What can the subjunctive disjoint reference effect tell us about the subjunctive?

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Abstract

This paper examines the obviation which holds between the pronominal subject of a subjunctive complement to desiderative/directive predicates in Romance and proposes that this obviation is due to the effect of a quasi-imperative operator, located in the head of FinP, on semantic binding of the pronominal subject. True imperatives yield an interpretation “anyone other than the speaker”, while embedded imperatives yield an interpretation “anyone other than the matrix subject”. In addition, such lexically selected subjunctive complements host an uninterpretable W(orld) feature in Force, which must be checked and deleted by the Mood head. In non-lexically selected subjunctive, the W feature is interpretable. It is argued that the core case of subjunctive complements are embedded imperatives; different languages may grammaticalize the interpretable W feature in other complement contexts such that subjunctive becomes the only option and the W feature is uninterpretable. This characterization of subjunctive complement clauses is supported by acquisition and attrition data, which shows that subjunctive is acquired first and lost last in contexts where the W feature is uninterpretable and hence must be deleted by the syntax in order to yield an interpretable structure at the interface.

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1. Introduction

The accurate characterization of the syntactic structure and semantic properties of subjunctive clauses has proven to be tantalizingly challenging. Because the syntax of these clauses, particularly with respect to their distribution, is so intractably connected to their semantic import, the analysis must inevitably focus on the nature of the syntax–semantics interface. In particular, from the perspective of the syntactic side of that interface, the fundamental question is how much of the semantic interpretation of these clauses is to be read off the syntactic representation. To put it in other terms, we can ask how much of what we now know about the semantic properties of subjunctive clauses should be present in some way in the syntax.

The organizing principle of this paper is to focus on the subjunctive disjoint reference effect as the entry point into the consideration of some of the fundamental questions about these clauses. The basic pattern of data, which is quite well known, is illustrated with the Spanish examples in (1):

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The paradigm illustrated in (1), of course, holds across the Romance languages in the core set of cases, subjunctive complements to desiderative and directive predicates.¹

Many researchers over the past two decades have contributed to our understanding of these clauses. What I hope to do here is to offer a general picture of subjunctive complement clauses which integrates many of the insights thus gained; as will become clear, some of my thinking on this problem has changed considerably. The article is organized as follows. In section 2, I provide a summary overview of analyses of the subjunctive obviation data based on binding theory. In section 3, I review another approach to these data, in which the obviation is argued to be an effect of the logophoric structure of the subjunctive clause; this section draws principally on work by Bianchi (2001). In section 4, I recast the main conclusions of section 3 in terms of the interaction of an (un)interpretable feature in the Force head in the left periphery with the +Fin head of the subjunctive CP. The analysis assumes the Minimalist Program of Chomsky (1995 and subsequent works) and the primary source of data is Spanish. Finally, I focus in section 5 on the broader question of the distribution of subjunctive complement clauses as this relates to the account of the disjoint reference effect which is developed in section 4, and show how to integrate into this analysis cases of subjunctive complement clauses which have proven somewhat more difficult to characterize, such as subjunctive clauses with implicative/causative verbs and subjunctive clauses with factive-emotive predicates.

2. A first look at subjunctive obviation: binding theory approaches

Various analyses of the subjunctive disjoint reference effect within the government and binding theory paradigm of the 1980s assumed that this effect was due to the operation of binding theory, concretely, Principle B. These accounts thus seek some principled way to derive the apparent extension of the binding domain of the pronominal subject into the superordinate clause. For Picallo (1985), among others, the determining factor is Tense; the observed consecutio temporum in subjunctive clauses is taken as evidence that such clauses lack independent referential tense, and binding domains are defined with respect to tense. There are two particular problems that arise in a tense-based approach, noted in Kempchinsky (1986). One is obviation in subjunctive clauses with nominals, as in (2), where the subject of the subjunctive complement clause is interpreted as disjoint in reference with the thematic subject of the head noun. The other is the fact that in a complex sentence with a series of embedded clauses of the relevant type — that is, subjunctive clauses lacking independent tense — binding domain extension never extends higher than the immediately superordinate clause, as shown in (3):

(2) Nunca entendí [su que proj se casara tan joven]  
never understand.PRET.1SG his/her desire that pro refl marry.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG so young  
‘I never understood his/her desire that s/he marry (SUBJ) so young.’

(3) pro deseaba [que proj quisiera lo acompañara en el viaje]]  
desire.IMPF.3SG that pro want.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG that pro him.ACC  
accompany.SUBJ.IMPF.3SG on the journey  
‘She/He desired that she/he want (SUBJ) that she/he accompany (SUBJ) him on the journey.’

Nevertheless, these problems are not technically difficult to resolve. Picallo (1985), for example, deals with data such as (3) by relativizing her definition of binding domain to include a potential binder, along the lines of Chomsky’s (1986) approach to binding domains. The difficulty for a tense-based definition of binding domains represented by the

¹ For the most part I will not address directly in this paper the appearance of obviation or lack thereof in Romanian subjunctives, where questions of coreference or disjoint reference of subjunctive empty pronominal subjects are obscured by the lack of morphological infinitival clauses (but see the conclusion for some speculations). For analyses of at least some empty subjects of Romanian morphological subjunctive clauses as PRO, see Terzi (1992) and Landau (2000, 2004).
nominal example in (2) is also not insurmountable if we assume that at least some nominals project event structure which includes some abstract representation of tense (cf. Grimshaw, 1990).

The more fundamental objection to tense-based extensions of the subjunctive subject’s binding domain is that the characterization of subjunctive clauses as inherently “tenseless” or as having “anaphoric” tense, in contrast to the “free” or “independent” tense of complement indicative clauses, is misleading. On the one hand, researchers on the syntax of tense (Enc, 1987; Zagona, 1990, 2005; Stowell, 1996; Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria, 2000, 2005; among many others) have shown that all complement clauses have a particular temporal relation with the matrix clause. On the other hand, many subjunctive clauses violate strict sequence of tense; in particular, subjunctive clauses to past tense directive predicates in Spanish may appear — as long noted even in traditional grammars of the language — in either the present or the past subjunctive, with real effects on the temporal interpretation, as argued in Kempchinsky (1986) and illustrated by data such as (4):

\begin{itemize}
  \item[(4)] a. Ordené a Pedro que terminara el proyecto  
  \quad \ldots y efectivamente lo hizo.  
  \quad \ldots pero todavía no lo ha hecho.  
  \quad ‘I ordered Pedro that he finish (PAST.SUBJ) the project  
  \quad \ldots and in fact he did so.’  
  \quad \ldots but he still hasn’t done it.’
  
  \item[(4)] b. Ordené a Pedro que termine el proyecto  
  \quad \#\ldots y efectivamente lo hizo.  
  \quad \ldots pero todavía no lo ha hecho.  
  \quad ‘I ordered Pedro that he finish (PRES.SUBJ) the project  
  \quad \#\ldots and in fact he did so.’  
  \quad \ldots but he still hasn’t done it.’
\end{itemize}

However, researchers continue to argue that the nature of the temporal relationship is different in the case of subjunctive vs. indicative complements; we will return to this issue in section 4.3.

The other approach to binding domain extension is represented by Kempchinsky (1986, 1990), where it is proposed that subjunctive clauses to desiderative and directive predicates are characterized by a modal operator in Comp, essentially, an (embedded) imperative semantic operator (see section 3.2 below). This operator must be identified at least by the level of LF. In the usual case, the subjunctive morphology on the verb identifies this operator, and hence V in Infl/T moves to Comp at LF, triggering as a result the extension of the binding domain of the subjunctive subject to the immediately superordinate clause. By this account, the abstract structure at LF of a sentence such as (1a) is that of (5):

\begin{center}
(5) \hspace{1cm} [IP ... V [CP INFL-que [IP [pro] tInfl [tv ...]]]]
\end{center}

Assuming the definition of binding domains of Chomsky (1986), the binding domain of the pronominal subject [pro] in (5) is the superordinate IP, since this is the smallest category containing the governor of [pro] — namely, the Infl which has moved to Comp — and a subject.

Obviously the evolution of syntactic theory in the last decade would necessitate some revision of this or any other binding-theory based approach to the subjunctive disjoint reference effect (see for example Kempchinsky, 1998; San Martín, 2007). That aside, there are a number of persistent empirical problems which binding-theory analyses (including mine) have failed to adequately explain. The principal empirical challenge to such analyses is the lack of obviation between the subjunctive subject and objects (accusative or dative) in the superordinate clause. In Spanish and in Catalan, such clauses freely alternate with controlled infinitives; relevant examples from Spanish are given in (6) and (7):²

² Note that such alternations between subjunctive and infinitival clauses in and of themselves present a challenge for “blocking effect” analyses of obviation such as Farkas (1992a) or Burzio (1989). San Martín (2007) presents a different counterargument to blocking accounts, based on the relative chronology of loss of obviation effects and loss of infinitival clauses in the evolution of Greek.
(6) a. Animé a Elisa a [PRO estudiar en el extranjero].
   ‘I encouraged Elisa to study abroad.’
b. La animé a [PRO estudiar en el extranjero].
   ‘I encouraged her (ACC) to study abroad.’
c. Animé a Elisa a [que pro estudiar en el extranjero].
   ‘I encouraged Elisa that she study (SUBJ) abroad.’
d. La animé a [que pro estudiar en el extranjero].
   ‘I encouraged her (ACC) that she study (SUBJ) abroad.’

(7) a. Le aconsejé (a Pedro) [PRO cambiar de carrera].
   ‘I advised him (DAT)/Pedro to change his major.’
b. Le aconsejé (a Pedro) [que pro cambiar de carrera].
   ‘I advised him (DAT)/Pedro that he change (SUBJ) his major.’

