

The Romance Subjunctive Schema. Grammaticalisations and Constructionalisations in a Comparative CxG Analysis of Spanish, Catalan, French, and Italian

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Abstract

This article applies the principles of Construction Grammar (CxG) to the problem of describing the various subjunctive-constructions in the Romance languages. Departing from a very basic mother construction, all other uses are derived from it via the concept of constructionalisation (c.f. Traugott & Trousdale 2013). The description thus takes the form of a cognitive network that can be represented as a graphic in which all ramifications are represented in a way that allows a synoptic vision of all subjunctive schemas of a given language. These charts are then used for a comparison between various Romance languages. The most important difference appears to be the development of the Honorific-Imperative Construction in all those languages that have developed a formal address-system based on morphologically 3rd person pronouns (Vd., você, vostè); in these languages, morphological subjunctives have given rise to a whole new paradigm of “neo-imperatives”.

Keywords: constructionalisation; demodalisation; insubordination; modal agreement; neo-imperatives; Romance subjunctive constructions; subordination marker

Resum. *L'esquema del subjuntiu romànic. Gramaticalitzacions i construccionalitzacions en una anàlisi comparativa construccionalista de l'espanyol, el català, el francès i l'italià*

Aquest article aplica els principis de la Gramàtica de la Construccions (CxG) al problema de la descripció de les diverses construccions del subjuntiu a les llengües romàniques. Partint d'una construcció mare molt bàsica, tots els altres usos se'n deriven mitjançant el concepte de construccionalització (c.f. Traugott & Trousdale 2013). La descripció adopta així la forma d'una xarxa cognitiva que es pot representar com un gràfic en el qual totes les ramifications estan representades; això permet una visió sinòptica de tots els esquemes de subjuntiu d'una llengua donada. Aquests gràfics es fan servir després per comparar diverses llengües romàniques. La diferència més important sembla ser el desenvolupament de la construcció honorífic-imperativa en totes aquelles llengües que han desenvolupat un sistema de tractament formal basat en pronoms morfològicament de 3^a persona (Vd., você, vostè); en aquestes llengües, els subjuntius morfològics han donat lloc a tot un nou paradigma de “neoimperatius”.

Paraules clau: construccionalització; desmodalització; insubordinació; concordança modal; neoimperatius; construccions romàniques de subjuntiu; marcador de subordinació

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The Romance subjunctive has been the subject of so many contributions from linguists and Romance philologists alike¹ that any intent of still adding something meaningful to the debate may almost feel like an act of hubris. I therefore shall – with only a few exceptions – not be claiming any new discoveries about the extant data or criticise the currently held positions as “wrong” in any meaningful sense. Rather, this paper will be dedicated to structuring what is known in an innovative way to give a more succinct and synthetic account of phenomena associated with the morphological forms labelled as “subjunctive” (or “conjunctive”) in the Romance languages. We will try to systematise the many correct and pertinent observations that have been made about the subjunctive in the various Romance languages. In following William of Ockham’s classical admonition that *entia non sunt multiplicanda praeter necessitate*, we will try to separate the central phenomena from various secondary epiphenomena in a bid to arrive at a more homogeneous overall description which will favour direct comparisons between individual Romance languages. In this vein, I will argue for the following:

- The subjunctive should not be described as a static phenomenon; rather, its various highly differentiated uses are all implicated in grammaticalisation processes at various stages of development.
- There are two types of subjunctive-constructions: one in which there is a choice between the subjunctive and the indicative; and another one, in which subjunctive inflection is syntactically required; the latter is the result of an ongoing grammaticalisation process and is therefore on the rise, while the former is slowly disappearing – at least from spontaneous speech. Thus, an ever-increasing number of subjunctives is not meaningful but only fulfils a procedural function within a given construction.
- The semantics of the freely choosable subjunctives should not be described as “modal” but rather as a discourse-pragmatic information that invites various modal inferences on behalf of the listener.

1. Cf. Gsell & Wandruszka (1986), Pérez-Saldanya (1988), Bosque (1990), Hummel (2001), Becker (2014), Haßler (2016: 299-379), Rothstein & Thieroff (2010), De Mulder (2010), Laca (2010), Quer (2010) and Squartini (2010).

- There is no “main clause use” of the Romance subjunctive; the cases in which these forms are used in apparently finite main clauses will be analysed as cases of “insubordination” (c.f. Evans 2007).
- The basic level of analysis should not be the verb inflected for “subjunctive”, but rather the whole construction in which it appears.
- The “imperfect subjunctive” in the protases of conditional sentences should be analysed independently of the other subjunctives.

And finally:

- Many subjunctives have actually grammaticalised into neo-imperatives and should no longer be treated as subjunctives at all.

Moreover, I’ll suggest describing the various uses of the subjunctive within a Construction Grammar framework (henceforth “CxG”), informed by Traugott & Trousdale (2013) which will make it possible to represent all subjunctive uses in a given language as one Constructional Network with its various internal sub-schemas and sub-constructions. I will argue that such a synoptic representation of all the subjunctive constructions of a given Romance language will greatly facilitate the comparison between related languages, because the resulting network-graphics make convergences and divergences immediately visible. The reasons for most of the observable differences must be seen in the varying degrees of conservatism which will have certain languages further advanced on a common grammaticalisation path, while others move into the same direction – but at a slower pace.

While some or even most of this may seem in open conflict with the various traditions, I would contend that it actually is not. Rather, most of what will be argued for is *grosso modo* perfectly compatible with (and quite obviously based on) the findings of traditional grammar and only a few punctual reinterpretations and reformulations are necessary to bring about the alternative interpretation we will be proposing.

This article draws heavily on an earlier *publication*, Radatz (2023), from which it even repeats certain central parts in order to make this new contribution self-contained. But while Radatz (2023) was mainly occupied with arguing for the new way of representing the totality of subjunctive constructions of one individual language, the present contribution will explore its possible applications for a systematic comparison within Romance.

1. Construction Grammar and the concept of “constructionalisation”

Like any other grammatical phenomenon, the Romance subjunctive is an ever-changing reality due to the various ongoing processes of grammaticalisation / constructionalisation. Harris (1974: 171) has shown the global development of these forms from classical Latin to the modern Romance languages as a long-term process, which moves the subjunctive from a semantically motivated phenomenon to a marker of grammatical subordination and verbal agreement. In this, some

constructions have already reached the end of the process, while others still retain an element of choice and thereby also some semantic or functional value. This state of affairs, i.e., the coexistence of various stages of a global process of grammaticalisation, is expected and predicted by grammaticalisation theory, resulting in a situation where there would be meaningful subjunctives alongside those which only fulfil the role of modal agreement. If we take the semantic subjunctive as cases of a still ongoing grammaticalisation process, the description will naturally allow for both types of subjunctive motivation to be placed in a systematic context rather than having to treat them – as has often happened so far – as capricious and unpredictable exceptions.² The much-debated question of whether the subjunctive is a marker of mood, or a marker of subordination (cf. Radatz 2023: 157-163) can thus be resolved by describing it as “an old mood that is increasingly demodalised or desemanticised, and that moves along a grammaticalisation path toward a syntactic affix of modal agreement, without having already arrived completely there in all cases”.

A description of the various uses of Romance subjunctives as representing various stages in a larger process of grammaticalisation has important advantages as compared to the traditional static analyses. While structuralist theorists strive for a unified explanation of all uses of the subjunctive, a grammaticalisation-based description allows for various synchronically coexisting stages of one and the same process of linguistic change and can thus account for variation in a systematic and principled way. It allows one to make falsifiable (and therefore scientifically sound) predictions about the further direction of the ongoing change by representing the modal subjunctive as an older state and the syntactic one as an innovation. As grammaticalisation is a unidirectional process, we can therefore conjecture that the new, strictly syntactic uses of the subjunctive will not revert to their semantic function once grammaticalisation has run its course; from the remaining modal uses, on the other hand, we would expect them to be used less and less as means of expression in the medium and long-term. As a result, they will ultimately lose their modal semantics in the spoken language first, where the modal subjunctive would more and more become a purely literary phenomenon. Already now it is increasingly the use of the indicative in subordinate clauses that feels “literary” and marked as opposed to the default subjunctives of everyday language:

- (1) Ruibérriz recibe muchos encargos y aunque no publica escribe continuamente [...]. (Javier Marías: *Mañana en la batalla piensa en mí*, p. 124)

In a second step, when the grammaticalisation approaches the end of its cycle, the modal uses of the subjunctive would eventually disappear there as well.

