

# THE SUBJUNCTIVE IN THAT COMPLEMENTS

## 1. On the concept of modality

In this section we consider the distribution of the subjunctive and the indicative moods in English complement clauses and argue that the observed patterns can mostly be explained on semantic grounds.

Traditional grammarians have long noticed that the opposition between the indicative and the subjunctive mood is semantic, each grammatical form being suitable in a coherent class of contexts. For example, Curme (1931) opposed the two moods as representing the mood of fact (= the indicative) vs. the mood of a mere conception of the mind (= the subjunctive). More recently, a widespread semantic account (cf. Farkas (1985), Boskovič (1997)) a.o. claims that the indicative is the mood of *realis* contexts, whereas the subjunctive is the mood of *irrealis* contexts. These dichotomies express very similar intuitions. In this section, we attempt to give more substance to these oppositions, as manifest in English, while also trying to explain why, even if it is true that the indicative and the subjunctive moods have their own "meaning", their use varies to a certain extent from language to language, for languages that have at least partly distinct forms for these categories.

### 1.1. *Mood and modality*

The basic assumption is that the grammatical category of Mood is one way of expressing the general notion of *modality*. Modal attitudes and concepts are variously expressed by lexical means (verbs, adjectives), as well as by functional elements such as the English modal verbs or the grammatical moods of the verb. The logical notion of modality presupposes the existence of *modal operators*.

A modal operator is one which, when it is appended to a proposition, yields another proposition. Roughly speaking, the modal operator expresses an *attitude* towards the operand proposition. Thus, in all the examples below, the modal operators (italicized) express attitudes towards the proposition *Tom is the murderer*.

- (1) a. Tom is the murderer.
- b. Tom *must* be the murderer.
- c. Tom *might* be the murderer.
- d. It is *believed* by the police that Tom is the murderer (but they are wrong).
- e. It is *possible* that Tom is the murderer.
- f. *Necessarily*, Tom is the murderer.
- g. The police *declared* that Tom was the murderer.

Conversation unfolds against a *common ground*, i.e., the set of propositions taken for granted in a context. Let us refer to this as *the conversational background*. The propositions in the conversational background play an important role in human reasoning, since they are taken as implicit premisses in the judgements speakers make. These implicit premisses are sometimes explicitly signalled by using phrases of the type: *by virtue of what is known*, *by virtue of what is reasonable*, etc. *The propositions in the conversational background determine a set of context worlds, containing all the worlds in which these propositions are true.*

Consider now the interpretation of the examples in (1 a-g). In uttering (1a), the speaker makes an (unmodalized) *assertion*. His statement expresses a commitment that the proposition *that Tom is the murderer* is true in the real world. Sentence (1a) must also be true in all of the context worlds, determined by the *conversational background*.

In contrast to (1a), sentences (1b) and (1c) contain modal operators and express *modalized assertions*. Sentences (1b) and (1c) are conclusions that the speaker may draw on the

basis of *what is known* in the context. Therefore they rely on an *epistemic* conversational background. Sentences (1b) and (1c) differ regarding the strength of the conclusion. Sentence (1c), containing the modal *might*, says that given what is known, it is not impossible for Tom to be the murderer. For (1c) to be true it is enough that the proposition that Tom is the murderer should be true in *one* world consistent with what is known. A similar idea is expressed in (1e), which has truth conditions quite similar to (1c), except that the modal operator is the adjective *possible*. In contrast, for (1b) to be true, given *what is known* in the current situation, the proposition *Tom is the murderer* must be true in *all* the worlds which are epistemically possible, i.e., in agreement with what is known.

These examples show what ingredients are involved in the interpretation of modalized assertions (cf. Kratzer (1981), (1991)): first, there is a *conversational background* which contributes the premisses from which the conclusions are drawn. In the examples above, the conversational background was epistemic, since the evidence involved in drawing the modalized conclusions represented what was *known* in the context. The background (i.e., the set of premisses (propositions) made use of in the modal judgement) determines the set of worlds with respect to which the truth of the modalized proposition is evaluated. Let us call *modal base* the set of worlds where all the premisses considered in the modal inference are true. The term *modal base* is thus a more technical term for 'type of conversational background', since the modal base is the set of worlds where all the propositions considered as premisses in the modal inference are true.