Kempchinsky (1990) attempts to account for such data by suggesting that at LF the object DP, be it accusative as in (6) or dative as in (7), does not c-command the sentential complement, but it seems quite difficult to maintain this account. In an antisymmetry approach such as Kayne (1994), any constituent which linearly precedes another must c-command the other (note that the matrix objects in (6) and (7) are not fronted). Furthermore, on purely empirical grounds it must be concluded that c-command does hold, since sentences such as (6) and (7) allow for bound variable readings of the pronominal subject when the matrix object is a quantifier:

(8) a. No animé a nadie a [que pro estudiar en el extranjero].
   ‘I didn’t encourage anyone that she/he study abroad.’
b. No le aconsejé a nadie [que pro cambiar de carrera].
   ‘I didn’t advise anyone that she/he change their major.’

That the subjunctive disjoint reference effect strictly affects subject-to-subject coreference is clearly shown by what happens with object control verbs when these have a reflexive object: the subjunctive clause variant is disallowed (9d)–(10d):

(9) a. Elisa forzó al niño a tomar la medicina.
   ‘Elisa forced the child to take the medicine.’
b. Elisa forzó al niño a que tomara la medicina.
   ‘Elisa forced the child that he take (SUBJ) the medicine.’
c. Elisa se forzó (a sí misma) a tomar la medicina.
   ‘Elisa forced herself to take the medicine.’
d. *Elisa se forzó (a sí misma) a que tomara la medicina.
   ‘Elisa forced herself that she take (SUBJ) the medicine.’

(10) a. Su padre le ordenó a Ana dejar de hablar del asunto.
   ‘Her father ordered Ana to stop talking about the matter.’
b. Su padre le ordenó a Ana que dejara de hablar del asunto.
   ‘Her father ordered Ana that she stop (SUBJ) talking about the matter.’
c. Ana se ordenó (a sí misma) dejar de pensar en el asunto.
   ‘Ana ordered herself to stop thinking about the matter.’
d. *Ana se ordenó (a sí misma) que dejara de pensar en el asunto.
   ‘Ana ordered herself that she stop (SUBJ) thinking about the matter.’

3 Bianchi (2001) claims that sentences in Italian comparable to (7) are slightly marginal, assigning a judgement of ?; see section 3.1.
4 The exception to this generalization is obviation in subjunctive complements to factive-emotive predicates with dative experiencer subjects:
   (i) A Elisa, le gusta [que pro tenga un trabajo estable].
   ‘Elisa is pleased that (she/he) as a steady job.’

Whatever may account for subject obviation in subjunctive complements to such predicates (see section 5.2) can easily be extended to such examples on the assumption that the dative experiencer is syntactically a (quirky) subject. Evidence for this comes from the well-known fact that dative experiencers can control PRO in adjunct clauses which generally require subject control.
As has been noted in the literature, a variety of factors can induce acceptability of subject coreference; the phenomenon is, as Landau (2004:855) observes, “notoriously intricate”. Speakers show variability in their judgments of sentences with passive subjects (in either the superordinate or the subordinate clause), sentences with modal verbs in the subjunctive clause, and sentences with an emphatic or focused pronominal subject in the subjunctive clause:

(11)  

a. % [El niño], fue forzado a que pro; tomar la medicina.  
   ‘The child was forced that he take (SUBJ) the medicine.’

b. % Ana, espera que pro; sea elegida para el puesto.  
   ‘Ana hopes that she be (SUBJ) elected to the position.’

c. % José, espera que pro; pueda terminar el proyecto a tiempo.  
   ‘José hopes that he be able (SUBJ) to finish the project on time.’

d. % [La ministra], insiste en que ELLA/[ella misma], presida la sesión.  
   ‘The minister insists that SHE/she herself chair (SUBJ) the session.’

Intra- and interspeaker variability surfaces most notably as a function of the particular matrix predicate, with the archetypical volitional predicates querer ‘to want’ and desear ‘to desire’ being the most “resistent” to overriding the subjunctive disjoint reference effect. Consider the examples in (12), presented without judgments on coreference:

(12)  

a. Ana quiere que sea elegida.  
   ‘Ana wants that (she) be (SUBJ) chosen.’

b. Ana quiere que pueda acompañaros.  
   ‘Ana wants that (she) be able (SUBJ) to accompany you.’

c. Ana quiere que ELLA os acompañe.  
   ‘Ana wants that SHE accompany (SUBJ) you.’

d. Ana quiere que os acompañe.  
   ‘Ana wants that (she) accompany (SUBJ) you.’

The overwhelming majority of speakers consulted reject a coreferential reading on the two subjects for all four examples in (12), including speakers who accept coreference in examples such as (11). However, some speakers reject (12b–d), but accept (12a). This recalls Ruwet (1991), who gives examples of coreference, with the appropriate contextualizing factors, for vouloir in French, although the pattern of preference is somewhat distinct:

(13)  

a. * Je veux que je parte.  
   ‘I want that I leave (SUBJ).’

b. ? Je veux que je sois autorisé à partir demain.  
   ‘I want that I be (SUBJ) authorized to leave tomorrow.’

c. Je voudrais bien que je puisse enfin être autorisé à partir.  
   ‘I would certainly want that I should (SUBJ) finally be authorized to leave.’

Quer (1998:51) suggests that part of the relevant generalization is that “the subject of the matrix predicate cannot be the agent in control of the embedded eventuality”. Although that characterization is incomplete, since apparently idiosyncratic lexical factors also play some role, a purely structurally based binding theory approach fails to capture the full range of facts.

3. Subjunctive clauses and logophoricity

3.1. External and internal logophoric centers

A newer approach to the referential properties of subjunctive pronominal structures has focused on the apparently logophoric properties of subjunctive clauses; this approach is exemplified by Bianchi (2001). Bianchi’s main goal is to explain the correlation of nominative Case with person agreement and the correlation of person agreement, in turn, with finiteness. More specifically, nominative Case and hence finiteness are necessary for the licensing of referentially

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5 Suñer (1986), an analysis which explicitly rejects a binding-theory type approach, proposes to capture this generalization via the use of the diacritic feature [WILL] on certain predicates. Similarly, Zaring (1985) appeals to the notion of an “instigator-instigatee” relationship as a factor in obviation, and Farkas (1992a) argues that the responsibility (RESP) relation is the relevant generalization, where this relation holds between an individual and a situation if the individual brings the situation about. See section 3.2 below.
independent DPs; that is, lexical DPs and pronouns with the feature [+R]. She proposes that the [+R] person feature is selected by the head Fin, the lowest head in the CP field, when it is linked to the speech point S. Linking to S establishes a center of deixis, or what Bianchi terms an external logophoric center, generalizing in this way the notion of logophoric center as employed in the analysis of logophoric languages. That is, the external logophoric center is simply the perspective point of the external speaker and addressee.

Linking of the +Fin head to S (the external logophoric center) is the default option. If, however, the Fin head is specified negatively, then it links to an internal logophoric center, which in turn is anaphoric to the matrix clause Event. An internal logophoric center licenses a [−R] person feature, which therefore must be anaphoric to some [+R] DP, where this DP is a participant in the matrix clause Event. This, essentially, is what happens in Control. Bianchi suggests that there is a parameter in UG which allows for the [+R] person feature to be selected by an internal logophoric center; this parameter setting allows for the existence of logophoric languages. We thus obtain at least three different scenarios for complement clauses:

(14) a. tensed complement clauses
    ..... V [CP [FinP +Fin [TP DP,+R [T ±Pst] ...]]]  
    |     | E                  S (=Ext LC)
    b. tensed complement clauses, logophoric languages
    ..... V [CP [FinP +Fin [TP DP,+R [T ±Pst] ...]]]  
    |     | E_i                Int LC_i
    c. infinitival complement clauses
    ..... V [CP [FinP −Fin [TP DP,+R [T −T] ...]]]  
    |     | E_i                Int LC_i

To account for subjunctive obviation, Bianchi proposes a slightly more complex picture. On the assumption that these clauses are tensed clauses, the Fin head links to an external logophoric center, i.e., the speech point S. However, subjunctive clauses — concretely, subjunctive clauses which are lexically selected by the matrix predicate — also encode an internal logophoric center, linked to a Mood head situated between FinP and TP:

(15) ... V [CP [FinP Fin [MoodP Mood [TP T ±Pst] ...]]]  
    |     | Ext LC                Int LC

Bianchi suggests that the subjunctive disjoint reference effect arises from the clash between the referential requirements of the external logophoric center and those of the internal logophoric center. Participants in an anaphoric internal logophoric center, with the feature [−R], must be anaphoric to arguments of the matrix clause, which is seen as incompatible with the [+R] person feature licensed by the external logophoric center linked to the Fin head. The solution to this incompatibility is that the [+R] person agreement on the subjunctive subject “cannot take as a value the referential indices of the participants of the internal LC [logophoric center], i.e., the matrix arguments” (op. cit.: 38). She also suggests that the same conclusion can be reached if the disjoint reference effect is seen as a consequence of blocking: when [−R] person agreement is sufficient to license the subordinate subject, then the infinitival structure, encoding only the internal logophoric center, is preferred by general economy principles over the subjunctive clause, with a more complex logophoric structure.

Note, in fact, that this approach requires blocking: if the [−R] person agreement licensed by the internal logophoric center linked to Mood is identified in turn by the [+R] person agreement licensed by the external logophoric center linked to Fin in the embedded CP, there is nothing to prevent “accidental” coreference with some participant in the higher clause—in other words, independent accessing of the discourse domain. This, presumably, is what happens in the case of embedded assertive (indicative) clauses. However, as we have seen, a blocking-type approach fails to explain the alternation between object control infinitives and subjunctive clauses in Spanish and Catalan. More generally, to extend the restriction on the possible value of the referential index of the subjunctive subject to all arguments of the
matrix clause fails, like binding theory-based analyses, to capture the subject orientation of the disjoint reference effect.