Traugott & Trousdale (2013) have recently undertaken to recast traditional grammaticalisation theory into a CxG framework as “constructionalisation”. In their model, all advantages of the grammaticalisation explanation are retained,

2. Cf. the additive accounts in De Bruyne (1993: 420-455), Hundertmark-Santos-Martins (1982: 215-263) or even in Riegel, Pellat & Rioul (2018: 561-575).

while a further useful device is added with the introduction of the concept of a “network”:

in a constructionalist model language is conceptualized as being made up of form-meaning pairings or ‘constructions’ organized in a network. The question we address is how we can account for change in the linguistic system, given this model of language. (Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 1)

This model allows us to describe the various uses of subjunctive verbs as a constructionalisation process which is continually diversifying into new constructions, schemas and sub-schemas that can be represented as a cognitive network in the vein of Lakoff (1987) or Claudia Brugman’s classical study of ‘over’ (Brugman 1988). This modelling of the Romance subjunctive as a process of ongoing constructionalisation and organised as a constructional network has the additional advantage that it allows the subjunctive use of individual Romance languages to be represented as different stages of development within an essentially uniform mega-process of linguistic change affecting an entire subgrouping of Indo-European languages. Contrary to the conventional listings of seemingly unrelated phenomena, a Constructional Network has the power to explain the cognitive processes that lead to the birth of new (or the demise of older) constructions and schemas.

2. The “syntactic subjunctive” as a modal agreement-marker

Romance linguistics as a whole is split on the question whether subjunctives are a means of expressing modal nuances or whether they are simple agreement markers devoid of semantic content. In the latter case, the use of subjunctive forms is to be considered a grammatical automatism and a simple concomitant of some modality which is expressed elsewhere – typically in the matrix clause. The alternative hypothesis of a predominantly syntactic Romance subjunctive has been proposed by various scholars, among which Takagaki (1984) was probably the most radical: “In the final analysis, I may safely conclude that it is some semantic factor in the main clause that governs the occurrence of the subjunctive in the complement” (Takagaki 1984: 250). Others, like Wandruszka (2000), contend that the syntactic subjunctive is nowadays by far the most frequent and important type but concede the persistence of the modal subjunctive in certain constructions.

Subjunctives only appear in contexts strongly tinged with modality and so it is understandable that they have been traditionally associated with the expression of mood in sentences like:

(2) Il faut que tu le fasses.

The question, however, is whether this modality is really *expressed* by the subjunctive in and of itself in these constructions, or whether the subjunctive just mirrors the modal semantics of the matrix verb. Rather than from the subjunctive itself, the modal meaning of the whole sentence generally results from some freely chosen

explicitly modal element of the matrix sentence (typically a modal verb or a conjunction) the modality of which, in turn, bleeds over into the subordinate clause under its scope and requires the subordinate verb to inflect for the subjunctive.

Harris (1974: 171) has traced the distribution of the modal and the demodalised subjunctive uses from Classical Latin to the modern Romance languages:

[A]lready in Latin, it is necessary to postulate two quite separate uses of the subjunctive, the distinction being not between two different ranges of meaning but precisely between those cases where the subjunctive was already an empty formal marker of subordination.

So, it is conceded that Romance subjunctives may still appear in constructions in which the subjunctive actually functions as a means of expression, because the speakers still may have a choice between the indicative or the subjunctive. It is, however, also clear that in all modern Romance languages there are constructions where subjunctives are simply required lest the sentence become agrammatical.

- (3) Il faut que tu le [**fais / fasses*]
- (4) Cal que [**vens / vinguis*]
- (5) No importa que lo [**haces / hagas*]

In these cases, the inflection for “subjunctive mood” must be seen as an obligatory modal agreement of the subordinate verb with some modal trigger in the main clause. But if we accept that the subjunctive *must* be used here, then this can no longer be analysed as a wilful and controlled semiotic act, because without a choice, there can be no expression. We might as well ask what a speaker tries to convey by placing the article at the leftmost side of an NP, rather than at the end. Expression implies a minimal freedom of choice.

There is thus an important difference between “noting that the subjunctive tends to appear in modal contexts”, which is obviously the case, and “claiming that it *expresses* this modality in all these contexts”, which is obviously not the case. The modern constructions with an obligatory subjunctive inflection on the subordinate clause verb may originally have arisen from the speakers’ desire to extend the modality of the matrix clause to the subordinate clause via mood, i.e., through the choice of the subjunctive inflection. This choice then became cognitively entrenched through repetition, until the indicative option came to be first forgotten – and finally considered agrammatical. In the modern Romance languages, the subjunctive has become increasingly automatic in many constructions, and is, on a whole, moving from being a means of expression to being an obligatory morphosyntactic marker with a merely concordant function. This modal concord works analogously to other morphosyntactic agreement markers, which is, why Blaikner-Hohenwart (2006) calls the subjunctive “frozen morphosyntax”, while Fernández-Serrano (2016) writes: “the subjunctive morphology of the subordinate clause would be nothing more than a feature consistent with the modality of the main predicate” (translated from Fernández-Serrano 2016: 12).

These subjunctives then appear in a subordinate clause, which, in turn, is within the scope of a modally marked matrix clause. The subjunctive, therefore, no longer has its own semantics here and its function is best described in this construction as a form of agreement in which the verb of the subordinate clause is morphologically subjected to the modal conditions of the matrix clause without being able to express any modality in and of itself (cf. e.g., Thieroff 2004). That agreement markers do not carry any additional semantic content and only copy a given value from their heads is the typical agreement configuration, and it can also be observed in many subjunctive uses, where the verbs in subordinate clauses copy simply their mood from the modality of the matrix clause. Grammaticalisation and constructuralisation theories can provide an explanation why and how, over time, subjunctives changed in the way they did. From the perspective of text linguistics, many subjunctives no longer play an expressive role but merely contribute to the morphosyntactic cohesion of the text by morphologically differentiating subordinate from matrix predicates.

3. The “semantic subjunctive” as a discourse-pragmatic device

While this long-standing constructuralisation process is still ongoing, there will still be some subjunctive-constructions left, in which the subjunctive can be willingly preferred over an equally acceptable indicative and in which, therefore, remains an element of choice and likewise a semantics to be expressed via this choice. The semantics of the subjunctive has traditionally been called “modal” and an important part of the linguistic literature on the subjunctive is dedicated to spelling out the exact nature of this modal semantics. In the following it will be argued that most of these observations are perfectly pertinent – but that they should not be seen as directly emanating from the subjunctive forms themselves. Rather, we suggest that the subjunctive as such is only capable of expressing one simple discourse-pragmatic information; it is this which then, in turn, triggers processes of invited inference. Only by this inference, the well described and analysed wealth of observable modal nuances arises.

In analysing linguistic phenomena like the subjunctive, it is important to keep two things always strictly apart: on the one hand, the real world and what is the case in it; on the other, its partial recreation in the linguistic world. It is very easy to forget that they are not identical, because in speaking, we usually try hard to make our spoken representation of the world match it as well as we possibly can. This is, after all, what the Gricean maxims of truth and relevance require us to do. Therefore, making those two worlds match as closely as possible is one of our most deeply automated routines in using language to communicate. It’s considered the very epitome of good communication skills.

This is sometimes taken to mean that the relationship between the real and the spoken world is unproblematic and that, save a few exceptional cases, they are one and the same. But e.g. “time”, as a phenomenon of the real world, is by no means identical with “tense” as its grammatical representation in the spoken world; biological “sex” in the real world is widely different from its cognate in the spoken

world, grammatical “gender”; and asserting a proposition in the spoken world is for more than one reason not at all identical with this proposition actually being an objectively truthful representation of the state of affairs in the real world.

Thus, an assertion like “Mary’s not at home” may be untruthful or infelicitous in more than one way:

- Error: I may be wrong, she entered through the backdoor and I didn’t notice it.
- Lying: I may be untruthful, either to deceive or because I feel that it’s none of your business.
- Lack of precision: There may be a misunderstanding as to which Mary we’re talking about or what exactly constitutes “home” (her parents’ or her own?) or, for that matter, “being there” (does being in the garden count?).
- Evidential opacity: I may only be guessing on the basis of what I’ve heard or seen, while my interlocutor takes the assertion as a first-hand knowledge report.

The freely choosable subjunctive is used – and interpreted – as a grammaticalised way of withholding the assertion of subordinate clauses. It appears in situations, where the choice of the indicative would not alter the grammaticality of the utterance as a whole and the choice of the subjunctive is therefore to be interpreted as a deliberate act of withholding, or rather even refusing this assertion. I would argue that this is pragmatically a rather more drastic effect than what Terrell & Hooper’s (1974) use of the word “presuppose” would lead us to think. The deliberate use of an assertion-refusing subjunctive is a flouting of Grice’s maxim of relevance and must, as such, be interpreted as an invitation to infer the speaker’s motivation from this flouting in the sense of Traugott’s concept of “invited inference” (cf. e.g., Traugott 2012). These motivations may include:

- The speaker reports somebody else’s account and does not want to commit himself to its veracity.
- The speaker may have insufficient evidence for a full assertion.
- The speaker may wish to express that the referent of the subordinate clause should be interpreted as indefinite rather than definite.
- The truth of the subordinate is already entailed by the main clause and asserting it again in the subordinate would be pragmatically awkward (“thematic subjunctive”).
- The speaker may wish to lie.

On this account, the deliberate use of the subjunctive is a discourse pragmatic device likely to trigger an invited inference, necessary to explain this otherwise shocking refusal to commit to the truth of one’s own subordinate proposition and, in doing so, being inexplicably “unhelpful” in the Gricean sense. The above inferences would generally lead to interpretations within the area of epistemic modality. Apart from signalling various degrees of epistemic reservations, another motivation would be to signal that the subordinate proposition is not to be taken as a speech act of “informing” at all, but rather as one of “requesting”, “ordering”, or “inviting”.

