



# **The German Reportative Subjunctive: A Relevance- Theoretic Analysis**

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# Abstract

This study uses Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory in order to provide an original account of the German verb form known as the reportative subjunctive, which occurs exclusively in indirect-speech contexts. It is argued that the German reportative subjunctive encodes *procedural meaning*, whose purpose is to reduce the amount of processing effort that a hearer must expend in inferring that an instance of indirect speech is to be understood to conform to a specific *prototype* of indirect speech. This procedural meaning is able to account for three phenomena which are characteristic of the German reportative subjunctive. Firstly, it accounts for the range of *verba dicendi* to which the reportative subjunctive may be subordinate. Secondly, it explains the fact that the matrix clause to which an instance of indirect speech needs to be understood to be subordinate does not always have to be explicitly stated. Thirdly, this procedural meaning accounts for the range of attitudes that a reporter may imply contextually towards a reported proposition.

Ultimately, this study aims to improve on existing accounts by identifying a *single* function for this verb form which is capable of accounting fully for its uses and distribution.

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# Introduction

## 1.1 Preliminary remarks

Over the last fifty years or so a number of accounts of the German reportative subjunctive have been written (Flämig 1959; Jäger 1970, 1971; Bausch 1975, 1979; Kaufmann 1976; Poulsen 1984; Melenk 1985; Starke 1985; Eisenberg 1986, 2004; Thieroff 1992; Zifonun et al. 1997; Diewald 1999; Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2004; Fabricius-Hansen 2006). Our purpose is to provide a fresh account of the reportative subjunctive from the point of view of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95), a theory which seeks to explain how human beings habitually recover the meaning which a communicator intends to convey by means of a linguistic (or non-linguistic) stimulus. Relevance theory is predicated on the notion that human cognition has evolved such that the search for relevance in our surroundings, including the language that we hear, is an intrinsic property of it. As such, it offers a more plausible explanation of utterance comprehension than Grice's theory of conversational implicature (Grice 1989). For with its reliance on a descriptively and explanatorily inadequate Cooperative Principle and attendant maxims which are arguably not universal, Grice's theory ultimately fails to explain how hearers understand the speaker's intended meaning.

## 1.2 Primary vs. reported discourse

It can be claimed that there are two principal types of discourse. On the one hand, we frequently say and write things for which we are ourselves willing to claim responsibility. This is the type of discourse to which Fairclough (1995: 54-55) refers as *primary discourse*. There will be no linguistic devices which indicate that the opinions, ideas and propositions expressed are to be understood to be attributed to

anyone other than the speaker.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, we can quote, refer to and use the utterances of others in our discourse, utterances for which we ourselves do not claim responsibility and which we wish our hearer to understand to be attributed to a third party. This is *secondary*, or, to use our preferred term, *reported discourse*, and that a stretch of discourse is to be understood as such will often be indicated by explicit linguistic devices. In English such devices include quotation marks which mark direct speech in writing, indirect speech and adverbials such as ‘allegedly’. There is also a third, hybrid, type of discourse in which the boundaries between primary and secondary discourse are to some extent obscured such that it is not necessarily clear whether the author of a text herself is speaking or whether she is quoting the words of a third party. The focus of this study is that variety of discourse to which the German reportative subjunctive is restricted: reported discourse.

### 1.3 Means of marking reported discourse in German

The German language possesses a wide range of linguistic devices which serve to make explicit that a stretch of discourse is to be understood to be reported. Here we shall review some of the more salient. First of all there are adverbials to which we shall refer as *discourse representative adverbials*. These consist of a preposition such as *laut*, *nach* and *zufolge* (all of these correspond roughly to English ‘according to’) and a noun phrase which indicates the source of the attributed utterance. The following example is taken from Carlsen (1994: 467):

(1a) *Sechs Iraker haben laut \_\_\_\_\_ einer Meldung der Nachrichtenagentur*  
 six Iraqis have according to a report of the news agency

*PARS im Iran um politisches Asyl nachgesucht.*

PARS in the Iran for political asylum applied

‘According to a report of the news agency PARS six Iraqis have applied for political asylum in Iran.’

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study we use the term ‘speaker’ to refer to a person who is engaged in an act of speaking or writing, and ‘hearer’ to refer to a person who is engaged in an act of hearing or reading.

Thus the proposition which is reported can be said to resemble that in (1b), whilst the discourse representative adverbial *laut einer Meldung der Nachrichtenagentur* has been selected by the reporter and thus belongs to the primary discourse:

(1b) *Sechs Iraker haben im Iran um politisches Asyl nachgesucht.*

Reported discourse in German can also be marked as such by modal verbs. *Sollen*, which may be said to correspond to some extent to English 'should', may be used with the meaning 'it is said that', as in example (2a) (from Durrell (2011: 349)). This reports a (rumoured) proposition which is assumed to resemble (2b):

(2a) *Er soll steinreich sein.*  
he should enormously rich be

'He is said to be enormously rich.'