Bianchi acknowledges that obviation is much sharper with subjects than with objects, and speculates that this difference derives from the fact that the matrix subject is an obligatory participant in the event (carrying the SOURCE logophoric role, following Sells, 1987), while the object is an optional participant. In contexts where the object is the addressee and therefore clearly a participant in the event, the SDR effect is, she claims, quite pronounced:

(16) ?*Ti prego [che e1 mi aiuti].
    ‘I beg you that you help (SUBJ) me.’

Note, however, that the exact Spanish equivalent to (16) is perfectly grammatical:

(17) Te ruego que me ayudes.

Further, in the case of direct object control implicative predicates such as forzar, the direct object must be present and is therefore, presumably, an obligatory participant in the event:

(18) a. La1 obligaron a [que e1 saliera de la habitación].
    ‘They obliged her that (she) leave (SUBJ) the room.’

b. * Obligaron a que saliera de la habitación.
    ‘They obliged that (she/he) leave (SUBJ) the room.’

Given that the pattern of obviation between the subjunctive subject and matrix objects is distinct in Italian vs. Spanish, an account based solely on the notion of participants in the matrix event does not suffice. As a more general observation, note that a typical pattern in logophoric languages is that the antecedent of a logophoric pronoun in the complement clause is the subject of the matrix verb, i.e., the internal logophoric center is the perspective point of the “internal speaker”. In that sense, a pronominal subject of a subjunctive clause in Romance behaves more like an antilogophor, as has been proposed, for example, by Caballero (2004).

Recall that the binding theory-based analysis of the subjunctive disjoint reference effect in Kempchinsky (1986, 1990) took as its point of departure the idea that at least a subset of subjunctive clauses — basically, complements to desideratives and directives — are characterized by the presence of a modal operator in the head of the clause. The basic insight that this analysis attempted to capture was the idea that these subjunctive clauses are essentially embedded imperatives, and this modal operator was therefore proposed to be akin to an imperative operator in simple imperatives. As a more general observation, note that a typical pattern in logophoric languages is that the antecedent of a logophoric pronoun in the complement clause is the subject of the matrix verb, i.e., the internal logophoric center is the perspective point of the “internal speaker”. In that sense, a pronominal subject of a subjunctive clause in Romance behaves more like an antilogophor, as has been proposed, for example, by Caballero (2004).

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3.2. Imperatives and subject interpretation

Portner (2005) offers a semantic analysis of simple imperatives according to which an imperative denotes a property to be added to the addressee’s To-Do List: it is a function from individuals to sets of properties. He proposes

6 However, one reviewer observes that the ungrammaticality of (16) may be due to the fact that the matrix object is a clitic, since an example like
(i) is also ungrammatical, although the object is not an addressee:

(i) *Lo prego che pro mi aiuti.
    ‘I beg him that he help me.’

In contrast, coreference with a full DP object is much more acceptable:

(ii) Prego Gianni, che pro mi aiuti.
    ‘I beg Gianni that (he) help me.’

As we have seen in section 2 with example (6), there is no difference in Spanish between the accusative object clitic and the full DP; coreference is fully grammatical with both. To further complicate the picture, Bianchi (op. cit.: 40) gives the example in (iii), where coreference holds between the subjunctive subject and a dative clitic (the gloss is hers):

(iii) Gianni mi ha consigliato [che pro mi faccia visitare da un medico].
    Gianni to-me has advised that (I) get myself examined by a physician

I have no explanation for the Italian data, but it seems clear that an account based solely on the notion of participants in the event will not suffice.

7 See, for example, Stenius (1967), who proposes three types of modal operators: declarative, imperative and interrogative, and for later work assuming a type of imperative modal operator, Rivero and Terzi (1995).
that the subject of a simple imperative is interpreted as an addressee-oriented logophoric pronoun (independently of its morphological realization, see (19b)) which must be bound abstractly:

(19) a. (You) be quiet!
    \[\lambda w \lambda x: x = \text{addressee}(c). x \text{ is quiet}\]

b. Everyone sit down!
    \[\lambda w \lambda x: x = \text{addressee}(c). \forall y: y \in x. \text{y sits down}\]

He speculates that the reason that imperatives are found in all languages is because UG provides an operator which has the capacity to bind an addressee-oriented logophoric element. He further suggests that the reason that imperative verbs in many languages occupy a higher position than in simple declaratives is because the universal operator triggers verb movement (see Rivero and Terzi, 1995).8

Now, the semantic parallelism between imperatives and, for example, complements to desideratives is that they denote events or states of affairs which do not obtain in the actual world \(W\) at the moment of speaking \(S\). For Portner, the difference between imperatives and complements to desideratives is that the latter represent possibilities on the To-Do List of the referent of the matrix subject, while the former represent possibilities on the To-Do List of the addressee. To recast this in the terms of Bianchi’s analysis, imperatives orient strictly to the external logophoric center, while complements to desideratives orient to the internal logophoric center. The external logophoric center, recall, is syntactically located in the Fin head and links to \(S\), the event of speaking. Simple imperatives, of course, are always interpreted with respect to \(S\), and I suggest, therefore, that Fin is the syntactic locus of the universal operator proposed by Portner.

The logical extension to subjunctive clauses is to assume that the quasi-imperative operator in these clauses is also located in a Fin head, that of the subjunctive CP. The crucial difference with the operator of simple imperatives is that whereas the imperative operator semantically binds an addressee-oriented logophoric element, the subjunctive operator semantically binds a subject-oriented antilogophoric element: it is in a sense the inverse of the imperative operator. Note that the operator proposed by Portner can semantically bind any person other than first person singular, that is, it excludes only the speaker alone. First person plural imperatives are possible, as in English *Let’s do it* or the Spanish equivalent *Hagámoslo*, which shows both imperative morphology and syntax (with respect to clitic placement). In the same way, the ‘inverse’ subjunctive operator excludes only the matrix subject alone; overlapping coreference is quite possible, as in the examples of (18):

(18) a. Quiero que vayamos allí juntos.
    ‘I want that we go (SUBJ) there together.’

b. Queremos que yo salga primero.
    ‘We want that I leave (SUBJ) first.’

(18b), in particular, does not require emphatic stress on the subjunctive pronominal subject.9

8 Rivero and Terzi (1995) propose that in languages with distinct imperative syntax, there is a strong V-feature in C with Imperative logical mood, forcing overt movement of V to C. In languages which lack distinct imperative syntax, the Imperative feature is within IP. The logic of this account is that the Imperative feature in C which is checked by V-movement must be an uninterpretable feature, which is consistent with the analysis of desiderative subjunctives in section 4.2.

9 Quer (p.c.) notes that examples such as (18b) require some contextualizing and/or focus; in this particular example, the adverbial *primero* provides an implicit contrastive focus, and in the absence of such elements, there is a clear preference for a postverbal subject, a position where focus on the subject is salient:

(i) a. Queremos que gane yo.
    ‘We want that I win’

b. % Queremos que yo gane.

It is not clear to me, however, that these effects are limited to subjunctive clauses, although they are perhaps more extensive there because of the lack of distinct person morphology between the first person singular and the third person singular in the subjunctive paradigm. Consider the examples in (ii) with indicative complements; for some (but not all) speakers coreference with the preverbal subject is more marginal than with a postverbal subject:

(ii) a. Ana, y José han anunciado que ganó ella,
    ‘Ana and José have announced that she won’

b. % Ana, y José han anunciado que ella, ganó.

Nevertheless, that focus plays a role in ameliorating obviation effects is well-known, as we saw briefly in examples (11d) and (12c) above (see Kempchinsky, 1986).
The essential idea, then, is that obviation in subjunctive complements to desiderative and directive predicates is due to the role that the quasi-imperative subjunctive operator plays in the interpretation of the subject pronoun in the semantic component. This approach therefore explicitly characterizes this class of subjunctive complements as embedded imperatives, and in section 4.2 I will address the question of how this characterization is represented in the syntax. Here I limit myself to three pieces of evidence in favor of this approach, all of them well-attested in the literature.

First of all, viewing these subjunctive clauses as embedded imperatives accounts for the variability of speaker judgements on coreference observed above in (11) and (13): coreference is possible in those cases where a direct imperative would be infelicitous, i.e., where the subjunctive subject is not the agent in control (see Suñer, 1986; Farkas, 1992a):

(19) a. # Ana, sea elegida al puesto!
   ‘Ana, be elected to the position!’

   b. # José, pueda terminar el proyecto para mañana!
   ‘José, be able to finish the project by tomorrow!’

Secondly, pragmatic studies often note the relationship between the subjunctive and simple imperatives; exchanges such as (20) are extremely frequent:

(20) Person A: Sube!
    climb.IMP.2S-in (e.g. into a car)

    Person B: ¿Qué dices?
    ‘What are you saying?’

    Person A: Que subas!
    that climb.SUBJ.2SG-in

Finally, existing studies on L1 acquisition of subjunctive clauses in Spanish converge on the observation that the earliest observed uses of subjunctive clauses are in indirect commands (Montrul, 2005) or with, in particular, the verb querer ‘to want’ (see Blake, 1983; among others); I will return to the implications of the patterns of acquisition in the conclusion.