In this case, the corresponding pragmatic inferences would generate meanings in the area of deontic modality.

All this can also be explained within the terminological framework introduced by Coseriu (1976) and his followers,³ in which the asserting indicative is characterised as “actual” and the assertion-refusing subjunctive as “inactual”. But while, within the theory, this may be construed to mean as “actual” or “inactual” *in the speaker’s mind* and without any reference to the real world, the terminology is, at best, prone to misunderstandings in the sense that the choice of the subjunctive was in any sense tied up with the state of affairs in the real world. It has led some defenders of the Coserian model to forget the two-worlds-doctrine and to interrelate the real and the spoken world in a way that is not acceptable. Thus, Hummel (2012) e.g. makes this point in a recent influential handbook article in the following terms: “Moods serve to express the relationship of the designated event to reality”; “Indicative forms [have] the function [...] of marking an event as actually occurring” (translated from Hummel 2012: 325). As pointed out above, objective reality or events “actually occurring” in it are irrelevant here, because the semantics of the Romance subjunctive is not about “truth”. It is about commitment.

The subjunctive only exists in the spoken world and does not convey any information about the external reality. Rather, its communicative function consists in conveying a speaker’s decision about whether he is willing to commit to the truthfulness of a subordinate clause’s proposition – or whether he deliberately chooses to withhold this commitment. Thus, the non-automatic or meaningful subjunctive does not serve to express, whether something has actually occurred or not; neither does it express the speaker’s subjective viewpoint, nor his convictions about the states of affair in the real world. Its sole function is to express a speaker’s deliberate decision to assert a proposition or to withhold this assertion; as for the speaker’s motivation to do this, we can only speculate along the lines exposed above. Contrary to what many traditional accounts seem to imply, the subjunctive does not directly emanate from the speaker’s knowledge or convictions about the world but is a function of his *decision about what he wants to assert and about what he wishes to withhold. It is therefore ultimately a discourse-pragmatic device.*

4. No Subjunctives in main clauses

Almost all traditional accounts consider that the subjunctive may also appear in finite main clauses or independent sentences. As an illustration for this, examples like the following are generally adduced:

- (6) Visca el Barça! / Vive la France! / ¡Viva el rey!
- (7) Que existeixi la llum. / ¡Hágase la luz! / Que la lumière soit! (Genesis 1:3)
- (8) Presenti la seva acreditació! / ¡Vengan todos!

3. Schlieben-Lange (1971), Dietrich (1981), Hummel (2001) and Pérez Saldanya (1988).

Now while all these occurrences undoubtedly contain subjunctives, we would argue that these (and other) sentences should not be considered truly independent finite main clauses, but should rather be analysed as subordinate clauses whose matrix clauses have been elided because of their low informational content (cf. Harris 1974: 173; Green 1988: 113-114; Posner 1996: 142-143, etc.). Because of their nature as subordinate clauses bereft of their maternal matrix clause, Ruiz Campillo (2008) has fittingly called them “subjuntivos huérfanos”, i.e., ‘orphaned subjunctives’. Thus in “Que vive la France!”, the hearer is expected to reconstruct an unspoken matrix clause expressing something like “I wish ...” or “I demand for France to prosper”. This pragmatic inference may be signalled by an initial complementiser plus the characteristic morphology of subordination on the verb (= subjunctive). Once this strategy of elision had been sufficiently established, the complementiser could also be elided in a next step, since the verbal morphology still refers to subordination: “Vive la France!”. In some Romance languages (Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese), these orphaned subjunctives have evolved even further towards what we will call the “Imperative-Subjunctive Schema”, giving rise to a whole new set of neo-imperative forms in these languages.

The development of such elision strategies can easily be explained pragmatically as cases of *invited inference*. The unusual use of a subjunctive form in a seemingly independent sentence may at one moment have functioned as the invitation to infer what might have induced the speaker to use such a strange structure. The inference is that a speaker has elided a main clause of low informational load while leaving no doubt that what is being said is to be seen as a subordinate clause. The communicative intention is that of giving a naked subordinate clause with the understanding that the elided matrix clause can be easily reconstructed on the basis of situational and encyclopaedic knowledge shared between speaker and listener. It might be argued that this explanation fails to distinguish between diachrony (the explanation of how these constructions might have arisen in the past) and the synchronic situation, where speakers may no longer feel these sentences to be cases of “elision”. This is a valid objection; but as long as all these sentences with orphaned subjunctives can always take a facultative open subordinating conjunction like *que*, while real independent main clauses cannot, the elision argument can be said to hold even synchronically.

Constructions like these have been treated by Evans (2007) who calls the phenomenon *insubordination*: i.e. “the conventionalized main clause use of what, on prima facie grounds, appear to be formally subordinate clauses” (Evans 2007: 367). Under the heading of “Special subordinate verb forms”, he also lists “forms such as the subjunctive in Italian [...]. Typically, such verb forms are either nonfinite or can be analysed as containing an old complementizer”; he gives the Italian examples *Non voglio che venga domani* (subordinate) and *Che venga domani* (“insubordinated”) (c.f. Evans 2007: 379).

The interpretation of these examples as elision cases (rather than as fully fledged main clauses) has several theoretical advantages. For one, it is in better agreement with the known facts of Latin, where the subjunctive was decisively associated with subordination. In addition to being more compatible with the

historical development of Latin, this interpretation has the theoretical advantage of allowing us to describe all subjunctives uniformly as a phenomenon of subordination (plus some discourse pragmatic content, where applicable). By this, we achieve a simpler and more coherent way of accounting for all their uses, under the common denominator of being markers of subordination, whether modal or purely syntactic.

The so-called “subjunctive in main clauses” all but disappears with our interpretation and thus gives way to a more homogeneous characterisation of the subjunctive as the normal and unmarked verbal inflection of most subordinate clauses; at the same time, it also disappears as an argument against the hypothesis of modal agreement. In examples such as “Vive la France!” it only looks as if the modality was expressed through the subjunctive; in reality, it derives from the illocution of an elided matrix clause and thereby from the construction as a whole. In examples as in (6-8), the forms are no longer interpretable as subjunctives and therefore cannot be adduced as counterexamples to the hypothesis that modern subjunctives can only appear in subordinate clauses.

5. The Romance Subjunctive Schema

In this chapter we will try to elaborate a complex and idealised linguistic network in which all subjunctive constructions found in Romance languages will be described and put into relation to each other. This form of representation is ultimately inspired by George Lakoff’s concept of “radial categories” (cf. Lakoff 1987: 91-114) but more immediately by the idea of constructionalisation and stepwise constructional changes within a network of related (sub)constructions (cf. Traugott & Trousdale 2013). This network will conflate all the various uses of subjunctives and subjunctive-constructions (which have been described in minute detail in a more than 150-year-old research tradition) into one global subjunctive schema, bound together by the presence of forms from the subjunctive paradigm in subordinate clauses. While the full array of different subjunctive uses has been traditionally presented in a purely additive fashion, the form of Constructional Network will allow us to represent the various strands of constructionalisation processes in the form of a tree diagram. I will use the CxG framework in a global way without explicitly adhering to any of the four main schools (cf. Croft & Cruse 2004).⁴

The analysis will thus take the form of a hierarchical description of the internal radial structure of this schema as interrelated subschemas and micro-constructions. Our proposed construction grammar modelling of the Romance subjunctive⁵ is designed to represent its various usages in modern Romance in the form of a structured network consisting of subschemas and micro-constructions. The

4. In this I am following Traugott & Trousdale (2013: 4): “In the remainder of this book, we draw opportunistically on a number of insights which have been proposed in the constructional accounts of language outlined below, without adhering to one particular type of construction grammar”.
5. Cf. Goldberg (1995), De Knop & Mollica (2013), Ziem & Lasch (2013), Traugott & Trousdale (2013).

idea is not only to arrive at a visual representation of new constructions being generated out of older ones, but also to elaborate the representation of a common Romance Subjunctive Schema which may then be used as a template for comparisons between individual Romance languages.

The starting point for this Constructional Network will be the most abstract Romance Subjunctive Schema which represents the subjunctive inflection as a feature of subordinate clauses. This in turn gives rise to two subschemas and one micro-construction, the latter being the “Protasis Construction”, where imperfect subjunctives cooperate with conditionals in the Conditional Schema:

(9) Si tuviese / tuviera dinero, lo compraría.

We consider this a special case of subjunctive use that should be treated in a study of Conditional Constructions which we will not delve into here. The three immediate daughters of the basic Romance Subjunctive Schema are thus: Non-Assertion, Modal Agreement, and the Protasis Construction. It will be argued that Non-Assertion can be subdivided into two micro-constructions (Non-Committal and Thematic Subjunctive), while the Modal Agreement Subschema is the locus of the most important innovations that can be subsumed as a process in which former imperatives are slowly being substituted by subjunctive forms.