In sentence (1d), the modal base introduced by the modal operator *believe* is *doxastic*; it includes the propositions which are believed to be true by the police. Sentence (1d) is true if the proposition *that Tom is the murderer* is true in those worlds which are consistent with the police's beliefs. Notice, as suggested by the bracketed continuation in (1d), that what is believed by the police does not have to be true in the real world. Thus, more generally, *the modal base may or may not include the real world*.

Modal operators express different types of commitments to the truth of the modalized proposition. What changes is the type of world or situation where the modalized proposition is evaluated (e.g., worlds compatible with what is known, worlds compatible with what someone believes, etc.). *The modality of the sentence thus signals the context of evaluation of the modalized proposition*, a context which is determined at least in part by the modal operator.

A conversational background or modal base is *realistic* when it represents a set of propositions which are true in the given world. It follows that a *realistic conversational background* is a subset of the common ground. It is signalled by phrases like, *in view of facts of such and such kind*. A modal base or conversational background is *totally realistic* when it represents a set of propositions which characterize the given world *uniquely*. Such a background may be signalled by expressions like *in view of what is the case*, etc. It is important to notice that asserted propositions like (1a) are evaluated with respect to a totally realistic background. A *weakly realistic* conversational background is a set of propositions that merely has an intersection with the common ground. Such is the context created by the verbs like *say*, *declare*, as in (1g)), because what we say or declare is not completely based on what is known to be true in the context.

A particularly salient ingredient in interpreting modality is that it may have, and often does have, a strong *normative* component. People reason function of *ideals* which represent perfect behaviour, the realization of all one's wishes etc. This is typically the case of modal operators like *want*, *wish*, *desire*, *prefer*, etc., but also of deontic modal verbs like *should*, *ought*, *may*.

- (2) a. Students should be polite to their professors.

- b. One ought to do one's duty.
- c. They prefer that the building should be restored at once.

Such modal operators not only introduce a set of alternatives, but also order them function of how close they come to the envisaged ideals. Modal judgements of these type imply not only a *modal base* (a set of alternative worlds), but also an *ordering source*, i.e., a set of principles / propositions imposing an ordering among the considered alternatives. Ordering sources capture the observation that the understanding of a modalised sentence often implies the use of idealised states of affairs, describing the world as it should be (according to the law, according to the normal course of events, according to what is desirable, etc.). An ordering source, which is also a set of propositions describing the ideal, orders the worlds in the modal base according to the degree to which they realise the ideal described by the ordering source itself. Ordering sources may be explicitly introduced by such phrases as, *in view of what is normal, according to the law, etc.* Worlds in the modal base are ordered according to how many propositions in the ordering source (in the ideal) they realise, i.e., how close they get to the ideal.

Verbs and other operators which have a stronger or weaker normative component invariably imply a *non-realistic modal base*, in the sense that we do not require that there should be any intersection between the worlds determined by the conversational contexts and these ideals.

### ***Conclusion on the semantics of modality***

Two semantic parameters are essential in the analysis of modality: *the modal base* and *the ordering source* (cf. Kratzer (1981), (1991)). A modal base specifies the world(s) in which the proposition in the scope of the modal is evaluated. The worlds in the modal base are possibly ordered by the ideals in the *ordering source*, if the respective modality implies one. The joint effect of the modal base and the ordering source is to force the evaluation of the modalised proposition in those worlds of the modal base that better realise the given ideal or norm.

*The modality of the sentence signals the context of evaluation of the modalized proposition*, a set of propositions with respect to which the speaker chooses to consider a particular proposition. In that sense, modality signals a particular attitude of the speaker. The view of modality proposed above comes very close to that proposed by Jespersen (1924), namely that mood describes a characteristic of sentence *use*. More precisely, it concerns the *speaker's commitment* about the truth of the sentence in the actual world. It is the notion of speaker commitment that was formalised in terms of the semantic environment where a sentence is to be evaluated.