Thus, although the parallelism is not quite exact, the intuition is that the imperative operator roughly yields the interpretation “anyone other than the speaker”, while the subjunctive operator gives the interpretation “anyone other than the matrix subject”, as noted in the observation above from Quer (1998). However, the proposal that the imperative/subjunctive operator is in the projection of the Fin head rather than within the projection of the Force head might seem surprising, since notions such as ‘imperative’ seem to be inextricably tied to illocutionary force (see Roussou, 2000). Further, the approach suggested thus far seems to endow the +Fin head of the subjunctive clause with the perspective point of the matrix subject — i.e., linking this +Fin head to an internal logophoric center — which differs somewhat from the specific analysis proposed by Bianchi. Recall that in her proposal the internal logophoric center is anchored to the Mood head, while Fin in the left periphery always links to an external logophoric center. To resolve these questions and to see more of the overall schema, we need to look at the syntax and semantics of models of evaluation and possible worlds.

4. Worlds in the syntax

4.1. Models of evaluation

Although it has long been realized that the realis/irrealis distinction is too crude to capture the semantic contrast between the indicative mood and the subjunctive mood, the basic intuition is that ultimately the mood contrast

10 Note that the effect of the quasi-imperative operator on the interpretation of the embedded pronominal subject is exactly the inverse of the promissive particle ma in Korean, proposed by Pak et al. (2006) to head a Jussive Phrase just above TP: when ma is present on a main clause, the null subject is necessarily interpreted as the speaker, and when ma is present on an embedded clause, the null subject of that clause is necessarily interpreted as coreferential to the matrix subject. I would argue that their proposed JussiveP is in fact FinP.
relates to the evaluation of propositional content. Quer (1998) argues that the consistent contribution of the subjunctive mood, cutting across the distinct semantic and syntactic factors which license it, is to signal a shift in the model of evaluation of the truth of the proposition. Truth is relativized to models within a context and to individuals. Thus, in (unembedded) assertions, the individual anchor is the speaker and the relevant model is the epistemic model of the speaker; therefore, the world in which the proposition is assigned a truth value is the world of reality according to the speaker, \( W_R(speaker) \). In contrast, intensional predicates which typically select for subjunctive complements introduce a set of future worlds which, in the spirit of the analysis of Farkas (1992b), are anchored to the matrix subject. Bianchi (2001) observes that her conception of logophoric center — as a certain perspective point or cognitive state in which the speech event is embedded — is very close in spirit to the notion of individual anchors of models of evaluation. An external logophoric center is the null case, in which the cognitive state is the Common Ground shared by the participants in the discourse. An internal logophoric center establishes a subordinate cognitive state which corresponds to the perspective of the internal speaker, generally the matrix subject. In semantic terms, the internal logophoric center serves to introduce a new model of evaluation for the subordinate proposition, where this model (an alternate world or a set of possible worlds) has as its individual anchor the matrix subject.

The question then is to what extent apparently purely semantic notions like models of evaluation are represented in the syntax. My focus to this point has been on the characterization of lexically selected subjunctive clauses with one particular set of matrix predicates, and we will return to these data, but here I will shift my attention to a very different use of the subjunctive. Giorgi and Pianesi (2002) note that although complement clauses to verbs of communication are generally in the indicative (leaving aside cases of reported imperatives), the subjunctive may appear when the matrix verb is used as an evidential, reporting on the source of the assertion expressed by the subordinate clause:

(21) Dicono che sia una stupida.  
'\text{They say that she is (subj) stupid.}'

(Giorgi and Pianesi, 2002:205)

Informally, the subjunctive in (21) has the effect of changing the entire sentence from an assertion presented by the speaker (I assert, “they say that she is stupid”) to a report of an assertion made by the matrix subject, with the pragmatic implication that this assertion is not true for the speaker. It has, in other words, the flavor of an evidential adverb such as allegedly.

Now, Bianchi’s proposal that person agreement is licensed by +Fin linked to the center of deixis (in her terms, the external logophoric center) is based fundamentally on the idea that the referential feature of person can only be interpreted in relation to the speech event. First person, for example, denotes the “addresser in [speech event] S” (Bianchi, 2001:11). Along similar lines, Speas (2004) argues that just as person agreement links an argument in the sentence to the discourse, evidentials — such as the evidential adverb allegedly or evidential morphemes in languages such as Quechua — express a relation between the discourse and the world or worlds in which the sentence is to be interpreted.

Speas proposes that in the syntactic representation there is a world argument which denotes the set of possible worlds within which the proposition expressed by a sentence is evaluated; in other words, the model of evaluation. In the absence of any modal-type element, the world argument \( W \) takes as its default value the actual world, \( W_R \). Speas further shows that like pronouns (and tenses), \( W \) arguments introduced by modals may be linguistically free (i.e., not expressed linguistically in the sentence), bound, obligatorily disjoint in reference from some c-commanding \( W \), and have de re and de se interpretations.

If we provisionally recast “external” and “internal” logophoric centers in terms of world arguments and their individual anchors, then the external logophoric center corresponds to \( W_R(=W_{(speaker)}) \) and the internal logophoric center corresponds to \( W_{(Su)} \) (matrix/superordinate subject). Examples such as (21) show clearly that the subjunctive mood is the overt grammatical expression of \( W_{(Su)} \). In this light, consider the appearance of the indicative in a complement clause to a negated epistemic—a context in which the subjunctive is the default option (so-called polarity subjunctive). What the indicative specifically signals is that the embedded proposition is not to be evaluated in the context of the matrix subject’s beliefs (or lack thereof), but rather in \( W_R \). Hence the pragmatic oddness of an indicative complement to a negated epistemic whose subject is the speaker (Quer, 1998). (22) are Spanish equivalents to his Catalan examples (op. cit.: 62, 79):
If we assume the existence of a world argument W in the syntax, then we must ask where this argument is located. The logical answer is that it must be in the left periphery, taking the left periphery in general as the nexus between the syntax and the discourse. Thus, Fin in the left periphery links to the spatiotemporal coordinates of the center of deixis. The natural proposal for the location of W is Force. Schematically, the CP field of a subjunctive clause has the structure of (23):

(23) \[
\ldots [\text{CP} [\text{ForceP} W(\text{Su}) [\text{FinP} +\text{Fin} [\text{IP} (\text{DP}) [\text{MoodP} [\text{TP} \ldots ]]]]]
\]

Comparing (23) with Bianchi’s abstract logophoric structure for subjunctive clauses in (15), what we see is that the proposed syntactic locus of W(\text{Su}) is structurally higher than the position proposed by Bianchi for the locus of the internal logophoric center, which she specifically links to the Mood head. Crucially, it is also higher than Fin, which is linked to the speech event and where, as proposed in section 3.2, the quasi-imperative operator of desiderative and directive subjunctive complements is putatively located. In the next section I return to those complements.

4.2. Interpretable and uninterpretable features: identification and checking

The examples of polarity subjunctive in (22) and subjunctive as the expression of evidentiality in (21) show that the subjunctive/indicative contrast carries consequences for the semantic interpretation of the clause, as is well-known. In contrast, lexically selected subjunctive with desideratives and directives is a consequence of the semantic properties of the matrix predicates: as intensional predicates they introduce a set of possible worlds which are always evaluated with the matrix subject as individual anchor. Following Speas (2004), I have been using W informally as a label for a world argument which may be one particular world or a set of worlds: as noted in the introduction, one of the great challenges in the analysis of subjunctive clauses is delimiting precisely how much of the semantic information is overtly represented in the syntax. I will suggest here that we recast W as a feature, which may come in interpretable and uninterpretable guises. Just as lexical selection for an interrogative complement is expressed as an uninterpretable wh-feature in the CP field (the exact position of which appears to be open to some debate), we can suppose that lexical selection for a subjunctive complement is expressed as an uninterpretable W feature, in Force. As an uninterpretable feature, it must be checked and deleted, and the necessary interpretable feature to do this work, in a language with mood paradigms, is in Mood. More accurately, the complex head [[[V][T][M]] in Mood checks, via Agree, the uW feature in Force\(11\):

(24) \[
\ldots V_W [\text{CP} [\text{ForceP} \text{Force}_u] [\text{FinP} [\text{Fin Op} [\text{IP} (\text{DP}) [\text{MoodP} [V+T+M_W] [\text{TP} \ldots ]]]]]
\]

\(11\) I am not addressing here the actual location of the complementizer que; however, I assume that it is located in the highest head of the CP field, Force, on a par with the Romanian subjunctive complementizer ca; see below. There are differing views on the syntax of “complementizer deletion” with subjunctive clauses; see Kempchinsky (1998) and Giorgi and Pianesi (2002). Note also that the inflected verb in the subjunctive clause, like any other verb inflected for tense, will also enter into an Agree relation with the +Fin head, which is not represented in (24). Whether in a language such as Spanish the Fin head is syntactically projected as a separate head, or is syncretic with Force in the absence of other elements in the left periphery, is not crucial.
Recall that the default value for W is WR, the actual world (according to the speaker). Let us assume that there is a “world feature” W present in the syntax only when W is overtly identified. As the default, WR need not be identified and therefore will not necessarily be present in the syntax (25a), although it can be as long as there is some linguistically present element to agree with it, as in (25b) and (25c):

(25) a. Global warming is the most serious problem facing the human race.
    b. As far as I can tell/Evidently, global warming is the most serious problem facing the human race.
    c. According to many scientists, global warming is the most serious problem facing the human race.

Now consider a sentence such as (26) in English:

(26) The dean doesn’t believe that the students deserve a prize
    ...and neither do I.
    ...but I do.

Given the two possible continuations of (26), it is clearly the case that the complement clause can be evaluated either in W(Su) or WR, but a language like English, which for the most part lacks a morphological subjunctive, does not overtly mark the shift in modal base. Of course, as in the case of (25b), the shift can be marked overtly with some appropriate modal phrase or adverb. In contrast, the Spanish version of (26) with the complement in the subjunctive (i.e., example (22b)) does mark the shift syntactically:

(26) The dean doesn’t believe that the students deserve a prize
    ...and neither do I.
    ...but I do.