6. The Subjunctive Schema [S [que V_{subj}]]

The subjunctive schema consists of a matrix sentence with an embedded clause and the formal schematic structure [S [COMP V_{SUBJ}]]. The construction comprises a matrix sentence (which may or may not be elided), a complementiser or a subordinating conjunction, and a subordinate clause whose verb carries subjunctive inflection. On this abstract level, neither the verb slot of the matrix clause nor the conjunction of the subclause need to be specified any further. The semantics of this construction is in most cases purely grammatical or procedural in that its only value on this level of representation is to mark the subordinate clause as such with respect to its matrix clause. In the less frequent case that the subordinate clause-verb should allow for an alternative indicative, the pragmatic effect of the subjunctive/indicative alternation will always directly consist in the subjunctive being interpreted as a refusal to assert the subordinate clause proposition. This leads to inferences based on this non-assertion and thus, indirectly, to a wide spectrum of contextually bound semantic effects.

This sketched schematic construction can be interpreted as two sides of the same coin: On the one hand, its abstract schema and semantics may be seen diachronically as the result or abstraction of the grammaticalisation process sketched above, by which the subjunctive became increasingly associated with subordination as such. On the other side, synchronically, this schema bequeaths its features to its subschemas which inherit the formal traits of the mother construction and central elements of its functional-grammatical semantics; they are differentiated from the basic schema and among each other by further formal and semantic constraints. In

what follows, we will detail the resulting subjunctive constructions and subschemas to be found in the Romance languages.

6.1. *The Non-Assertion Subschema* [S [que [V_{subj}/V_{ind}]]]]

Among all the schemas and constructions in which Romance subjunctives may appear, this is the only one in which we find a semantics that still might be subsumed under the label of “mood” (taken in its widest sense). On the formal side, the schema consists of a matrix sentence which does *not* contain any modal verb or conjunction that would automatically trigger the use of the subjunctive in the embedded clause but allows for either the indicative or the subjunctive. If the indicative is chosen, the proposition of the subordinate clause is asserted; if, however, the subjunctive is chosen, the assertion is deliberately withheld, and we get the Non-Assertion Subschema. This subschema bifurcates into two different micro-constructions, depending on what motivates the speaker’s refusal to assert the subordinate clause proposition. As argued in a chapter above, there may be a wide range of motivations to do so. There is the Non-Committal Construction in which the speaker may wish to report somebody else’s account without passing judgement over its veracity; he may be convinced that the reported opinion is factually untrue, may feel unsure or may not share the opinion expressed. He may not wish to assert the subordinate proposition to avoid a definite interpretation of its subject or because the intended illocution of the embedded sentence may be “wishing” or “ordering”, rather than “describing”. And there is the Thematic Subjunctive Construction in which assertion is withheld, because it is already entailed by the proposition expressed in the matrix clause.

The semantics of the Non-Assertion Subschema is frequently described by contrasting it with its respective indicative version and one might be tempted to assign this to another schema, e.g., a hypothetical ‘Committal Construction’. However, as asserting a proposition is the unmarked case in human communication and corresponds to the Gricean maxims of cooperation, no special schema is needed to account for this case (cf. Grice 1975: 46).

6.1.1. *The Non-Committal Construction*

The *Non-Committal Construction* withholds assertion as an invitation towards the hearer to contextually infer the motivation behind this refusal. Thus, in the following example (data from Gebhardt 1979: 170) the speaker explicitly withholds the affirmation of the subordinate clause:

(10) No sé en qué me haya equivocado.

No error has been conceded at this point and any future apologies depend on further information. The possibility of this reading crucially depends on the awareness of speaker and hearer that such an indicative-subjunctive choice is actually available and that using the subjunctive is not simply the default choice for subordinate clauses in general, but rather a deliberate decision to refuse an assertion. In this

case, withholding the assertion of the subordinate clause's proposition may turn a seeming apology into its exact opposite and the speaker explicitly refuses to admit any error unless proof to the contrary is given. The indicative version of this sentence is grammatically possible as well but comes with a completely different semantics (data from Gebhardt, 1979: 170); cf. (11):

(11) No sé en qué me he equivocado.

Now the proposition of the subordinate clause *is* asserted; the speaker admits to an error and asks for information about it, implicitly to make amends. The final semantic effect created by the Non-Committal Construction arises from the interaction between its semantics of deliberate non-assertion and the invited pragmatic inferences of the hearer, who will have to infer the reasons for this withholding of any commitment from the context.

The ultimate effects of this interaction between the discourse-pragmatic act of refusing assertion and the resulting pragmatic inferences on the side of the hearer may be varied:

(12) Juan no cree que Pablo [tiene / tenga] dinero.

Here, the subjunctive version just reports on Juan's opinion, while the speaker makes clear that he wishes to withhold judgement on Pablo's economic situation; when on the other hand the indicative is chosen, the speaker effectively asserts not only that Pablo actually has money, but also, that he considers Juan's opinion on this factually incorrect.

By asserting a predication, we must necessarily also affirm the existence of its logical subject; hence the pragmatic awkwardness of a sentence like "The present king of France is bald" as opposed to "The present king of England is bald". This principle is being exploited in relative clauses like the following:

(13) Je cherche une fille qui [connaît / connaitse] la France.

Here, the choice of the indicative asserts the subordinate proposition and thereby also affirms the existence of at least one such person which, by invited inference, is interpreted as a definite reference: The speaker has at least one such girl in mind and her acquaintance with France is just given as additional information on her. The subjunctive, on the other hand, refuses such an assertion and leaves open, whether the speaker knows of any such girl, or not. The reference is therefore interpreted as indefinite: "I'm looking for any girl who knows France". While relative clauses of this type have traditionally been described as special cases, we suggest subsuming them under the Non-Committal Construction because its semantics is derivable from it by the same pragmatic inference as in the other examples.⁶

6. This is also one of reasons why we're not following the traditional differentiation of various subgroups of subjunctive use according to the sentence-type in which they may appear (e.g., "object,

6.1.2. Thematic Subjunctive Construction

The other micro-construction directly derived from the Non-Assertion Subschema is the *Thematic Subjunctive Construction*. In these cases, the verb in the matrix sentence is a psych verb expressing a reaction to the propositional content of the subordinate clause as in, “I’m happy that you’ve come!”. The assertion of the subordinate proposition is already entailed by the matrix clause and can therefore hardly be contentious. Nevertheless, the assertion-withholding subjunctive is generally preferred here. These are the cases that have puzzled generations of grammarians who have tried to analyse the subjunctive in terms of “reality vs. non-reality”. How is it possible that the assertion is generally refused in examples like the following?

(14) Je suis très content que tu sois venu!

In most Romance languages, the subjunctive tends to become almost obligatory in these circumstances, but examples of indicatives can still be found e.g., in Spanish:

(15) Me gusta que eres perfecta (song *Me gusta, me gusta* by singer Tommy Portugal)

In these cases, the strong preference for the subjunctive can be explained by the high degree of thematicity of the subordinate proposition, which makes it seem awkward to assert something that must have been taken for granted in the first place. In the Thematic Subjunctive Construction, assertion is withheld because it is felt to be superfluous or, even worse, pragmatically misleading. Within the Non-Assertion Schema, there appears to be a considerable degree of fluctuation; pending empirical confirmation, we would stipulate that the choice of the indicative is increasingly felt to be marked as either literary and slightly stilted or already unacceptable. As soon as the indicative is felt to be unacceptable, the construction can no longer be said to fall under the Non-Assertion category and would have to be shifted to the Modal Agreement Subschema under our analysis. Given this general tendency of abandoning these subtle semantically motivated uses of the subjunctive, we would expect to find more indicatives in the conservative registers of the written language, while the spoken language will increasingly renounce the subtleties of the assertion vs. non-assertion casuistry. The subjunctive is clearly following a grammaticalisation path towards becoming the default inflection in subordinate clauses.

Wherever the subjunctive / indicative-choice is lost, the associated semantics will disappear with it. Analogously to what has already happened in spoken French, the corresponding examples would shift further along the dimension of “type of concept” from contentful (‘lexical’) towards procedural (‘grammatical’)

subject, or adjunct clauses”). While such an analysis is clearly relevant to a full syntactic description of a language, it has little or no relevance to the constructional network(s) of the Romance subjunctive.

(cf. Traugott & Trousdale 2013: 12). The Non-Assertion Subschema is therefore bleeding over into the Modal Agreement Subschema which is clearly procedural; the last stronghold of a subjunctive as a freely chosen means of expression is slowly being eroded here and Non-Assertion is clearly a dying subschema in most Romance languages while it is arguably already dead for spoken French.

6.2. *Modal Agreement Subschema* [[V_{trigger}/ Conj_{trigger}] [que V_{subj}]]

These constructions inherit their formal traits from the Subjunctive Schema; however, unlike in the Non-Assertion Schema, the subjunctive inflection is not *chosen* here, but rather licensed or triggered by some non-declarative illocution of the matrix sentence, a modal verb or a modal subordinating conjunction. A central unifying trait of the constructions under the Modal Agreement Schema is therefore the observation that a substitution of the subjunctive by an indicative is considered ungrammatical by most native speakers. This appears to be the case in examples like (16-18):

(16) No importa que [venga / *viene] Juan.

(17) Cal que [vinguis / *vens].