(2b) *Er ist steinreich.*  
he is enormously rich

'He is enormously rich.'

Another modal verb which may be used to indicate reported discourse is *wollen*, whose basic meaning is 'want'. The original speaker is understood to be the subject of *wollen*, and Durrell (2011: 352) remarks that '[i]n this sense *wollen* is usually linked with a perfect infinitive, typically with the implication that the claim is false'. An example from Durrell:

(3a) *Er will eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft haben.*  
he wants a villa on Majorca bought have

'He claims to have bought a villa on Majorca.'

The purported original utterance will be:

(3b) *Ich habe eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft.*  
I have a villa on Mallorca bought

'I have bought a Villa on Majorca.'

A particularly important and common type of reported discourse is direct reported speech, which, according to Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 1203), '[...] purports to give the actual wording of the original [...]'. Direct speech is restricted to cases where:

[...] perhaps one has access to a written or recorded version of the original, perhaps the original was short enough for one to have been able to memorise it, or perhaps one is composing fiction, where the author can decide what the characters say.

(Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1203)

In cases of direct speech, the alleged actual words of the original speaker are placed inside quotation marks and are typically introduced by some sort of *verbum dicendi*, or verb of saying. In the example below this *verbum dicendi* is *flüstern* ('whisper'):

- (4) [CONTEXT] Oskar raises his right arm and suddenly stands still. The guide makes throaty noises. Then he uses his binoculars to search for the leafy canopy of the jungle.<sup>2</sup>

*"Er ist hier irgendwo", flüstert er.*  
he is here somewhere whispers he

"'He's here somewhere", he whispers.'

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 17.09.2005)

Since the words purport to be exactly the same as those of the original utterance, all deixis (personal, spatial and temporal) will reflect the point of view of the original speaker.

---

<sup>2</sup> *Oskar hebt den rechten Arm und bleibt abrupt stehen. Der Guide stößt kehlige Laute aus. Dann sucht er mit dem Fernglas das dichte Blätterdach des Urwaldes ab.*

## 1.4 Indirect speech

There is an important type of reported discourse which deserves a section of its own in this chapter because it is the one which is of the greatest interest to us: indirect reported speech. (5) is an example of German indirect speech:

(5) *Australiens Aussenminister Smith sagte jedoch dem*  
Australia's foreign minister Smith said however to the

*Fernsehsender Sky News, er gehe davon aus, dass der*  
television broadcaster Sky News he assumes from it SP that the

*27-Jährige in Australien ebenso warmherzig empfangen werde*  
27-year-old in Australia just as warmly received becomes

*wie in Neuseeland.*  
as in New Zealand

'However, Australia's foreign minister Smith told the television broadcaster Sky News he assumed that the 27-year-old would be just as warmly received in Australia as he was in New Zealand.'

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 20.01.2010)

On a basic level, indirect speech in German consists of a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause and a subordinate clause, which may or may not be introduced by the subordinating conjunction *dass* ('that'). Additionally, certain changes must be made to deixis in the subordinate clause: the reporter must choose pronominal deixis from her own point of view, whilst other deixis may reflect the point of view of either the reporter or the original speaker. Tenses are usually selected from the point of view of the original speaker, but may be chosen from the reporter's own point of view.

However, there is another property which arguably attends many instances of indirect speech and will prove to be of central importance to this study since, as we shall suggest in later chapters, it is a consistent feature of German indirect speech whose finite verb is a reportative-subjunctive form. This concerns *indirectness*, or, to use the German term, *Indirektheit*. Zifonun et al. consider *Indirektheit* to be a property of indirect contexts, which latter they define as follows:

INDIRECT CONTEXTS are contexts [...] in which the speaker does not directly address a piece of propositional knowledge as though it is valid for himself at the time of speaking, rather he reports it by referring to another source.<sup>3</sup>

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1753)

For Zifonun et al., in the case of indirectness the reporter's attitude, or degree of commitment (*Verbindlichkeitsanspruch*) to the reported proposition, can be formulated as 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*'<sup>4</sup> (1997: 1762).

In our view, indirectness may be linked to non-presupposition of the reported proposition. Presupposition is a broad concept and a given proposition may possess a number of presuppositions. The following example has been adapted from Levinson (1983: 179-180):

(6a) John stopped doing linguistics before he left Cambridge.

According to Levinson, (6a) has the following presuppositions:

(6b) There is someone uniquely identifiable to the speaker and addressee as *John*.