## **2. Back to grammatical mood**

A plausible account of grammatical mood must incorporate the distinction between 'notional mood' or *modality*, which is a semantic classification of the evaluation contexts, and *grammatical mood*.

Grammatical mood is (one of ) the linguistic manifestation(s) of semantic modality. Grammatical mood is a manifestation of a *binary classification* of the contexts with respect to which propositions are evaluated (cf. Giorgi and Pianesi (1997)). The contexts are classified function of a *basic designated one, identifiable as that of basic simple assertion. In this case the*

*base is totally realistic. Contexts sufficiently alike to the basic one use the indicative, contexts sufficiently remote from the basic one use the subjunctive.* In this view, the indicative mood appears whenever the complement proposition is asserted or at least evaluated with respect to the real world. The subjunctive appears when the complement is not supposed to be true in the real world, but in a different possible world.

The standard context is that of a totally realistic base (the common ground). Contexts of evaluation are ordered function of their similarity to this standard. The rationale of this idea is that notional mood (modality) is a way of classifying sentences with respect to the standard constituted by simple assertions. It is possible to set up the following hierarchy of contexts of evaluation (apud Giorgi & Pianesi (1997)). The scale moves from contexts where the ordering source is non-null, so that the sentence is judged to be true in possible worlds conforming to the ideals in the ordering source, to contexts which take into account only what is the case in the particular context of utterance.

(3) non-null > non-realistic > weakly realistic > realistic > totally realistic ordering base.

*Grammatical mood, the indicative/subjunctive divide, corresponds to a simplification of such a classification into a binary one.* Contexts of evaluation similar to the standard one require the indicative, whereas those classified as different require the subjunctive.

Similarity to the basic context is, expectedly, a matter of degree. This is why, crosslinguistically, there are a number of contexts where the indicative is consistently used across languages and there are also contexts where the subjunctive is used, likewise, consistently. Generally, whenever there is an ordering source and the context of evaluation is non-realistic, the subjunctive is selected across languages. When the ordering source is null, languages may differ on the other parameter, the status of the evaluation context as to the realistic/ non-realistic distinction. There is also an area of interlingual and intra-lingual variation, so that many languages permit 'dual mood choice'.

### **3. Operator licensed and lexically licensed subjunctive**

Generally the occurrence of the subjunctive in a sentence is the effect of the (implicit or explicit) presence of a modal operators. Modal operators may be lexical categories (verbs, adjectives, nouns) or they may be functional categories, such as negation.

(4) a. They require that new solutions should be sought.  
b. I don't believe that he should win the competition

As a result, there is a distinction between *lexically licensed subjunctive* and *operator licensed subjunctive*. Since we are interested in mood choice in subordinate clauses, we shall mostly be concerned with the lexically licensed subjunctive, since it is the main verb which is the modal operator chiefly responsible for the selection of a particular modal base and ordering source, determining the context of evaluation for the subordinate clause.

3.1. **Lexical licensers of modality.** To understand why the subjunctive and the indicative appear where they do, a classification of the subordinate contexts is needed, function of the semantics of the main verbs. The semantic mechanism is, roughly, the following: the modal operator, i.e., the main verb, determines the context of evaluation, and the context of evaluation is signalled by the choice of grammatical mood (indicative vs. subjunctive). Several semantic

features which may characterise verbal concepts prove relevant in classifying evaluation contexts and thus in determining mood choice.

Farkas (1982) offers an insightful characterization of the difference between verb like *believe, hope* which use the indicative, even though they express modal concepts, and verbs like *desire, wish*, which use the subjunctive. Verbs like *believe, hope* are labelled *weak intensional*. They may be said to introduce just *one alternative* to the context-world, that possible situation/world where the proposition believed or hoped for is true. Since normativity (= an ordering source) is not involved, it is not necessary to introduce an ordering on possible worlds, so one alternative course of affairs is sufficient. On the other hand, verbs like *desire, wish, prefer* are *strong intensional* verbs. They introduce *ideals* and thus impose an ordering on the alternative courses of affairs. Talk in terms of ordering implies the existence of more than one possible world. Weak intensional verbs often require the indicative in their complement, strong intensional verbs require the subjunctive.