(18) Il faut que tu [viennes / *viens].

As there is no longer any choice of mood, the use of the subjunctive in itself can no longer be associated with any semantic content; the function of this subschema is strictly procedural and amounts to a simple marker of subordination (c.f. Noonan 2008: 145-147).⁷ It has traditionally been remarked in the literature on the Romance subjunctive that these constructions always show a clear modal colouring, and this has frequently been taken to mean that the subjunctive was there to express this modality. This analysis is not convincing, though, because the modality can always be traced to some element in the matrix clause, while the subordinate clause-verb only reacts to it in a form of “modal agreement”. Like any other morphological agreement marker, the subjunctive inflection in these constructions no longer conveys any additional meaning but simply repeats a modal nuance that has already been introduced into the sentence by some other freely choosable element, the modality of which it only echoes. At this stage of grammaticalisation, the subjunctive has been reduced to a simple agreement marker with the effect of enhancing

7. Noonan (2008) in his typologically oriented paper contemplates various types of complementation systems. About the various Romance types, he writes: “Four-member systems typically include indicative and subjunctive complement types, and two non-s-like complement types. Catalan is typical of this sort of system, with an indicative used in assertive contexts, a subjunctive used in non-assertive contexts, an infinitive in DTR contexts where its notional subject has been equi-deleted under identity with the matrix subject, and a participial complement used for immediate perception complements. This sort of system is typical of the Western Romance languages.” (Noonan 2008: 145-147).

textual cohesion. Triggering contexts for this construction are typically those which confer to the matrix sentence an epistemic or deontic modality. Triggers may be either modal verbs or a subordinating modal conjunction:

(19) Te lo digo para que lo [sepas / *sabes].

(20) T'ho dic perquè ho [sàpigues / *saps].

(21) Je te le dis pour que tu le [saches / *sais].

Which conjunctions and which verbs belong to the set of triggers is an empirical question and open to debate; it potentially varies from language to language and will be in a constant flux, as intuitions change. A full CxG analysis for any given language might have to posit individual micro-constructions for all subjunctive-triggering conjunctions and verbs. As is to be expected in living natural languages, each of these micro-constructions will leave room for debate about the degree of modal choice that any given construction may still offer to the speaker. As a general tendency, older written registers will still allow for some indicatives after these conjunctions, while spontaneous spoken registers may already have moved towards a situation in which subjunctive inflection will be perceived as the default or even the only acceptable option.

Alongside triggering conjunctions, there is also always a group of modal verbs which as well will trigger a subjunctive inflection in the subordinate clause under their scope:

(22) Dudo que lo [sepa / *sabe].

(23) Dubto que ho [sàpiga / *sap].

(24) Je doute qu'il le [sache / *sait].

Establishing the full list of trigger verbs will also be an empirical matter, outside of the focus of this article. Again, some verbs may be considered triggers by some speakers and non-triggers by others. The advantage of the constructionalisation approach suggested here would be that any individual vacillations can easily be accounted for by attributing a given micro-construction either to the Non-Assertion Subschema (where an alternative indicative form is deemed acceptable) or to the Modal Agreement Subschema (when the subjunctive is felt to be a simple modal agreement marker).

For more than one reason, Modal Agreement is by far the most productive node within the Subjunctive Schema. In the first place, it is the endpoint for all micro-constructions under the Non-Assertion Schema as soon as the subjunctive-indicative choice is given up in the language in question; another reason for the central position of Modal Agreement is the fact that it is the only place within the Subjunctive Schema, where new nodes like the Imperative-Subjunctive

Subschema are still developing. It must therefore be seen as the endpoint of the great grammaticalisation and constructionalisation process of the Romance subjunctive. Wherever a former modal choice within the Non-Assertion Schema falls out of use because one of the two options is no longer chosen, the respective constructions lose the element of choice and thereby also the associated semantics. The construction will then either freeze with the subjunctive, and thereby feed into the Modal Agreement Subschema, or with the indicative, thereby falling out of the Subjunctive Schema altogether. In languages like French, in which this process is already further advanced, the Modal Agreement Schema will be the last retreat, where the subjunctive inflection survives.

6.2.1. *Orphaned Subordinate Subschema* S [(que) V_{subj}]

“Orphaned subjunctives” appear in stand-alone (in-)subordinate clauses with an optional overt subordinating conjunction; the modal value of their verbs derives from an unexpressed matrix sentence which the hearer has to reconstruct pragmatically on the basis of situative and encyclopaedic knowledge; starting from this basic situation, certain more frequent reconstructions have coalesced into new conventional schemas and constructions. These come in two forms: the Optative Construction and the Imperative-Subjunctive (sub)Subschema.

6.2.1.1. *Optative Construction* S [(que) V_{subj}]

The Optative Construction is a micro-construction based on the Modal Agreement Schema but differing formally from it in that its modal matrix clause is elided on the surface but at the same time clearly understood by speaker and hearer. A clause-initial subordinating conjunction can always be added but is not obligatory. The subjunctive is activated by an elided matrix clause with non-declarative illocution which is pragmatically understood and therefore dispensable:

(25) (Que) vive la France!

This construction is clearly non-compositional because its semantics always implies a deontic and excludes the epistemic reading, more precisely: an “optative”, i.e., a wish without any explicit or implicit addressee. Thus, the elision of the matrix clause comes with a semantic restriction not logically deducible from other linguistic facts and must therefore constitute an independent construction in the technical sense. I have placed this construction under the Modal Agreement Schema which in turn has been characterised as “procedural” rather than “contentful”. It might therefore seem like a contradiction to file the optative construction under ‘not contentful’, while it clearly expresses an optative or desiderative semantics. I would however argue that this meaning does not directly derive from the mood of the verb but rather from a contextual pragmatic inference, by which the listener must reconstruct the deontic nature of the elided matrix sentence; these inferences have eventually become conventionalised as an optative.

6.2.2.2. Imperative-Subjunctive Subschema

While the Optative Construction is not particularly frequent, the Imperative-Subjunctive Subschema definitely is for all those Romance languages that have developed it. A sizeable portion of all subjunctive forms occurring in Spanish, Catalan and Portuguese texts tend to be used in constructions from this node in the subjunctive network. The Imperative-Subjunctive Schema is analogous to the Optative Construction in that it is ultimately based on an elided matrix sentence with an imperative illocutionary force, i.e. ‘I order / ask / command you to ...’. Its semantics is therefore desiderative, but, unlike the optative, directed at third person addressees, rather than being impersonal.

By this, the Imperative-Subjunctive becomes semantically indistinguishable from etymological imperative forms which it has been cannibalising for quite some time. All constructions under the Orphaned-Subordinate Schema share the semantic feature that they can no longer appear in the whole range of epistemic modalities that were open to their structural “grandmother”, Modal Agreement. However, while the Optative Construction can still express a number of distinguishable nuances within the deontic branch of modality, including *commissive*, *volitive*, *optative* and *hortative* interpretations, the Imperative-Subjunctive is limited even further to a clearly *imperative* meaning (and syntactic behaviour). The Imperative-Subjunctive Schema feeds subjunctive forms as neo-imperatives into the imperative paradigm, in which the older etymological forms slowly become a minority. This massive restructuring of the imperative paradigm is the result of the Imperative-Subjunctive Schema, subdividing further into four individual micro-constructions (one of which is limited to Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese).

6.2.2.2.1. Honorific-Imperative Construction

The first of these four daughter-nodes is the Honorific-Imperative Construction. In Spanish, Catalan, and Portuguese, etymological imperatives may only be used with the informal 2nd person pronouns and verbal inflection, while the formal address system requires the Honorific Imperative Construction. The formal address system in these languages uses 3rd person verbal morphology together with a pronominal honorific *usted / vostè / você* which developed as a lexicalisation of an older form of address acting in all respects like the English form ‘your Grace’. This innovative address-system consists in using 3rd person morphology with a 2nd person semantics and it had, over time, a far-reaching effect on the verbal and pronominal systems of the languages in question. To start with, there are no “3rd person imperatives”, as real etymological imperatives are intrinsically 2nd person and could therefore not be used. So, to close this morphological and communicative gap, the already existing Optative Construction was used to convey an imperative meaning, when the formal address was used. As long as the older informal treatment (using forms like <tú / vosotros> with the old imperatives) and the new system of 3rd person formal address (using optative subjunctives as neo-imperatives) were in complementary distribution, the resulting solution was one of coexistence between one system of informal and another system of formal imperatives (= subjunctives):

(26) ¡Ven aquí, Pepa! / Vine aquí, Núria! (informal) [Spanish / Catalan]

(27) ¡Venga aquí,[Vd./sra. Gómez!] / Vinga aquí, [vostè / sra. Pla] (formal)
[Spanish / Catalan]

Now while these “formal imperatives” may still be using subjunctive morphology, there are good semantic and syntactic arguments that they should no longer be considered “subjunctives” at all but a completely new set of neo-imperatives. The fact that the constructionalisation of these erstwhile subjunctives into full imperatives has now come to a conclusion can be seen from their semantics – but even more compellingly from their behaviour with respect to cliticisation. As for their semantics, it no longer permits nuances within the domain of deontic modality but is firmly locked into a clear imperative interpretation. The syntactic facts derive from the rules of clitic-placement. Modern Spanish and Catalan pronominal clitics are obligatorily proclitic with finite verbs (including subjunctives!) and always enclitic with non-finite verbs and imperatives.

