoodP as in Giannakidou (2009). Dobrovie-Sorin (1994, 2001) argues that Romanian subjunctive particle *să* is part of the verbal morphology incorporating into the verbal cluster. This claim is in line with Giannakidou’s (2009) observations regarding the defectiveness of tense compatible with *na*: PNP cannot occur on its own, therefore, *na* is merged in order to introduce the variable *n* (*now*) into the syntax. The dependency between *na* and the verb suggests that it is responsible for establishing a relation with given features of the matrix domain.

Here we will tentatively assume that Balkan subjunctive particles have a dual nature: they are generated in a lower position (within the TP field or below FinP) but they also establish a relation with the CP (triggered by given features of EvaluativeP). Therefore, the lack of obviation effects is derived according to the position in which the subjunctive particle

is interpreted: when the particle is in the TP zone, the domain of the embedded subject is transparent for binding which gives rise to the absence of obviation effects. Notice that Bulgarian *da*-structures in (11a-b) draw an ambiguity: they denote subjunctive (11a) but, in addition, they occur in contexts in which an infinitive would be selected in Romance languages (11b).⁶

Romanian is particularly revealing here. As shown in [Dobrovie-Sorin, 2001, p. 60] obligatory control structures are only possible when the complementizer *ca* does not intervene:

(12) Romanian

a. *Ion începe s -o ajute pe Maria.*

John starts să her-CL.ACC help-SUBJ pe Mary

‘John starts helping Mary.’

b. **Ion începe ca pe Maria s -o ajute.*

John begins that pe Mary să her-CL.ACC help-3SG.SUBJ

Notice that the complementizer *ca* will be otherwise obligatory whenever a constituent such as *pe Maria* in (12b) precedes the *să*-clause [Dobrovie-Sorin, 2001]. With obligatory control verbs, however, it blocks the relation between the matrix clause and the *să*-clause.

4.1. Some asymmetries in main subjunctive clauses

Coming back to subjunctive main clauses, we are now able to explain some intriguing asymmetries between the languages under investigation.

In section 3 we observed Portuguese main subjunctive clauses codify the speaker’s evaluation of the state of affairs described. The evaluative reading confined to these structures seems to hold also for Greek (13), Russian (14) and Bulgarian (15). Giannakidou (2016) claims that the occurrence of Greek *na* in (13) is associated with epistemic modality:

(13) Greek

Ti na theli?

what SUBJ want-3SG

‘What might he want?’ [Giannakidou, 2016, p. 183.]

⁶ Differently from Russian, Greek and Bulgarian have lost the verbal morphology for subjunctive and infinitive.

(14) Russian

Чтобы я такое сказал!

Čtoby ja takoe skazal!

that.SUBJ I such said

‘That I would say such thing!’ [Baylin, 2012, p. 89.]

(15) Bulgarian

Kakvo da kupija?

what SUBJ buy.3SG

‘What should I buy?’

A closer look at the data however suggests the languages under study display some restrictions regarding subjunctive main clauses. The Greek and Bulgarian examples in, respectively, (13) and (15), show subjunctive is felicitous in *wh*-questions. In Portuguese such structures are ruled out:

(16) Portuguese

**O que compre?*

what buy.SUBJ

‘What should I buy?’

Mezhevich discusses the occurrence of subjunctive in Russian main clauses [Mezhevich, 2006, p. 132–134]. In her terms *by* is a conditional particle:

(17) Russian

Я бы пропустила этот доклад.

Ja by propusti-la etot doklad.

I COND miss-PAST this talk

‘I would skip / would have skipped this talk.’

(18) *Что бы ты пропустила?*

Čto by ty propusti-la?

what COND you-NOM miss-PAST

‘What (e.g., which talk) would you skip?’

However the data in (17) and (18) are distinct from (14) above. While in the former *by* functions as a marker of the so-called conditional mood,⁷

⁷ Counterparts of Russian *by* can be found in the other Slavic languages as a hallmark of conditional mood.

in the latter the occurrence of the complex *čtoby* underlies the evaluative reading of subjunctive main clauses. Our suspicion that *by* (a residue of the old aorist) functions as marker of modality in the examples in (17) and (18) is in conformity with the observations of Migdalski (2006) on Polish *by*. What is more, *čtoby*, parallel to Portuguese subjunctive, is infelicitous in *wh*-questions:

(19) Russian

*Что	чтобы	ты	пропустила?
*Čto	čtoby	ty	propusti-la?
what	SUBJ	you-NOM	miss-PAST

In the light of the data discussed so far, we can then distinguish between two groups of languages: (i) Greek and Bulgarian which permit subjunctive in questions and (ii) Russian and Portuguese which do not.

Let us start by (i). As discussed above, the subjunctive particles *da* and *na* appear to display an ambiguous behaviour being counterparts of the Romance subjunctive and infinitival structures. In the examples in (13) and (15) above, both *da* and *na*-clauses refer to future, unrealized event patterning with Stowell's (1982) observations on control infinitives. Moreover, the Bulgarian example in (15) can express both deontic modality and rhetorical or evaluative-like reading. The latter is not however a result of the properties of *da* but rather an outcome of the features of given projections in the Left Periphery activated by *wh*-movement.

Crucially, it seems to us that evaluation and true questions are generally incompatible. Evaluation, in the sense adopted here, implies knowledge or presupposition which are being object of the evaluation itself. Hence, a *wh*-question, being a request for information, seems to be incompatible with such a definition of evaluation. Interestingly, the Russian example in (14) consistently supports the assumption that evaluation implies knowledge. Observe that the evaluation reading confined to (14) is obtained by the combination of both *čto* and *by* and not by *by* itself. *Čto* is the indicative complementizer. According to Ambar (2016) it heads AssertiveP, the projection of indicative mood, codifying 'what the speaker knows' [Ambar, 2003]. The derivation of the subjunctive mood therefore involves raising of *čto* to *by*, the latter having been merged in Evaluative_{CP} [Ambar, 2016].

Following the claim that evaluation and questions are incompatible, we observe that in Portuguese and Russian *wh*-subjunctive questions are ruled out. Mezhevich's (2006) example in (18) is particularly important here: in structures in which *by* is merged in a lower position (Moode according to Migdalski (2006) on Polish *by*) nothing goes wrong for the interrogative interpretation. In (19) with *čtoby*, on the other hand, *wh*-movement is blocked.

As for Portuguese, besides the general incompatibility between neutral questions⁸ and evaluation, wh-subjunctive questions are infelicitous due to the unvalued t_i -features whose valuation by the Op in EvaluativeP is blocked by the intervening wh-word.

5. Conclusions

Pursuing the twofold goal of this paper we: (i) adopted the system for tense-features valuation proposed in Ambar [2007, 2016] which captures both the dependency and the independency analyses of tense; and (ii) observed that main clauses denote *evaluation* (which has been extended to all occurrences of subjunctive mood) suggesting that the trigger for subjunctive is an Op merged in EvaluativeP. Arguing that the properties of subjunctive (namely evaluation) are incompatible with those of true questions, we observed that the apparent plausibility of subjunctive wh-questions in Greek and Bulgarian is actually a result from a consistent ambiguity between subjunctive and infinitive.

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⁸ As previously shown in the literature ([Ambar, 2000, 2003], a.o.) wh-questions can acquire rhetorical or echo-readings which result from wh-movement to the Left Periphery.

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