Let us now examine the distribution of the Indicative and the Subjunctive in English, starting from contexts that select only the indicative or only the subjunctive and continuing with verbs that allow dual mood selection.

### 3.2 *Indicative triggers*

a) The indicative is typically the mood of root non-modalised assertions. In such cases the modal base is totally realistic.

(5) Tom was here.

b) Expectedly, clauses embedded under *assertive* verbs, i.e., clauses whose complements make assertions (truth claims) also select the *indicative*. These verbs are weak intensional. The main verb introduces one world, in which the complement is evaluated. The intersection of this world with the common background is non-null, so that the modal base is *weakly realistic*. The ordering base is null. Using the terms of Farkas (1982), these verbs, even if they are modal operators, are *extensionally anchored*, i.e. they introduce one world with respect to which the complement is evaluated, and in which the complement clause is true.

In English, all *assertive verbs* (strong assertive, semi factive and weak assertive verbs) *select the indicative*, since, as explained, they are *weak intensional verbs, extensionally anchored*.

(6) They have just reported that the enemy has been defeated. (strong assertive verb)

They claim that the enemy has been defeated.

(7) They have realized that they are defeated. (semi-factive verb)

They have discovered that they have been defeated.

(8) They believe that they will win. (weak assertive verb)

The indicative appears to be *the mood of assertion* (see Quirk e.a. (1972)). Several characteristics follow from this characterization. The indicative is factual, descriptive, presenting the world "as it is". Indicative propositions are typical for informative, referential discourse. Indicative tenses are deictic, directly or indirectly placing an event in real time, as discussed above.

### 3.3 *Subjunctive triggers*

At the other end of the mood scale, one finds verb classes which always select subjunctive complements. The semantic characteristic of these verbs is that their complements

are evaluated with respect to *non-realistic backgrounds, involving non-null ordering bases*. Since the ordering bases is non-null, more than one alternative to the actual world is taken into account and these alternatives differ in terms of how close they are to moral, legal, etc., ideals and norms. The most general single meaning associated with the subjunctive in argument clauses (cf. Portner (1994)) is thus a very general notion of *normativity*, incorporating the senses 'ought to be' (desirability) and 'ought to do' (obligation)". Compare the following examples in American English, showing contrasting mood choices:

- (9) a. They hope that he will be here.  
b. \* They hope that he be there.
- (10) a. \*They desire that he is here.  
a.\*They desire that he will be here.  
b. They desire that he be here.

*Hope*, an indicative selector, differs from *desire*. It is possible to hope only as long as one still believes there is a chance of satisfaction. In other words, the modal base of *hope* intersects with the common ground, with what is known to be possible in the real world. *Hope* requires a weakly realistic modal basis and this explains why the indicative rather than the subjunctive is used. On the other hand, the verb *desire* naturally calls for the subjunctive. One cannot desire a type of situation unless one believes both that the situation does not exist in the real world (i.e., the modal base is non-realistic) and that it still could come to exist. The desired situation thus must be *future*. Intuitively, desires are for states of affairs that are believed to be unrealized as of yet, which are future, but *undetermined* as to whether they will be actualized (cf. (10a), and (10b)). A nonrealistic modal base and an ordering source are clearly present (the 'ought to do' component of the subjunctive). This explains why the subjunctive is compatible with *desire*, but not with *hope*.

The subjunctive always signals the presence of norms and ideals, so that the ordering base is non-null and the modal base is non-realistic. The verbs which require the subjunctive are *strong intensional verbs*, since, as already explained, they need to introduce a set of (ideally ordered) worlds, with respect to which the complement clause is evaluated.

The subjunctive is normative, prescriptive, essentially involved in the choice and evaluation of human agency. The subjunctive "tenses" are not deictic. They do not place an event in real time. The Past Subjunctive, merely expresses anteriority with respect to a reference expressed in the main clause.

- (11) a. I regret that he should believe me capable of dishonesty.  
b. I regret that he should have believed me capable of dishonesty.