As long as we consider the forms in (27) subjunctives, pronominal clitics added to them would be expected to be proclitics as in:

(28) Quiero que [me lo digas]! / Vull que [m’ho diguis!] [Spanish / Catalan]

As for the etymological imperatives, enclitics must be used:

(29) Dímelo! / Digues-m’ho! [Spanish / Catalan]

We would thus expect these ‘subjunctives’ to take proclitic personal pronouns as in (28). This, however, is not the case: In the Honorific Imperative Construction, clitics always go to the end of the verb. This proves that the speakers no longer perceive these forms as subjunctives at all and that they now treat them exactly the same as the other imperatives:

(30) ¡Dígame! / Digui-m’ho! [Spanish / Catalan]

Syntactically, these imperative subjunctives clearly align with their etymological counterparts, and we must conclude that they have now definitely morphed from subjunctives into neo-imperatives. In future comparisons between Romance languages, this clitic-test can be used to determine, whether the imperative construction has already progressed to the state of full new imperatives, or whether it is still part of the subjunctive schema.

As we have seen, the Imperative-Subjunctive Subschema arises as a reaction to the introduction of 3rd person honorifics into the language. We would thus expect to find it in Spanish (where *usted* is used in this function), but also in Portuguese (where either *você* or other 3rd person forms like *o senhor / a senhora XYZ* are used). French, on the other side, has a firmly established and centuries-old tradition of using 2nd person *tu* and *vous*, whereby a *pluralis maiestatis* use of the plural

form is the conventional formal address. French therefore has not developed the Imperative-Subjunctive innovations and still uses a fully etymological imperative-system.

Interesting cases are constituted by those Romance varieties which may today have 3rd person honorifics – but adopted them only recently. Possible candidates for this are Mallorcan Catalan and Italian. Rural Mallorcan retains to this day an address-system in which <tu + 2nd person singular morphology is the informal and <vos + 2nd person plural is the formal treatment:

(31) Tu què fas, Toni? / Vós què feu, l'amo en Toni? [Mallorcan Catalan]

The Catalan 3rd person honorific pronoun *vostè* was introduced in the 19th century as a loan translation of the Spanish *usted*-construction. It has long been firmly established in the Catalan-speaking area as a formal treatment between individuals, while vestiges of the older 2nd person system are still clearly visible.⁸ Mallorca, however, was a rather remote place until the 1970s and rural Mallorcan Catalan had little exposure to Spanish until then. This may explain why the use of 3rd person *vostè* is still felt to be a recent Spanish innovation in Mallorca and the old system has survived alongside this innovation. Thus, the Imperative-Subjunctive has not yet had enough time to constructionalise into full neo-imperatives (c.f. Radatz 2010: 193-95; 241). This can be shown with the clitic-test:

(32) Digui-m'ho! / Porti-m un got d'aigua! / Faci-m el favor ...! [standard Catalan]

(33) M'ho digui! / Me dugui un tassó d'aigo! / Me faci es favor ...! [Mallorcan Catalan]

In Mallorcan Catalan, clitics still precede those subjunctives in an imperative role, because they have not yet been fully integrated into the local imperative system and are obviously still felt to be special cases of the Optative Construction. Something very similar is happening in Italian, where an older address system based on 2nd person plural *voi* as the formal address for individuals has rather recently been replaced by a new system using 3rd person *Lei* (c.f. Schuepbach et al. 2007: 6). Like in Mallorca, in Italian, too, these new subjunctive imperatives still require proclitic pronouns: “Mi dica!”. Thus, the nature of the formal address-system divides the Romance languages into two types: on the one hand a more conservative group with a formal address-system based 2nd person plural *VOS* and an intact paradigm of etymological imperatives; and on the other hand an innovative group, where the conventional formal address is based on some 3rd person

8. In Catalonia proper, the notion of ‘please’ is still expressed by the formula *si us plau* (an analogue to French *s'il-vous-plait*), containing a 2nd person treatment. The Imperative Subjunctive is also still excluded from public signs like *Empenyeu / Estireu / No fumeu / No trepitgeu la gespa* (‘Push’, ‘Pull’, ‘Don’t smoke’, ‘don’t step on the lawn’). The subjunctive versions would still be seen as Spanish interferences: *?Empenyin / ?Estirin / No ?fumin / No ?trepitgin la gespa*.

singular honorific, grammaticalised into a new personal pronoun like Spanish *usted*, Portuguese *você*, Catalan *vostè* or Italian *Lei*. In these languages, a whole new set of neo-imperatives developed on the basis of (still homophonous) former subjunctives.

6.2.2.2.2. *Plural-Imperative Construction*

The second micro-construction under the Imperative-Subjunctive Subschema is the Plural-Imperative Construction; it is largely limited to Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese and has made all plural forms of the etymological imperative obsolete in these varieties. It can be seen as an extension of the Honorific Imperative Construction to informally addressed plural referents:

(34) ¡Venid aquí, los niños! [Spain]

(35) ¡Vengan acá, los niños! [Latin America]

Just like the “subjunctives” in the Honorific Imperative Construction, these forms are completely identical to etymological imperatives in their semantics as well as in their syntactic and morpho-syntactic behaviour; the only factor that still associates them with the subjunctive as such is the morphology. Apart from that, the Imperative-Subjunctive and the Plural-Imperative Constructions belong firmly in the domain of imperatives and should no longer be associated with mood in any sense.

6.2.2.2.3. *Negative-Imperative Construction*

The third subschema is the Negative-Imperative Construction, is used obligatorily when an imperative is negated:

(36) ¡Ven! → ¡No vengas! [Spanish]

This is the first case in which the still extant etymological imperative forms can no longer be used and must be substituted by the corresponding subjunctives. The reason for grouping this Construction under the Imperative-Subjunctive Schema is the conjecture that its development is somehow connected to the same factors that have brought about its sister nodes. Languages that have historically had a system of 2nd person honorifics do not seem have developed this construction:

(37) Venez ! → Ne venez pas ! [French]

(38) Vieni! → Non venire! [Italian]

6.2.2.2.4 *Embedded-Imperative Construction*

The last of the four imperative micro-constructions is the Embedded-Imperative Construction which is used for indirect and reported commands. Etymological imperatives cannot appear in this function:

(39) ¡Ven! → Dicen que vengas. [Spanish]

In other Romance languages, this construction exists alongside alternative constructions. Thus, while French may use *Ils disent que tu viennes*, the preferred way of expressing this seems to be:

(40) Ils (te) disent de venir ! [French]

Italian has the subjunctive solution, but also an alternative construction based on an infinitive:

(41) Ti ordino che lo faccia! / Ti ordino di farlo! [Italian]

6.3. Protasis Construction

This is the third and last immediate daughter-node of the Romance Subjunctive Schema – and it is an outlier as the use of the subjunctive is not really essential to the structure in question, a hypothetical “Conditional Schema”. Such a schema would have to be the subject of a completely different study. The use of the subjunctive is heavily contextually restricted within this schema, consisting of one verb in the protasis-part inflected for past tense subjunctive, and another verb in the apodosis which takes a conditional inflection:

(42) Si lo hubiese sabido, no habría tirado el penal. [Spanish]

(43) Si ho hagués sabut, no hauria tirat el penalti. [Catalan]

(44) Se lo avessi saputo, non avrei preso il rigore. [Italian]

Not all Romance languages have such a subjunctive solution as can be seen from the use of an indicative imperfect form in the protasis part of the same sentence:

(45) Si [j’avais / %j’eusse] su, je n’aurais pas pris le penalty. [French]

While all other micro-constructions under the subjunctive schema may appear either in the present or past tense, the protasis construction is strictly limited to imperfect tense subjunctives. The systematic place for describing it is within the context of the Conditional Construction. It may be (and has been) argued that the subjunctive here confers a modal meaning of *irrealis* to the subordinate protasis phrase. This may well be the case, either historically or even synchronically; however, the whole construction is so integrated that it seems a questionable analytical strategy to separate its constituting elements, trying to ascribe to each one its individual contribution to this construction, which is clearly non-compositional and therefore more than the sum of its component parts. An empirical argument against a modal contribution of the protasis-subjunctive to the whole construction can be found in the fact that, even in languages like Spanish, informal versions of the construction may well use an indicative in the protasis (interview quote by Messi):

(46) Si lo sabía, no tiraba el penal.

There seems to be a general tendency in Romance to replace the subjunctive imperfect with the indicative imperfect in informal registers and the French state of affairs might well be an endpoint towards which all other Romance languages seem to be gravitating.

We have now presented the whole internal structure of the Romance subject Schema which can be resumed in the synoptic overview in Figure 1.