In both (24) and (27), the feature W must be identified. In the case of lexically selected subjunctive, the shift in the modal base — the introduction of a new (set of) possible worlds — is a consequence of the semantics of the matrix predicate. The selection relation itself triggers the presence of W. Therefore, W itself is uninterpretable, and so like any other uninterpretable feature must be checked. In (27), in contrast, the shift in the modal base is only made visible by the subjunctive mood itself; hence the relationship between W in Force and the verbal complex is not checking, but identification.

The structure in (24) also represents the quasi-imperative operator in the Fin head of these subjunctive complements which I have proposed semantically binds a subject-oriented antilogophoric element. As a type of propositional operator, however, the expectation would be that it is located in Force, not Fin, as observed previously. Recall that Fin links to the spatiotemporal coordinates of the speech event; Bianchi explicitly links person agreement to Fin because determination of person, like spatiotemporal references, is also determined by the discourse context. Since the center of deixis includes the persons in the discourse, any operator which restricts the possible linking of persons in the discourse to arguments in the syntax should be part of that center of deixis. In (27), in contrast, this operator is absent; thus subjunctive complements to negated epistemics signal a shift in the model of evaluation, represented by the interpretable W feature in Force, but do not show obviation effects.

In this sense, the syntactic correlates of the semantic interpretation of subjunctive complements to desiderative and directive predicates are spread over two heads in the left periphery. Here it is of interest to consider the syntax of modal particles in languages such as Romanian and Greek, which may or may not co-occur with a complementizer (the Greek examples are from Philippaki-Warburton, 1994):

(28) a. Ion vrea ca ela să pleacă.
    Ion wants that she SUBJ leave,3SG
    Romanian

(29) a. O Janis theli i Maria na pai mazi tu.
    John wants Mary SUBJ go,3SG with him
    Modern Greek
b. O Janis theli na pai mazi tu i Maria.
c. *O Janis theli oti i Maria na pai mazi tu.
    John wants that Mary SUBJ go,3SG with him
The Romanian example of (28a) shows both the subjunctive complementizer *ca* (in opposition to the indicative complementizer *caˇ*) and the modal particle *saˇ*; in standard Romanian in the absence of preverbal constituents *ca* fails to surface, as shown in (28b), although *ca saˇ* sequences are possible in colloquial Romanian, as in (28c) (Farkas, 1984; Dobrovie-Sorin, 1994). In contrast, the modal particle *na* of modern Greek does not co-occur with a separate complementizer-type element, and in fact cannot co-occur with the subordinating complementizer *oti*, as shown by the paradigm in (29) (Philippaki-Warburton, 1994).

Roussou (2000) proposes that in these languages Fin is a Modal head, while Force is the position which determines whether a clause is an interrogative, a declarative, or an imperative/jussive. Both *na* in Greek and *saˇ* in Romanian originate in the Fin head; in Greek *na* always moves to the Force head (thus excluding the complementizer *oti*), while in Romanian *saˇ* moves only in the absence of *ca*:

(30)  

a. ... [CP [Force *na*] [Fin *t na*] [IP ...]]  
b. ... [CP [Force *ca*] [Fin *saˇ*] [IP ...]]  
c. ... [CP [Force *saˇ*] [Fin *t saˇ*] [IP ...]]

Roussou explicitly argues that *na* and *saˇ* (the latter in the absence of *ca*) have both a clause-typing and a modal function. Where the analysis offered here differs is in the syntactic location of the quasi-imperative operator, which Roussou assumes to be in Force and which I have argued is in Fin, reserving Force as the locus of W feature which represents the shift in modal base. Now, given that what morphologically identifies the subjunctive in Romanian and Greek is the subjunctive particle/complementizer itself, the checking relation in these languages must be as in (31):

(31)  

\[ V_W \left[ CP \left[ \text{Force}_{[\omega W]} \right] \left[ \text{Fin}_{[\omega W]} \left[ \text{IP} \left[ \text{DP} \left[ \text{TP} \left[ \text{V} + \text{T} \right] \right] \right] \right] \right] \right] \]

This suggests that the checking relation in Spanish-type languages is actually a two-step relation, with checking of an uninterpretable W feature in both Fin and Force by the interpretable feature in Mood:

(32)  

\[ V_W \left[ CP \left[ \text{Force}_{[\omega W]} \right] \left[ \text{Fin}_{[\omega W]} \left[ \text{OP} \left[ \text{IP} \left[ \text{DP} \left[ \text{Mood} \left[ \text{V} + \text{T} + \text{M} \right] \right] \right] \right] \right] \right] \right] \]

Balkan-type languages do not have Mood as a verbal paradigm, as argued by Roussou (2000); they have clauses with a particular modality. In the case of intensional predicates such as desideratives and directives, the modal base is introduced by the lexical meaning of the matrix predicate, and hence the W feature in Force is uninterpretable. The difference in the two language groups lies in the syntactic location of the interpretable feature which checks and deletes that uninterpretable feature: in Mood or in Fin. In the last section of the paper I will return to this issue and the implications that it may have for the analysis of obviation.

4.3. Sequence of tense and subjunctive clauses

The Fin head in the left periphery, of course, also plays a role in temporal interpretation, and it could be argued that just as direct imperatives orient necessarily to the moment of speaking, subjunctive clauses which are characterized as embedded imperatives orient necessarily to the event-time of the matrix predicate, and in this sense subjunctive tense is anaphoric. In Kempchinsky (1986) it is argued extensively that the phenomenon of *consecutio temporum* in subjunctive clauses does not mean that these clauses are in some sense “untensed”. Bianchi (2001) explicitly adopts that position in her proposal that subjunctive clauses are specified for +Fin. Conversely, the idea that indicative complement clauses have “independent” tense (vs. some notion of “dependent” tense in most subjunctives, as proposed by Landau, 2000, 2004) is also misleading. As noted in section 2, research on the syntax of tense shows that there are clearly delimited possibilities of temporal construals between matrix and subordinate complement clauses. Nonetheless, it must be recognized that the possible tense construals between at least certain subjunctive clauses and
their matrix clause are more limited than those which are possible between most indicative complement clauses and their matrix clause. What, then, does it mean to say that +Fin links to the speech event S?

In an approach to temporal syntax which takes Tense and Aspect to be dyadic spatio-temporal predicates, as in Zagona (1990), Stowell (1996) and Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2000, 2005 and references therein), Tense orders a Reference-time to an Assertion-time, which in turn is ordered with respect to the Event-time by (sentential) Aspect. Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2005) detail an approach to the syntax of tense construals between complement and matrix clauses according to which the Reference-time (Ref-T) of the complement clause must, in most cases, be reset from the unmarked value of utterance-time to the Assertion-time (As-T) of the matrix clause. The resetting is driven by a proposed principle which states that temporal derivations must yield an unambiguous ordering of the Assertion-time of the matrix clause and the Assertion-time of the subordinate clause.

Clearly, such an approach to temporal dependencies is compatible with the notion that +Fin links to Speech-time, i.e., the external logophoric center. The Fin head represents the external temporal argument of Tense, which can be reset. Therefore the idea that finiteness represents in some sense linking to the Speech-time as the center of deixis is not contradicted by semantic relations of temporal dependency, in either indicative or subjunctive subordinate clauses.

In terms of the temporal syntax, then, we have the following abstract structure with respect to the tense construals between matrix and complement clauses:

\[
(33) \quad [\text{CP} \ [\text{FinP} \ \text{Ref-T} \ [\text{TP} \ [\text{AspP} \ A\text{s-T} \ [\text{vpVP} \ V \ [\text{CP} \ [\text{FinP} \ \text{Ref-T} \ [\text{TP} \ dots]]]]]]]
\]

Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria also argue that resetting of the Reference-time of a complement clause obeys a general principle of economy according to which no step in the temporal derivation can be semantically vacuous. As an example, in the general case of a Past tense embedded under a Present tense, resetting is unnecessary — and therefore does not apply — because Past in the unmarked case orders the Assertion-time before S, or utterance-time, and Present in the unmarked case situates the Assertion-time within S. To reset the Ref-T of an embedded Past to the Assertion-time of a matrix Present yields the same result as simply calculating the embedded Past as before the utterance-time S.

Bianchi (2001) argues that the presence of consecutio temporum indicates that the temporal structure of the subjunctive clause is anchored to the internal logophoric structure. In our terms, what this means is that the Reference-time of the subjunctive clause in the Fin head is linked to the modal base W(Su) which ultimately, in the case of lexically selected subjunctive, is an (interpretable) feature of the matrix selecting predicate.

\[
(34) \quad [\text{CP} \ [\text{FinP} \ \text{Ref-T} \ [\text{TP} \ [\text{AspP} \ A\text{s-T} \ [\text{vpVP} \ V \ [\text{W} \ [\text{CP} \ [\text{ForceP} \ Force_{uW}] \ [\text{FinP} \ \text{Ref-T} \ [\text{MP} \ dots]]]]]]]
\]

Intuitively, what seems to be the case is that the selection relation between V and the uW feature in Force prevents the resetting of the Reference-time of the subjunctive clause from accessing any temporal argument higher than Event-time, linked to the verb. The Event-time of the matrix verb is ordered in the usual fashion with the Assertion-time of the matrix clause.

Now as a modal element, the subjunctive mood is a forward-shifting operator. If the subjunctive verb is in the past, the past moment from which the modal operator shifts forward cannot be previous to the past moment of the event time of the matrix verb. Thus, there is no temporal derivation possible for a sentence such as (35) below, because, by Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria’s first principle, the relative temporal ordering of the matrix and complement clauses must be unambiguous:

\[
(35) \quad # \ \text{Ana quería el viernes 22 de julio que la carta llegara el miércoles 20 de julio.}
\]

‘Ana wanted on Friday July 22 that the letter arrive (SUBJ.IMPF) on Wednesday July 20.’
If the subjunctive verb is in the present, as in examples such as (4b), repeated below as (36), the time from which the modal operator shifts forward is speech time S, and by Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria’s economy principle, no resetting is necessary.