Let us examine some of the subjunctive triggers.

a) The first verb class almost exclusively used with the subjunctive is that of exercitive verbs. In Austin's definition exercitive verbs "give a decision in favour or against a course of action", crucially involving the "ought to do" component of the subjunctive. Exercitive verbs may be verbs of command or verbs of permission. The following represent the most frequently used exercitive verbs of command:

- (12) ask, beg, advise, demand, decree, decide, instruct, prohibit, forbid, interdict, recommend, rule, command, order, give orders, suggest, etc.
- (13) a. She demanded that I should stay with her. b. God forbid that you should take any road, but one where you will find and give happiness. c. The carrier proposed that my pocket

- handkerchief should be spread upon the horse's back to dry. d. Now they ask that this sordid episode be sealed from public knowledge.
- (14) a. We ask that this food be blessed. (LG)  
b. The medicine man then ordered that there should be no mourning for the dead child. (LG)
- (15) a. He *demands* that he be told everything.  
b. It is *ordained* in heaven that women should work in the home.

These sentences report exercitive acts, acts whose point is to bring about the fulfilment of some volitional act denoted by the complement clause and carried out by an explicit or implicit Agent in the subordinate clause. There are a number of constraints on the propositional content of the complement clause. The verb in the complement clause should be non-stative, and should denote a volitional, controllable act of an Agent. The time sphere of the complement is future. These constraints explain why sentences (16b, c) are ungrammatical:

- (16) a. He ordered that she should leave.  
b. \*He ordered that she should grow taller.  
c. \*He ordered that she should have left.

The use of the subjunctive with these verbs is related to the notion of 'imperative sentence', of 'bringing it about that p', actualizing some state of affairs. Each of these main verbs introduces sets of future possible worlds consistent with what the main clause subject demands, forbids, proposes, suggests. If the exercitive act is felicitous, the clause will be true in (some of) these future alternatives.

Some of these verbs appear with Direct Objects or Indirect Objects (see (17)). In such cases, the referent of the object is either coreferential with the subordinate clause Agent, or is responsible for fulfilment of the volitional act denoted by the subordinate sentence. Thus, sentence (17c) below is felicitous only if the referent of the Indirect Object *to him* is responsible for seeing that the next recital is indeed shorter.

- (17) a. We advised Mary that she should wait.  
b. They recommended *to him* that he should read the instructions carefully.  
c. We suggested *to him* that the next recital should be shorter.

The subjunctive is also required after exercitive verbs of permission: *allow*, *authorize*, *suffer*, *permit*, etc. In this case, in the alternative courses of affairs introduced by the main verb, the volitional act denoted by the subordinate act is not prevented from occurring:

- (18) a. Do you permit that I should smoke in here? b. The committee allowed that the bridge should be restored. c. The doctor allowed that John should drink a glass of whisky every evening.

Exercitive verbs of command and permission very clearly illustrate the normative, prescriptive dimension of the subjunctive. There are also a few modal adjectives which are non-factive, even though they are hardly emotive, that is they can hardly be said to express an emotional reaction: *(un)necessary*, *impossible*, *imperative*, *likely*, *unlikely*, *possible*. They are nearly always used with the subjunctive.

- (19) It is necessary that one should pay one's taxes.

**Remark.** The adjectives *possible*, *conceivable* select a subjunctive with *may*, by a sort of modal agreement between the main predicate and the auxiliary in the complement clause. Their antonymic pairs select the *should* subjunctive.

- (20) It is conceivable that he may win.  
It is impossible that he should succeed.

b. A second group of verbs that select the subjunctive, often to the exclusion of the indicative, are volitional verbs, expressing volition, intention, planning or activity intended to prepare the fulfilment of some desirable state of affairs. There are several verbs and adjectives in this class:

- (21) a. verbs: want, wish, intend, prefer, desire, arrange, see to, etc.;  
b. adjectives: eager, anxious, willing, reluctant, can't stand, can't bear, etc.  
(22) a. I want / am anxious that he should get the job. b. They arranged that we should be met at the station. c. Who will see to it that things should turn out well?

Volitional verbs, like exercitive verbs may be described as strong intensional verbs. They introduce a set of alternative worlds, ordered function of the ideal of what is wanted, intended, prepared, etc. The complement clause is evaluated with respect to these alternatives, not with respect to the real world. The normative, ideal semantic component is again clear, which is why volitional verbs select the subjunctive cross-linguistically. (Giorgi & Pianesi (1997)).