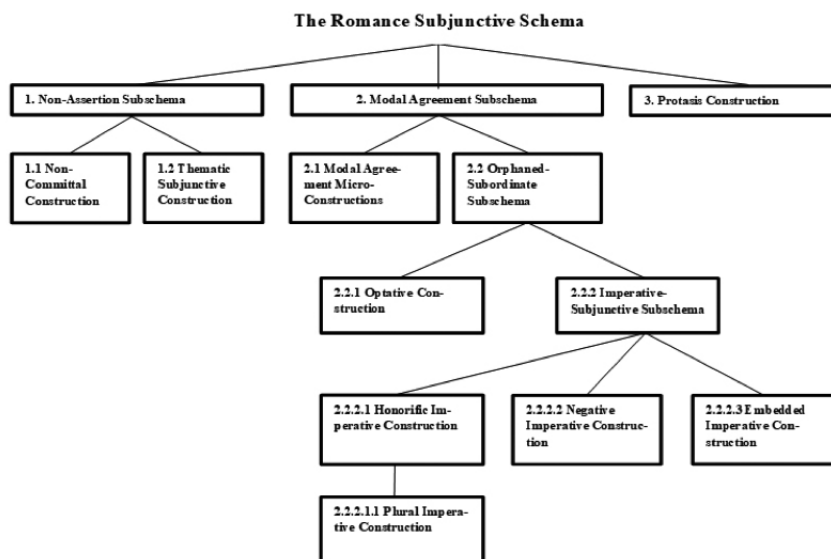


Figure 1. The Romance Subjunctive Schema

7. The Subjunctive Schema in individual Romance Languages

The primary goal of this paper was to elaborate a bird's eye view of the constructions and schemas that use the subjunctive inflection in the Romance languages, while a detailed (or even cursory) discussion of all Romance languages would be beyond its scope. In this section, we will therefore only give a first idea of what kinds of comparisons become possible through the application of the Subjunctive Schema and the discussion will only be exemplary without any claims to exhaustiveness. We will be taking a big-picture perspective to illustrate, where empirical studies might yield interesting new insights.

7.1. Spanish

Spanish is arguably one of the Romance languages with the highest number of subjunctive constructions. Like Portuguese, it has a centuries-old tradition of morphologically 3rd person honorifics which has resulted in an important set of constructionalizations within the Orphaned Subjunctive Subschema. The need for a substitute for imperatives while using the 3rd person address pronoun *Usted* < *Vuestra merced* led to the development of new uses based on an imitation or adaptation of the Optative Construction in the form of the Honorific Imperative Construction and its sister constructions Negative Imperative and Embedded Imperative. In Spanish, etymological imperatives have become increasingly marked and limited by distributional restrictions; thus, in the first of these last two constructions, negated imperatives are

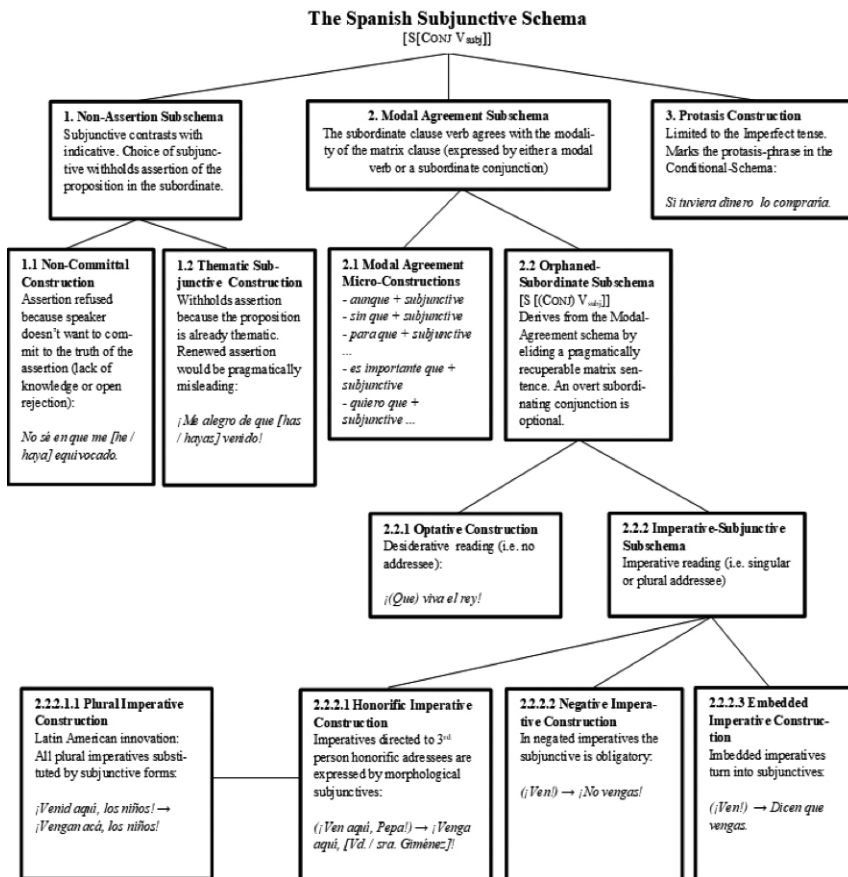


Figure 2. The Spanish Subjunctive Schema

obligatorily converted into subjunctives; the same happens, when reported imperatives are embedded into a matrix clause.

A further constructionalisation developed in most Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese, where 3rd person honorifics were generalised to the extent that the old 2nd person pronouns came to be ever more restricted. In the case of Brazilian Portuguese and the *voseo*-regions of Rioplatense Spanish, many varieties substituted them completely. The abandonment of 2nd person plural morphology became generalised over most Latin American varieties of Spanish and Portuguese, giving rise to the Plural Imperative Construction. This construction is found in all those varieties which have given up the formal/informal differentiation (*tu* vs. *usted*) in favour of a unified 3rd person *ustedes* in the plural. Here, all plural imperatives are now realised in the form of the Plural Imperative Construction, i.e. by neo-imperatives. The clitic-placement test proves that the morphological subjunctives of the Honorific Imperative Construction have already completely grammaticalized into full imperatives and the Plural Imperative Construction inherits this trait from its mother node.

While Spanish is arguably the Romance language with the most richly differentiated Subjunctive Schema, French is the exact opposite!

7.2. French

The stark contrast between the French and the Spanish system can be represented by applying our Romance Subjunctive Schema and greying out all those constructions and subschemas that do not – or do no longer – apply to French. As the written literary language of French is quite conservative and many traits have been maintained artificially by intense language-planning efforts of the *Académie française*, we shall concentrate here on the spoken language. Spoken French represents the other extreme in the grammaticalisation and constructionalisation of the subjunctive. There are good morphological reasons why this should be the case. For centuries, French has been moving from the Latin morphological type of a postdetermining synthetic towards an agglutinating and predetermining language (cf. Baldinger 1968) in which relevant morphological information shifted from suffixes to new elements to the left: in the NPs, gender- and number-marking has now shifted to the article, while the remaining suffixes have become unreliable through centuries of sound-change-induced homophony. The same happened also to verbal inflection and while many subjunctive forms may still be differentiated in writing, the all-pervasive homophony makes them unworkable in the actual spoken language. While in languages like Spanish, Italian or Catalan there is almost always a reliable phonetic difference between subjunctives and indicatives, this is clearly not the case for French – at least not with regular verbs:

(47) Cal que [cantis / cantes]. (Catalan) – Il faut que tu [chantes / chantes]. (French)

Whether a subjunctive can be acoustically realised or not depends completely on the choice of the verb and while the more frequent verbs may all have audi-

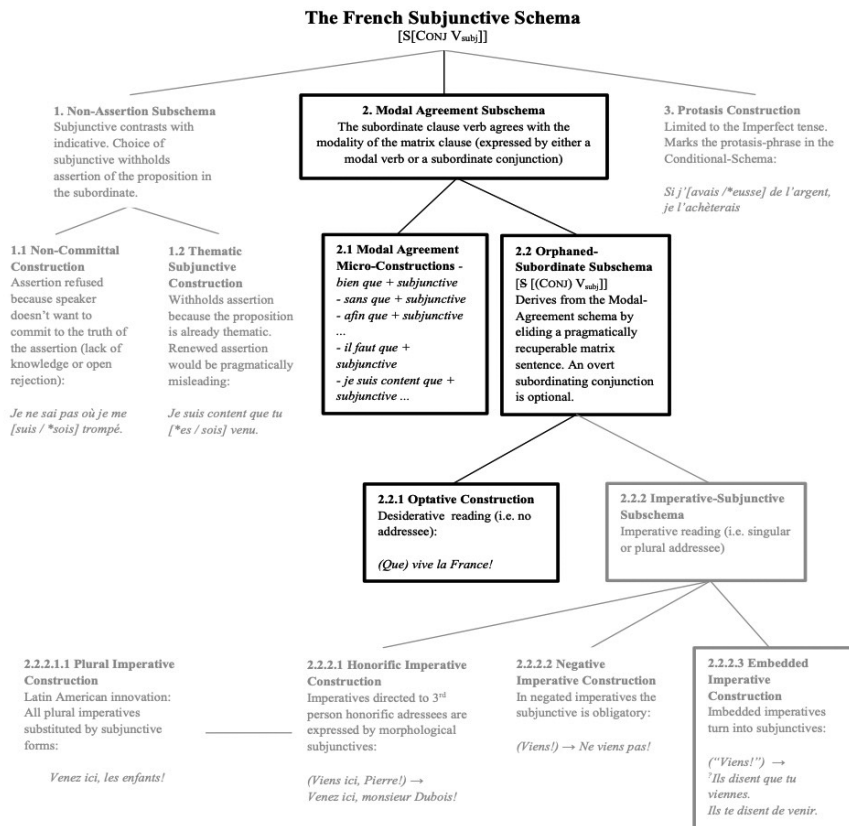


Figure 3. The French Subjunctive Schema

bly different subjunctive forms, most regular ones consistently do not. So spoken French has almost completely abandoned all uses of the subjunctive as a means of expression, as Figure 3 shows. All Non-Assertion constructions have been basically lost for the spoken language. The Protasis Construction is limited to the most archaic registers of the written language and can no longer be used casually. Within the Modal Agreement Subschema, we still find all the automatically triggered uses, but their functional yield is low – and can only be low, because most French verb tokens can no longer produce audible subjunctives. So, in spoken French, there are hardly any uses of a meaning-bearing modal subjunctive left, while the Modal Agreement Subschema appears to be in clear recess:

In my opinion, however, these theses [of a modal subjunctive] can only be effective if they continue to be anchored in the linguistic awareness of native speakers [...]. In any case, they partly contradict the aforementioned automatism in French, where the usages usually do not express or imply a modal distinction; above all, however, they contradict

frequency criteria, both in oral corpora, where the *subjunctif* is only a marginal phenomenon within the use of verb forms – at least quantitatively – and in newspaper and magazine texts, where, for example, in an issue of *Le Monde* (*Le Monde*, 9/1/1996, no. 15 847) only 56 examples were found on pages 1-24, in an issue of *ELLE* (7 August 1995) 50 *subjunctifs* on 105 pages and in the women's magazine *PRIMA* (September 1995) not a single example. (Blaikner-Hohenwart 2006: 615)

7.3. Italian

Italian appears to take a middle position between the Iberoromance languages and French. Subjunctives retain audibly distinctive forms. However, in the Thematic Subjunctive Construction, the indicative seems no longer to be an option and the respective cases would have to be classed as another subclass of the Modal Agreement Schema. As Italian has traditionally had a formal address-system based on 2nd person plural *Voi*, the new 3rd person singular *Lei* has not yet had the time to leave its mark; so, the Honorific Imperative Construction is syntactically still treated as a specialised case of the Optative Construction and negated imperatives are still treated in a conservative latinized infinitive-construction. The Embedded Imperative Construction is restricted in Italian and must in some cases be substituted with an alternative infinitival construction:

(48) ?Dicono che tu venga! Vs. Ti dicono di venire! [Italian]

The subjunctive is perfectly possible in these examples, but is now associated with an epistemic reading quite similar to conjunctive uses in Classical Latin:

(49) Dicono che questo vino provenga dalla Puglia. [Italian]

With explicitly deontic main clause verbs, the Embedded Imperative Construction is still possible:

(50) Chiedono che tu venga!

The resulting overall picture is represented in Figure 4.

7.4. Other Romance languages

A more detailed application of the prototypical Romance Subjunctive Schema outlined here to the other Romance languages will undoubtedly reveal its remaining shortcomings. For Portuguese, one might wish to accommodate the particularity of the Future Subjunctive in constructions like:

(51) Podemos ir para onde quisermos. (Becker 2010a: 188)

Likewise, the Rumanian Balkan Infinitive Construction would certainly have to be taken into account, which has no correspondence in the other Romance languages:

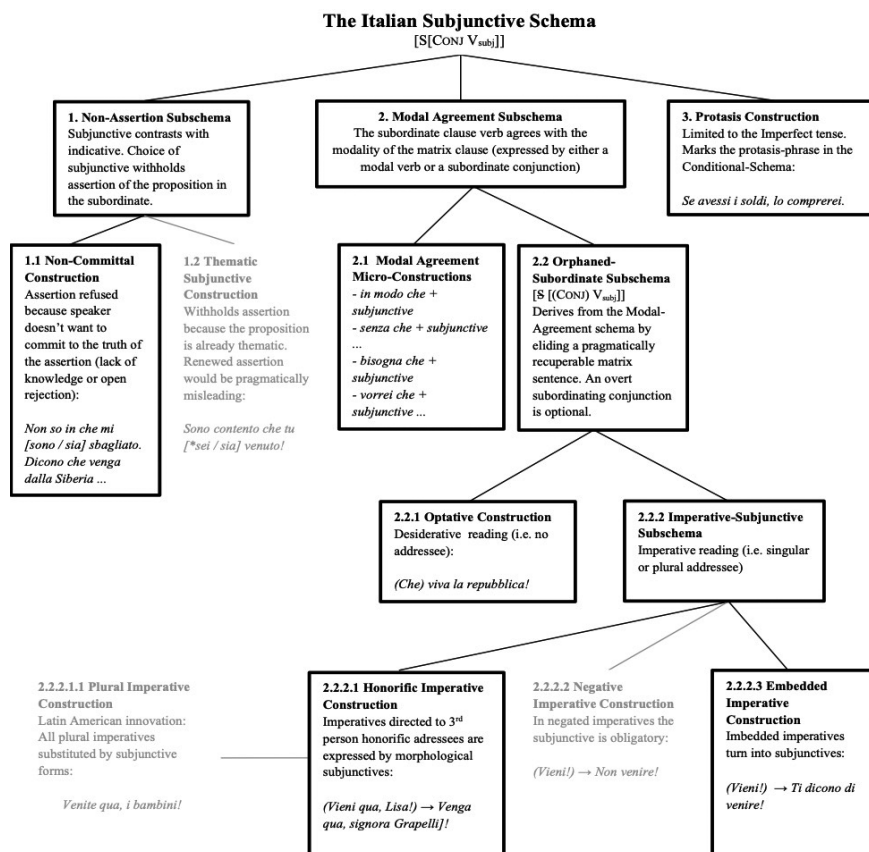


Figure 4. The Italian Subjunctive Schema

(52) [o / am] să ajut (= voi ajuta). (Becker 2010b: 266)

Some languages may have more particularities than others. Catalan, for one, has had centuries of advergence with Castilian, and while its grammar generally still maintains many aspects that clearly differentiate it from Spanish, its subjunctive system is possibly not foremost among these and is, in its global outline, almost identical with that of (European) Spanish. However, the Mallorcan data cited above reminds us that some relevant insights might also be found below the level of the established standard varieties and that an analysis of dialectal material is likely to shed light on the constructionalisation processes involved in arriving at the status quo.

8. Conclusion and outlook

The analysis we have proposed here should not be seen as a closed system but rather as a heuristic model designed to make the differences and convergences between different languages visible and to hypothesise about the constructionalisation paths via which the innovations come about in individual languages. In this way, we were able to visualise the differences between the Spanish and the French Subjunctive Schema; and in this way we did not have to simply list the various subjunctive constructions of each language in an additive fashion, as traditional accounts usually have done. The Cognitive Network representations have allowed us to integrate the (hypothetical) developments within the schema into the description, deriving, e.g., the Orphaned-Subordinate Subschema from its mother-node Modal Agreement, while at the same time explaining the whole Imperative-Subjunctive Schema as a further grammaticalisation originating in the Orphaned-Subjunctives.

The whole model is based on the findings of more than a century of research on subjunctives in the Romance languages; it is not woven out of thin air and the constructionalisation paths given in my description are at least motivated. But for the time being, it is not based on any dedicated large-scale analysis of huge corpora or data bases. Everything stipulated here must in principle be considered hypothetical, awaiting empirical confirmation. While this might rightfully be seen as a severe shortcoming of our proposal, it could at the same time also be interpreted as its most important added value because, instead of providing further data based on traditional research questions, it tries to offer a structured environment for future empirical research, based on newly found problems: What is the percentage of the Non-Committal Construction in Spanish as opposed to French? Or in spoken Spanish as opposed to formal written registers? How did the Honorific Imperative Construction develop out of the improvised Optatives, after 3rd person formal address-systems expanded? What is the actual percentage of modal subjunctives in a Spanish press corpus, when we consistently exclude all neo-imperatives from the count? And how would this change our appreciation of the importance of the modal subjunctive in Spanish as compared to Italian? Quite a few language comparisons have been undertaken about the Romance mood systems. Lindschouw (2010) e.g. bases his comparison between French and Spanish on a corpus analysis which does not seem to take into account the Honorific Imperative Construction with its neo-imperatives and he considers Spanish as “one of the most conservative languages” with respect to its subjunctive system (c.f. Lindschouw 2010: 202). Considering the huge number of innovations in Spanish as opposed to French, this could also be seen in a different light: Spanish may be conservative in maintaining many uses that have been abandoned in French – but could at the same time also be hugely innovative by opening a whole new strand of subjunctive constructions in the area of imperatives. If anything, our proposal shows how much empirical work still has to be done in order for a full understanding of the Romance subjunctive – not only, as a dead and stative phenomenon, but as a living and ever-changing conglomerate of constructionalisations and constructions.

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