(36) Ordené a Pedro que termine el proyecto.
   ‘I ordered Pedro that he finish (SUBJ.PRES) the project.’

Recall that there is no selection relationship between the matrix predicate and the subjunctive clause in cases of polarity subjunctive, and in such clauses sequence of tense is rather freely violated. Furthermore, regardless of whether it is observed or not, there are no obviation effects:

(37) a. Muchos ciudadanos no creen que haya/haya habido/hubiera armas de destrucción masiva en Irak.
   ‘Many citizens don’t believe that there are/have been/were (SUBJ) weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.’

   b. El presidente no cree que proi esté/haya estado/estuviera equivocado en sus decisions.
   ‘The president doesn’t believe that he is/has been/was mistaken in his decisions.’

Thus, the disjoint reference effect obtains only when subjunctive is lexically selected, and the W feature in Force is therefore uninterpretable. Whereas early binding theory analyses of the subjunctive disjoint reference effect took the correlation of consecutio temporum with the restriction on the interpretation of the subjunctive subject as a cause and effect relation, this approach takes the correlation between the two phenomena as being reflexes of the same underlying syntactic and semantic structure.

To reiterate the basic idea, subjunctive complements to desiderative and directive predicates have a $uW$ feature in the Force head, which enters into a selection relation with the W feature on the matrix intensional predicate and a checking relation with the W feature on the Mood head in the subjunctive clause. As tensed clauses, these complements also have a positively specified Fin head, which links to the speech event S but then resets to link to the Event-time of the matrix verb. The W feature is the syntactic correlate of the model of evaluation $W(Su)$ (i.e., ME$_{(Su)}$).

My point of departure for this paper was the subjunctive disjoint reference effect which holds in the complements to desideratives and directives, and which does not hold in polarity subjunctive. One difference between these two classes of subjunctive clauses which has been adduced is the uninterpretable vs. interpretable status of W in the Force head. In the next section I examine cases of subjunctive complements to non-strongly intensional predicates where it can be argued that W is also uninterpretable, and where we find more cross-linguistic variation in the distribution of subjunctive clauses.

5. The distribution of subjunctive complement clauses

5.1. Lexical selection for subjunctive: the core case of subordination?

With respect to the mood of complement clauses, there are two separate but intertwined questions. On the one hand, subjunctive clauses surface as complements not only to desiderative and directive predicates — strong intensional predicates — but also to weakly intensional or even non-intensional predicates such as implicatives, factive-emotives, negated epistemics and non-negated epistemics, depending on the language. This range of semantic types, with the accompanying cross-linguistic variation, raises the question of whether there is a “core” case of subjunctive complements. On the other hand, the question also arises as to whether, for complement clauses as a whole, the indicative or the subjunctive is the “unmarked” mood. Proposals that the indicative is in fact the marked mood for complement clauses rest on two basic observations: the general impossibility of the subjunctive in matrix clauses, and precisely the variation in matrix predicates just noted, which makes it difficult to arrive at a unitary characterization of subjunctive clauses.

What the account developed above in sections 3 and 4 suggests is that the “core” case of subjunctive clauses are complements to desiderative and directive predicates, in which the morphological realization of Mood is necessary to check the uninterpretable $uW$ feature on Force. The shift in the modal base to $W(Su)$ is purely lexically driven, by the matrix predicate, but overtly marked by the subjunctive verbal paradigm. By extension, this verbal paradigm is linked to the shift from $W_R$ to $W(Su)$. In any given language, this verbal paradigm may then extend to other contexts of
subordination to overtly signal a change in the model of evaluation, in cases where the matrix predicate does not inherently force such a shift.

San Martín (2007) notes that subjunctive is traditionally related to true subordination (hypotaxis) and indicative is correlated to lack of subordination, parataxis. In a similar vein, Torrego and Uriagereka (1993) suggest that true dependent clauses are subjunctive, while apparent indicative complement clauses are more properly seen as adjunctive in nature, either via dislocation or base generation in a type of appositive relationship. What this line of thinking suggests is that just as the realis/irrealis distinction has proven to be too rudimentary to characterize the indicative/subjunctive opposition (Quer, 1998), the distinction main clause/subordinate clause, or parataxis/hypotaxis, or indeed any of these simple oppositions, may ultimately prove to be unhelpful ways to frame the research agenda. Rather, there is a continuum of complementation types, in both syntactic and semantic terms. If lexically selected subjunctive with desiderative and directive predicates is the “core” case, what this means is that it marks one end of this continuum.12

One relevant factor in this discussion is the typical pattern of “loss” of the subjunctive in cases of language attrition. Whereas the subjunctive/indicative alternation has evident consequences for the semantic interpretation of the clause in cases such as (22), the appearance of the subjunctive morphology in complement clauses to desiderative predicates does not carry any additional semantic information than what is already contributed by the matrix predicate. Nevertheless, language attrition studies consistently show that subjunctive is “lost” first (that is, speakers fail to produce it) in contexts where the mood alternation is semantically relevant (see Poplack, 1992 for French and Silva-Corvalán, 1994 for Spanish, among other studies). Conversely, it is retained the longest in contexts where it serves a purely syntactic function: checking of an uninterpretable feature. But of course the primary task of the syntax is to deliver to the conceptual interface (as well as to the phonetic interface) a completely interpretable linguistic expression, with all uninterpretable features checked and deleted. In the absence of any linguistic marking thereof, the semantic component can access different (sets of) worlds in which to evaluate a given proposition (as shown by English examples such as (26)), but it cannot, by definition, interpret uninterpretable features.

This view is supported by the research results reported in Montrul (2005). This study sets out to examine not only the production of subjunctive forms in speakers with some language attrition (heritage speakers of Spanish, from a variety of backgrounds) but also the interpretations which these speakers assign to subordinate clauses (complement clauses, relative clauses and adjunct clauses) in which subjunctive/indicative alternations are possible. Her results show that these speakers, while they generally recognize the obligatoriness of the subjunctive in desiderative and directive complements, do not consistently recognize the differing semantic interpretation of the subjunctive/indicative contrast with respect to evaluation of the proposition, in contexts where this contrast carries semantic import. Tellingly, there is a correlation between the capacity to morphologically distinguish the subjunctive from the indicative and the ability to interpret the effect of the subjunctive on clausal interpretation. As speakers lose the morphological distinctions, they increasingly fail to recognize the semantic contribution of the subjunctive. She concludes from this pattern that loss of Mood as a functional category involves loss of both morphological and semantic features.

With this in mind, I want to briefly examine other cases along the complementation continuum.

5.2. Italian subjunctive complements to epistemic predicates

If the subjunctive mood is the grammatical expression of \( W_{SU} \), the question arises as to why it is generally impossible in complements to non-negated epistemics. In the Romance languages, the exception is Italian where the subjunctive, apparently, is lexically selected by these predicates. Consider again the semantic import of the subjunctive/indicative alternation in (22b and c). The subjunctive makes the identification of the modal base as \( W_{SU} \) salient, while the truth value of the proposition in \( W_R \) is in fact neutral, as shown by the possibility of the two continuations of the sentence. In contrast, the indicative complement to a non-negated epistemic in the Romance languages other than Italian does not overtly indicate the modal base, and subjunctive is systematically impossible, as in the Spanish example below:

12 Or at least, it marks one end of the continuum with respect to tensed clauses, since there are a number of other syntactic devices to mark hypotaxis (infinitives, inflected infinitives, nominalizations and so on).
(38) El decano cree que los estudiantes merecen/ *merezcan un premio
    ... y yo también lo creo.
    ... pero yo no lo creo.
    ‘The dean believes that the students deserve (IND)/ *deserve (SUBJ) a prize
    ... and I also believe so.’
    ... but I don’t believe so.’

To the extent to which subjunctive is the only possibility in a complement clause to a verb like *credere* in Italian, the logic of the analysis thus far would dictate that in these clauses W in Force is uninterpretable, and therefore carries no consequences for the evaluation of the proposition expressed by the complement clause. To put it in other terms, this would imply that the default modal base for this proposition is $W_{(Sb)}$, and this modal base has been grammaticalized in Italian. Nevertheless, Giorgi and Pianesi (2002) note that in non-standard dialects of Italian indicative complements are also possible:

(39) a. Mario crede che sia partito.
    ‘Mario believes that he has (SUBJ) left.’

b. % Mario crede che è partito.
    ‘Mario believes that he has (IND) left.’

Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) propose that lexical selection for subjunctive complement clauses varies cross-linguistically along a scale of modal bases; or, to put it differently, different languages make the “cut” between subjunctive and indicative at different points, and I have nothing more interesting to add to this.

Nevertheless, it can be observed that “intensionality” is not the most accurate way to characterize the continuum of variation, given the near universality of subjunctive complements to implicative predicates such as *forzar* ‘to force’ and the fact that across the Romance languages subjunctive is more commonly found in complements to factive-emotive predicates – being absent only in Romanian, *pace* subjunctives as quasi-Control infinitives — than in complements to epistemics, found only in Italian. In both these cases, the embedded proposition can be interpreted as true in the actual world — necessarily so in the latter case — and I will proceed to examine each in turn.

5.3. The case of implicatives

Subjunctive complements to implicative predicates such as *forzar* ‘to force’ or *obligar* ‘to oblige’ present a problem for Bianchi’s (2001) logophoric center analysis of subjunctive clauses, according to which, recall, the functional head Mood is the syntactic expression of the internal logophoric center. Because implicative predicates, as she notes, do not introduce a cognitive state of the matrix subject, it is unexpected that they should surface with subjunctive complements.