### 3.4. *Dual mood choice*

While so far we have examined only predicates that consistently select one mood, there are also many predicates which systematically allow either mood. The interpretation of the two moods is clearly different, and follows from the semantics of the two moods, as described above.

a. One class of verbs which allow both the indicative and the subjunctive with different interpretation is that of *verbs of communication*:

- (23) agree, tell, say, confess, declare, explain, suggest, inform, point out, write, telephone, convince, persuade, repeat, remark, state, warn, etc.

When the complement clause is in the indicative, these verbs are used as (strong) *assertive* verbs, the complement clause makes an *assertion*, and there are no constraints on the propositional content of the complement clause. It is interpreted in a weakly realistic background, since the verb is extensionally anchored. This use of the verbs is the one described in 3.1. above

When they are used with the subjunctive, they are interpreted as *exercitive* verbs. Since they become exercitive verbs, in this use, they observe all the constraints mentioned above for exercitive verbs: The complement clause should denote a volitional act, controlled by an Agent. If there is a direct or indirect object, it is either coreferential with the Agent in the subordinate clause, or at least understood as responsible for fulfilment of the action in the complement clause. These differences are clearly brought out by pairs of examples like the following:

- (24) a. I told / convinced Mary<sub>i</sub> that she<sub>i</sub> should go to that conference  
a' \* I told / convinced Mary<sub>i</sub> that should be tall.  
b. I told / convinced Mary that Paul was right.  
c. I told / convinced Mary<sub>i</sub> that I should go to the conference.  
(25) a. I insist that the concert finished at ten (= I claim that it is true that it finished at ten).  
b. I insist that the concert should finish at ten (I demand that it should finish at ten)  
In (24a) the verb is exercitive, the act is felicitous if in some future course of action Mary goes to that conference. *Should* is a subjunctive auxiliary in this case. The predicate in the



complement clause is non-stative. The referent of the direct object, *Mary* is responsible for fulfilment of the action in the complement clause. In (24b, c) the main verb is assertive and takes the indicative mood. In (24b) the assertion in the subordinate clause is not modalised, in (24c), there is a modal assertion, *should* is interpreted as a deontic modal operator. Here are some more examples:

- (26) a. Bill told Suzy that she should go to the dentist's. b) Mother convinced me that I should keep indoors another day. c. The secretary informed the students that they should take the final test on the 25th of May.

Verbs of communication exhibit this dual interpretation in many languages, among which Romanian. Recently Quer (1998), discussing the phenomenon of "double mood selection", has proposed that the semantic structure of the subjunctive-taking verb is more complex than of the indicative-taking verb. Quer starts from the empirical remark that in many languages, if causative verbs accept finite clauses at all, the complement of the causative verbs is in the subjunctive. The caused event represents a distinct future situation in comparison with the causing situation. And it is this introduction of a new situation which explains why causative verbs that embed finite clauses (may) use the subjunctive. (Romanian is a case in point ( cf. *a face pe cine să facă ceva*)). In English, the verb *cause* might perhaps illustrate this, since most causative verbs are infinitive or gerund takers.

- (27) The doctor caused it that the patient should be operated on.

Quer's proposal (1998: 58) is that the subjunctive taking verbs involves a more complex semantic structure: the verb of communication does not directly take the subjunctive complement, but is co-ordinated with another VP headed by CAUSE, a verb which selects the subjunctive. The verb of communication merely expresses a manner of causing. In other words a sentence like (28) is roughly 'equivalent with' (29):

- (28) The doctor said that the patient should be operated on.  
(29) The doctor caused it that the patient should be operated on by saying it.

The presence of the CAUSE component explains the exercitive meaning and the selection of the subjunctive.

b) Evaluative predicates/ emotive predicates represent another class of predicates that exhibit double mood selection in English. Emotive predicates fall into several classes:

b<sub>1</sub>) Non-factive emotives. This semantic class includes a large number of adjectives that take subject clauses, and express evaluative modalities: *good, bad, right, wrong, best, better, essential, legal, moral, natural, normal, urgent, vital, inconvenient, troublesome, unlikely, amazing, anomalous, astonishing, awful, annoying, etc., natural, neat, nice, notable, noteworthy, okay, (un)lucky, paradoxical, peculiar, preferable, ridiculous, silly, untypical, unfair, understandable, upsetting, wonderful*. There is also a group of 'importance adjectives': *advisable, critical, crucial, desirable, essential, fitting, imperative, important, necessary, obligatory, vital*

b<sub>2</sub>) Factive emotives fall into several syntactic classes: emotive factive adjectives: *odd, tragic, quaint, crazy, bizarre, amazing, surprising, bothersome, etc.*; emotive, subject-clause taking verbs (=

psych verbs): *amaze, alarm, surprise, bother, annoy, irritate, astound, disturb*, etc.; transitive emotive verbs: *regret, resent, deplore*, etc.

Interestingly, in English, all emotive predicates, factive and non-factive alike, exhibit double mood selection. This possibility, which is attested cross-linguistically, is inherent in the semantic make-up of evaluative predicates. The meaning of an emotive predicate may be decomposed into a descriptive component and an evaluative, normative component (cf. Hare (1952)).

Emotive predicates are descriptive by virtue of our knowledge of the adequate standards of functioning or behaviour which entitle us to speak about 'a good deed', 'a right decision', 'a good car'. In terms of the analysis adopted here, given their descriptive meaning, the complements of evaluative predicates may always be interpreted against a weakly realistic epistemic modal base, and are thus extensionally anchored predicates. Hence the use of the indicative with evaluative predicates.

But these predicates also express normative concepts through the implicit commending or condemning attitude that they express. When one commends or condemns anything, it is always against standards and ideals, and one does so in order to guide choices (usually of action) of one's own or of other people. In other words, these predicates may make reference to ideals and norms, and when the subjunctive is used, normative judgements are made explicitly. Choice of the subjunctive over the indicative stresses the prescriptive, normative component in the meaning of the emotive predicates. The contrast can best be appreciated in pairs of the following type:

- (30) a. It is best that he is going there alone.  
b. It is best that he should be going there alone.
- (31) a. It is important/ essential that this book is being written.  
b. It is important / essential that this book should be published.
- (32) a. It is very natural that he should wish to meet her. b. But it was essential in her father's view that this affair should reach its climax in London. c. It was important to them that I should let them off morally, that I should spare them the necessity of being ruthless.

The Longman Grammar also mentions (1999: 673, 674) that affective/evaluative adjectives, as well as necessity and importance adjectives accept the subjunctive with *should*, as well as the uninflected subjunctive. These forms are most common in academic prose:

- (33) a. It is sensible that the breeding animals receive the highest protection.  
b. It is preferable that the marked cells should be identical in their behaviour to the unmarked cells.
- (34) a. It is essential that the two instruments should run parallel to the microscope stage.  
b. It is vital that leaking water is avoided  
c. It is important that it be well sealed from air leakage.  
d. It is desirable that it be both lined and insulated.

c) *Factives*. English is a languages that allows the use of the subjunctive with factive-emotive predicates (*regret, resent, odd*, etc.), even though this appears to be an inconsistency. Quer (1998: 94) comments that these predicates have two components in their meaning. On the one hand, their complements are interpreted factively, i.e., they are presupposed to be true in the real world; this makes them compatible with the indicative. On the other hand, emotive factive predicates express reactions or emotions to situations, or relate situations to an implicit set of normative criteria, and this makes them compatible with the subjunctive.

- (35) a. It seemed to Mor a little quaint that she should refer to the boys as children. b. It is not strange therefore that the Tudors should have been able to exercise a great influence. c. It irritated Mor that his wife should combine a grievance about her frustrated gifts with a lack of any attempt to concentrate. d. I'm ashamed that you should have me for a mother.

In order to better understand double mood selection with these verbs, one should notice, with Quer (1998:95) "that factivity (in the sense of presupposed truth of the complement clause) is not an inherent property of the lexical semantics of these predicates.", but depends on the contexts where they are used. Their complements are indeed presupposed when the main predicate is in an episodic tense (such as the Past Tense or the Present), but they are not presupposed in all the tenses or moods of the verb. Notice the different interpretation of the complement clauses in the examples below.