Within Landau’s (2000, 2004) theory of control, complements to implicatives are classified as having anaphoric tense, based on the apparent inability of the complement clause to have temporal modification independent of the matrix clause. In this they contrast with complements to directive verbs such as *ordenar*:

(40) a. Ayer Ana forzó a los estudiantes a entregar el trabajo de investigación (*hoy).
    ‘Yesterday Ana forced the students to hand in the research paper (*today).’

b. Ayer Ana ordenó a los estudiantes entregar el trabajo de investigación hoy.
    ‘Yesterday Ana ordered the students to hand in the research paper today.’

By Landau’s control calculus, Infl in complements such as (40), being [−T], cannot license a [+R] element such as pro; only PRO, a [−R] element, is a possible subject. Hence Balkan subjunctive complements to these verbs are classified as C(ontrrolled)-subjunctives, akin to controlled infinitives in other languages. Recall that in Spanish and in Catalan, implicatives may take subjunctive as well as infinitival complements. With these complements, the temporal modification data remains unchanged: the subordinate event cannot be independently modified13:

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13 Quer (p.c.) notes that not all implicative verbs are as restricted as *forzar* in disallowing an indexical temporal expression in the complement clause, citing the predicates *conseguir* ‘to bring about’ and *contribuir* ‘to contribute’. This suggests, as I believe is the case for other reasons, that Landau’s characterization of these predicates as having anaphoric tense is problematic. For an account of the tense restrictions in implicative complements, see Kempchinsky (2005).
Ayer Ana forzó a los estudiantes a que entregaran el trabajo de investigación (*hoy).
‘Yesterday Ana forced the students that they hand in (SUBJ) the research paper (*today).’

By the logic of Landau’s calculus, the null subject of a Spanish or Catalan subjunctive complement to an implicative should also be PRO, not pro, as in Balkan C-subjunctives, given that Infl in these clauses, being “anaphoric”, is [−T]. Nevertheless, as we have seen in section 2, the characteristic subject obviation of intensional subjunctives also holds in these complements: if the DP object of the implicative is coreferential with the matrix subject, only the infinitival complement is possible. The relevant example is (9), repeated below as (42)14:

(42)

a. Elisa forzó al niño a tomar la medicina.
‘Elisa forced the child to take the medicine.’

b. Elisa forzó al niño a que pro tomara la medicina.
‘Elisa forced the child he take (SUBJ) the medicine.’

c. Elisa se forzó (a sí misma) a tomar la medicina.
‘Elisa forced herself to take the medicine.’

d. *Elisa se forzó (a sí misma) a que pro se tomar la medicina.
‘Elisa forced herself that she take (SUBJ) the medicine.’

I conclude that we must continue to assume that the subject of the Spanish subjunctive clause is only pro, not PRO. To put this differently, we must assume that these are true subjunctive clauses, not “disguised” infinitives.

Implicatives are also at first sight problematic for Quer’s (1998) analysis of subjunctive as essentially involving a modal base. He proposes to incorporate implicative subjunctive complements into his analysis by characterizing such predicates as “establishing a world dependency in which the main clause subject introduces a set of future alternatives right before the point of causation” (op. cit.: 49). They thus group with strong intensional predicates such as desideratives in their common lexical property of introducing a set of future alternative worlds, complements to implicatives are evaluated in the non-veridical model ME_{fut}(su); that is, future realizations of the world according to the matrix subject and in which that subject wants — and in the case of implicatives brings about — a certain state of affairs. Given that it is a lexical property of the matrix verb that introduces this set of alternative worlds, by the logic of the account thus far this entails that the W feature in Force of the subjunctive complement is uninterpretable. Further, given the obviation facts, the quasi-imperative operator must also be present in Fin, with the usual consequences for interpretation of the subjunctive subject.

There is some interesting confirmation for this way of viewing implicative complements. Borgonovo (2003) discovers an intriguing interaction between polarity subjunctive and intensional subjunctive: when a negated epistemic verb and its complement clause are in turn embedded under an intensional predicate such as querer ‘to want’, the usual mood choice which is possible in the most deeply embedded clause disappears, and only the indicative is possible. A relevant paradigm is given below:

(43) La gente no cree que el presidente miente/ mienta.
‘The people don’t believe that the president lies (IND)/ lies (SUBJ).’

(44) La prensa quiere que la gente no crea que el presidente miente/ *mienta
‘The press wants that the people not believe, SUBJ that the president lies (IND)/ *lies (SUBJ).’

This phenomenon, which she terms suspension of mood choice (SMC), also holds in other strong intensional environments such as under imperatives and in counterfactuals—that is, contexts which introduce a set of possible worlds which does not include the actual one, at least in the modal base of the speaker. Borgonovo shows that when subjunctive marks in polarity contexts is the focus of negation; hence (45a) entails (45b):

(45)

a. Juan cree que Marta no es culpable.
‘Juan believes that Marta is (IND) not guilty.’

b. Juan no cree que Marta sea culpable.
‘Juan does not believe that Marta is (SUBJ) guilty.’ (Borgonovo, 2003:25)

14 Indeed, for every Spanish speaker I consulted, representing a variety of dialects, a sentence such as (42d) comes close to gibberish. As discussed by Suñer (1984), in sentences such as (42b) the only possible interpretation of the empty pronominal subject is as coreferential to the matrix direct object; hence her term “controlled pro”. Since this obligatory coreference in the case of a reflexive direct object as in (42d) would necessarily entail coreference of the subjunctive subject with the matrix subject, speakers have no way of assigning a grammatical interpretation to the sentence. Landau (2004) cites this data indirectly in support of his proposal that there is control — and therefore PRO — in clauses with apparent tense morphology, but as noted above, this does not leave any obvious way of accounting for the contrast between (42c) and (42d).
Consider then what (44) would mean with subjunctive in the lowest clause: the people hold the belief that the president does not lie, and the press wants the people to hold the belief that the president does not lie: the actual world then models the desired set of possible worlds, and hence the sentence is semantically infelicitous.

Note now that SMC also obtains with implicative predicates, in spite of the fact they are not strong intensional predicates:

(46) La prensa forzó a que la gente no sospechara que el presidente mintiera.

‘The press forced the people to not suspect (SUBJ) that the president lied (IND)/ *lied (SUBJ).’

Thus, although in the cases which Borgonovo discusses it is under strong intensional predicates that SMC obtains, it is not in fact that strong intensionality per se is the relevant condition. Rather, it is simply that the matrix predicate expresses an alternative world or set of worlds from that obtaining at the temporal reference point for that matrix predicate (cf. Villalta, 2001).

In more general terms, to the extent that the general schema for the “core” case of subjunctive complements to strongly intensional desiderative predicates can be extended to implicative predicates, we have a little more insight on the division of labor between the syntax and the semantics. With respect to the interpretation of the truth of the embedded proposition, the distinction between, say, desideratives and implicatives, is semantically very relevant. Strictly speaking, however, the syntactically active \( uW \) feature on the Force head of the subjunctive complement only expresses \( \text{grosso modo} \), as it were, the concept “sets of possible worlds according to the matrix subject at a certain point in time”. The problematic case, as always, are subjunctive complements to factive-emotives, which I will examine briefly in the next section.

5.4. Factive-emotives: the actual world, according to the subject

The appearance of subjunctive complements to factive-emotive predicates is the bane of every attempt to give a general characterization of the subjunctive, even in terms of the traditional realis/irrealis distinction. Complements to factive-emotives are not only to be evaluated in terms of the (matrix) subject’s cognitive state or perspective point; in the usual case they must be true in the actual world \( W_R \). There thus seems to be no semantic justification for positing a \( W \) feature in Force with the value \( W_{(S_u)} \), be it interpretable or uninterpretable. Nevertheless, subjunctive disjoint reference effects with these subjunctive complements are, in Spanish, quite robust with both nominative matrix subjects and quirky (dative) matrix subjects:

(47) a. Soledad, laments que \( pro_{-s} \) se haya comportado tan mal.

‘Soledad regrets that he/she has (SUBJ) behaved so badly.’

b. A Soledad le gusta que \( pro_{-s} \) trabaje con colegas amenes.

‘Soledad likes that he/she works with pleasant colleagues.’

Now, as is the case with complements to desideratives and directives, for most speakers of Spanish subjunctive is lexically selected by these predicates; indicative complements are not possible (see Bosque, 1990).\(^{15}\) As with the case

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\(^{15}\) Quer (2001) notes that in Catalan indicative complements are more or less acceptable in episodic contexts, as opposed to non-episodic generic-like contexts:

(i) a. Em va agradar que em truquesi?/va trutar de seguida.

‘It pleased me that he called (SUBJ)?/called (IND) me immediately’

b. M’agraida que em truquesi?/van trutar de seguida.

‘It pleases me that they call (SUBJ)?/called (IND) me immediately’

The acceptability of sentences like (i-a) in Spanish with an indicative complement varies considerably across speakers. In Kempchinsky (2007) I report on an empirical study conducted with two groups of speakers, one from Puerto Rico (\( N = 21 \)) and another from northern Spain (\( N = 24 \)), the results of which show that a better predictor for the acceptability of indicative complements is that the subordinate clause represent discourse-new information. This is generally also an episodic context, but discourse-old information can also be episodic. Preliminary results from a longer follow-up study with four groups of speakers (Spain, Puerto Rico, Colombia and Mexico) indicate that for two of the groups (Puerto Rico and Mexico), indicative complements are more acceptable in discourse-new contexts, while for the other two groups, a better predictor is the syntactic class of the matrix predicate: transitive (e.g. lamentar ‘to regret’) vs. an inverse psych predicate (e.g. agradar ‘to please’), but with opposite results: for the group from Spain, indicative is more acceptable with transitive factive-emotive predicates, while for the Colombia group the opposite holds.
of implicatives, we are faced with an example of so-called intensional subjunctive (insofar as it is not a case of polarity subjunctive) to a non-intensional matrix predicate.

If the subjunctive is lexically selected, by this account it must mean that there is an uninterpretable W feature in Force. In section 5.2 I suggested that the subcategorization for subjunctive complements by Italian epistemic verbs is the result of grammaticalization of the default modal base for the propositional evaluation of these complements as \( W_{Su} \). I suggest a similar grammaticalization for subjunctive complements to factive-emotive predicates in non-alternating dialects (see footnote 15), where \( W_{Su} \) as the value for the W feature in Force can be informally interpreted as “the set of propositions which are true in the actual world incorporated into the subject’s understanding of the actual world”. As complements to factive predicates, these propositions are evaluated in \( W_{R} \); as complements to emotive predicates, these propositions are evaluated in \( W_{(Su)} \), which is identical to \( W_{R} \).

In addition, to account for the obviation data, it must be the case that there is some type of operator in Fin with the usual consequences for the interpretation of the subjunctive subject; however, there is no obvious sense in which such an operator, in the case of the factive-emotive complements, can be characterized as a quasi-imperative. This, essentially, is the analysis in Kempchinsky (1986), in that the core case of subcategorization by desideratives and directives for an operator in Comp, to be identified at LF by movement of Infl, was argued to extend to the factive-emotive. That is, the mechanics of strict subcategorization for subjunctive complements are divorced from their interpretative import as embedded imperatives.

However, I would like to suggest some interpretative basis for this operator. Traditional and pedagogical grammars of Spanish, in their attempts to explain the appearance of subjunctive complements with these predicates, appeal to the evaluative rather than the factive component of the main predicate. Quer (2001:107) has a specific articulation of this idea: factive-emotive predicates “express a causal link between an eventuality ... and a psychological state resulting from that eventuality” (cf. Giorgi and Pianesi, 1997). In this light, observe that, as with desideratives and directives, there are a number of mitigating factors and a range of inter- and intraspeaker variability with respect to obviation. For example, many speakers accept subject coreference with the predicate lamentar ‘to regret’ if there is a modal verb in the subjunctive complement (48a), but still reject coreference with the quirky subject of a predicate such as gustar ‘to be pleasing’ (48b):

(48) a. Soledad, lamenta que [pro], no pueda ayudar en el proyecto.
   ‘Soledad regrets that (she) cannot (SUBJ) help with the project.’

b. A Soledad, no le gusta que [pro], no pueda ayudar en el proyecto.
   ‘Soledad doesn’t like that (she) cannot (SUBJ) help with the project.’

Focusing on (48a), we can note that the semantic contribution of the modal verb in the complement clause is to reduce the subject’s direct control over the proposition expressed by the complement, and hence the subject’s contribution to the eventuality which results in the psychological state. Similarly, even with a predicate like gustar, some speakers can accept coreference when the eventuality is completely out of control of the subject:

(49) a. *No me, gusta que [pro], siempre llegue tarde a las citas.
   ‘I don’t like that (I) always arrive (SUBJ) late for appointments.’

b. No me gusta siempre llegar tarde a las citas.
   ‘I don’t like always arriving late for appointments.’

c. ??No me gusta que [pro], me parezca tanto a mi padre.
   ‘I don’t like that (I) seem (SUBJ) so much like my father.’

d. ??%/No me gusta parecerme tanto a mi padre.
   ‘I don’t like seeming so much like my father.’

16 The judgments indicated on (49d) are an attempt to capture that fact that for some speakers whom I consulted (speakers of Latin American Spanish, principally Colombian), the sentence was perceived to be pragmatically odd; it seemed infelicitous as an expression of an ongoing state. Peninsular speakers accepted (49d), but they also marginally accepted (49c). In the empirical study reported in Kempchinsky (2007), the results show that although coreference is marginally more acceptable when the subordinate subject is nonagentive, the difference vis-à-vis agentive subjects is not statistically significant. The acceptance of coreference between the subjunctive subject and the matrix (nominative or quirky dative) subject appears to be more strongly correlated with the acceptance of indicative complements to factive-emotive predicates in general, which suggests that the presence of the quasi-imperative operator in Fin is a direct consequence of a lexical selection relation between the matrix predicate and the subordinate clause. See section 6 below.
The pattern of judgements in (49) is reminiscent of the data we saw earlier in (11) and (13). Although we still lack a complete understanding of the semantic properties and syntactic constraints of the causal operator as it enters into the factive-emotives, I think that this is a promising way to incorporate the pattern of obviation with these complements into the overall picture.

6. Concluding remarks and some speculation

In this paper I set out to re-examine the subjunctive disjoint reference effect, with the goal of seeing whether a more precise determination of the syntactic and semantic factors that enter into this phenomenon could in turn shed some light on more general questions on the distribution of subjunctive complement clauses. The essential idea is that the core case of subjunctive complements are those which appear with matrix verbs which introduce some set of alternative worlds which do not hold at the time of the matrix predicate; this broad definition includes desideratives, directives and implicatives. Given that it is the lexical meaning of the predicate which introduces these alternate worlds, the selection for the clausal complement which represents the proposition to be evaluated in these world is expressed as the selection of an uninterpretable W feature in the Force head of the left periphery of the clause. In contrast, polarity subjunctive, which relates to speaker and/or subject commitment to the truth of the complement clause, has an interpretable W feature in Force; the subjunctive is not selected per se by the matrix predicate. To the extent that selection for a subjunctive clause — expressing some change in the modal base — becomes grammaticalized with other classes of matrix predicates (positive epistemics in Italian, factive-emotives in Romance in general), the W feature in Force becomes uninterpretable, to be checked and deleted by the V in Mood in the complement clause itself. Subjunctive obviation itself is due to a quasi-imperative operator in the Fin head of the left periphery. At the syntax—semantics interface this operator semantically binds a subject-oriented antilogophoric element; it is in essence an instruction to the semantic component on how to interpret the pronominal subject of the subjunctive clause.

A natural question is how this type of account can extend to subjunctives in Balkan languages. These languages differ in two ways from the Romance family (excepting, of course, Romanian): they apparently lack infinitival complements, and subjunctive complements are differentiated from indicative complements by a distinct complementizer/subjunctive particle, as briefly discussed in section 4.2. The binding theory approach of Kempchinsky (1986, 1990, 1998) explained the lack of obviation effects as a result of the second of these two properties: since the complementizer itself identified the complement clause as subjunctive, for the purpose of satisfying the matrix predicate’s selectional requirements, Infl in the subjunctive clause was not involved and the binding domain of the subjunctive subject did not extend into the superordinate clause. On the account offered in the present paper, this correlation is lost. What, then, are the interpretative limitations on subjunctive subjects in Balkan-type languages? There are two possible avenues to pursue here. One, mentioned briefly in footnote 1, is to assume that in some subjunctive complements in these languages, the subject is actually PRO, and these cases are a special type of control; this is the approach, for example, in Terzi (1992) and Landau (2000, 2004), among others.

The other possibility is to continue to take the distinct form of the complementizer as the crucial factor, albeit recast in different terms. Recall the idea advanced in section 5.1 that subjunctive is the default mood for true dependent clauses. Torrego and Uriagereka (1993) suggest that from the point of view of acquisition, children who are acquiring languages in which the complementizer which heads subjunctive complements does not differ in form from that which heads what they term “indicative dependents” have an additional burden, since they will not be able to immediately tell which clauses should be transparent to certain LF effects (the true subordinate clauses) and which are not. It was proposed at the end of section 4.2 that in for example Romanian, the subjunctive particle sâ in Fin checks the uninterpretable feature in Force; that is, sâ (or ca sâ, when both are present) marks the clause as a true dependent. Suppose then that in Spanish-type languages, it is the obviation effects themselves which mark the clause as a true dependent, and other manifestations of LF transparency then follow. In other words, the effect of the operator in Fin, in these languages, is the same as the effect of overt morphology in that head, for the purposes of clause type identification. If a language has an overt means of marking dependency, restrictions on pronoun reference can be loosened, resulting in a less costly semantic computation. On this story, what is crucial to the lack of obviation in the Balkan-type languages is not the lack of true infinitival complements, but rather the presence of a distinctive subjunctive complementizer, as I argued in my previous work and as has been argued more recently by San Martín (2007).
In that sense, the subjunctive disjoint reference effect is an entry point into the properties of subjunctive clauses for the child as well as for the linguist. In this respect, it is noteworthy that although children acquiring Spanish as L1 start to produce subjunctive as early as 2:6 to 3 years of age (Montrul, 2005), most aspects of subjunctive syntax are acquired relatively late in the L1 acquisition process. Children make “errors” in the interpretation of subjunctive subjects through age 4 and beyond, and Blake (1983) observes that all of the effects on semantic interpretation of subjunctive clauses are not acquired until the age of 7 or 8. At the same time, the judgments of adult speakers on most aspects of the syntax and semantics of these clauses are generally robust. Despite the collective effort of many linguists to try to explain the linguistic competence of an average 7-year-old child, our efforts still fall somewhat short, and the accurate elucidation of the syntactic and semantic properties of subjunctive clauses remains an incomplete task.

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References


17 As a graduate student casting about for a dissertation topic, I was struck to hear a 4-year-old Spanish child, in the course of an argument with her mother, utter exactly the sentence in (1a), with the (ungrammatical) coreferent interpretation. Such was the start of a 20-year quest.