- (36) I would regret it if he didn't come.  
I regret it that he didn't come  
(37) I would resent it if you were famous.  
I resent it that you are famous.

Since the factive component can be suspended, one understands why these verbs allow a modal normative reading, whose specific interpretation has long been noted by grammarians. Quirk e.a. (1972) remarks that when the subjunctive is used with these verbs, what counts is not that the complement is true, but that "it is imagined as true", that is, the complement is merely possible. Rosenberg (1975) stresses that with emotive factives, the proposition often refers to actual events only "due to a pragmatic principle of emotional reactions" which says that "people react emotionally to states and events that exist, rather than to non-existent fictitious ones." However, taking into accounts their own normative standards, people may express emotional reactions on the strength of beliefs that something has happened, may happen, will happen and they may be proved wrong in their beliefs.

- (38) He regrets that that the little girl should be sick, but I know that the little pert is shamming.

Thus in a sense the use of the subjunctive signals the *absence of factivity*, or rather it signals lack of concern for what is actual. The judgement is evaluative, not descriptive. As aptly expressed by Curme (1947) " even when the subjunctive is used of actual facts, it presents them as conceptions of the mind, as general principles rather than facts."

**3.5 Operator licensed subjunctives.** In the examples discussed so far, the subjunctive has been lexically licensed by the semantics of the main verb. The subjunctive may also be licensed by other operators, such as negation, the question operator, etc. (cf. Quer (1998), Giorgi & Pianesi (1997)) Thus in the example below, the subjunctive is triggered by negation, rather than by the main verb, as shown by the difference between the affirmative sentence and its negative counterpart:

- (39) I believe that he is here. /\* I believe that he should be here.  
I don't believe that he should be here./ I don't believe that he is here.

In this paragraph we examine the effect of mood shift with the polarity subjunctive, and then present a group of verbs for which the use of the subjunctive in the complement clause has the same effect as that of the polarity subjunctive:

- (40) a. The dean does not believe that the students should deserve a prize, but I do.  
b. ?The dean does not believe that the students should deserve a prize, and neither do I
- (41) a. They do not believe that Godot should come.  
b. They do not believe that Godot will come.

Quer comments that there is a difference between such pairs. When the indicative is used, the presuppositions of the complement sentence normally become part of the common ground. When the subjunctive is used, the presuppositions of the complement clause are not accepted as common ground presuppositions. The use of the subjunctive signals that the complement proposition is contrary to the common ground expectations or presuppositions. This is the so called *contrary to expectations subjunctive*.

The contrary to expectations subjunctive is found not only with negation, but also with lexical predicates that include an element of doubt, uncertainty, implicit negation, such as: *doubt, think, believe, matter, fancy, imagine, complain, reproach*, etc. But this subjunctive also may appear with verbs that fail to express uncertainty, to suggest that the complement clause is contrary to the presuppositions in the common ground. Here are examples:

- (42) a. And that you should deceive me – well, I don't exactly understand it, but I can imagine it. b. It doesn't matter that Max should have bought a Cadillac. c. To think that he should have done it at last! d. I doubt that he should succeed.

### ***Conclusions***

1. The indicative and the subjunctive represent the main propositional modalities of English. Each of the two grammatical moods is associated with a semantic content that limits its distribution.

2 Grammatical mood is (one of ) the linguistic manifestation(s) of semantic modality. The indicative/ subjunctive dichotomy represents a *binary classification* of the contexts with respect to which propositions are evaluated. The contexts are classified function of a basic designated one, identifiable as that of basic simple non-modalised assertion. In this case the base is totally realistic. Contexts sufficiently alike to the basic one use the indicative, contexts sufficiently remote from the basic one use the subjunctive.

3. The indicative mood appears whenever the complement proposition is asserted or at least evaluated with respect to a realistic background. This is in line with its factual, descriptive nature.

4. The subjunctive signals a non-realistic conversational background and the presence of an ordering source. This is in line with its normative ('ought to be'), prescriptive ('ought to do') character.