(6c) John was doing linguistics before he left Cambridge. (triggered by 'stop')

(6d) John left Cambridge. (triggered by 'before')

(6e) John had been at Cambridge. (triggered by 'leave')

However, it is presupposition specifically in the sense of Huddleston and Pullum (2002) that is of interest to us. They are concerned with the the status of a given proposition as a whole when embedded under a matrix verb. They remark that '[t]he information contained in a presupposition is backgrounded, taken for granted, presented as something that is not currently at issue', before subsequently defining presupposition formally (2002: 41):

**X presupposes Y**  $\equiv$  in saying X the speaker in the absence of indications to the contrary, takes the truth of Y for granted, i.e. presents it as something that is not at issue.

---

<sup>3</sup> *INDIREKTHEITSKONTEXTE sind Kontexte [...], in denen der Sprecher ein Stück propositionalen Wissens nicht unmittelbar als für ihn selbst zum Sprechzeitpunkt aktuelles Wissen anspricht, sondern es wiedergibt, indem er sich auf eine andere Quelle rückbezieht.*

<sup>4</sup> *Ich, B, sage, daß A sagt, daß p, aber ich lasse offen, ob ich sage, daß p.*

Given that a speaker takes the truth of a presupposed proposition for granted, we hold that a reported proposition with the property indirectness will not typically be understood to be presupposed in Huddleston and Pullum's sense. This type of presupposition would be inconsistent with Zifonun et al.'s understanding of indirectness, contradicting in particular the reporter attitude associated with the concept: 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*'.

Indirect speech which possesses the property indirectness alongside concomitant non-presupposition of the embedded proposition is typically introduced by non-factive verbs such as 'believe', 'say' or 'think'. For instance, neither (7a) nor its English translation (7b) presupposes its embedded clause, i.e. the proposition in (7c):

(7a) *Mein Bruder sagte, dass er das Jobangebot angenommen hat.*  
my brother said that he the job offer accepted has

(7b) My brother said that he had accepted the job offer.

(7c) My brother accepted the job offer.

The speaker of (7a) and (7b), i.e. the reporter, reports (7c), but does not take its truth for granted: it is not necessary for the hearer to understand (7c) to be true in order for him to comprehend (7a) or (7b) as a whole.

Other verbs which introduce indirect speech are factive which means that their '[...] content clause complement is normally presupposed [...]' (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1008). Such factive verbs include 'admit', 'comment', 'emphasize', 'mention', 'point out' and 'recognize'. As examples from German we provide the factive verbs *bedauern* ('regret') and *zugeben* ('admit') ((8a) and (9a)) alongside their English equivalents ((8b) and (9b)):

(8a) *Mein Bruder bedauerte, dass er das Jobangebot nicht angenommen*  
my brother regretted that he the job offer not accepted

*hat.*

has

(8b) My brother regretted that he did not accept the job offer.

(9a) *Sie gab zu, dass sie die Halskette gestohlen hat.*  
She admitted that she the necklace stolen has

(9b) She admitted that she had stolen the necklace.

These seem to presuppose (8c) and (9c) respectively:

(8c) My brother did not accept the job offer.

(9c) She stole the necklace.

Thus, examples (8a), (8b), (9a) and (9b) do not display the property indirectness. In fact, factive verbs will still presuppose their embedded proposition even if they are themselves embedded under a non-factive verb. Thus (8d) still presupposes (8c):

(8d) My brother said he regretted that he did not accept the job offer.

In view of the wide variety of verbs that may function as *verba dicendi*, many of which are factive, it cannot be claimed that indirectness is an essential feature of indirect speech: this would result in an unnecessarily narrow and essentially *ad hoc* definition of indirect speech – one on which the embedded proposition cannot be understood to be presupposed – and furthermore would be counterintuitive. Instead it seems that, in the case of German and English at least, indirectness should be considered a phenomenon that attends many instances of indirect speech but is not necessarily a constitutive property of it.

In the light of the foregoing considerations regarding how indirect speech should be defined, we propose the following preliminary working definition of the concept:<sup>5</sup>

- (i) Indirect speech consists of a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause and a subordinate proposition which latter in German may or may not be introduced by *dass*.
- (ii) Pronominal deixis must be selected from the point of view of the reporter. Other deixis may be selected from the point of view of the original speaker.

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<sup>5</sup> We do not claim that this characterization exhausts the properties of indirect speech. However, whether or not there are further properties will not ultimately influence the analysis of the import of the German reportative subjunctive which will be provided in Chapter 4.

- (iii) Indirect speech may exhibit the property indirectness. In such cases the reported proposition will not be understood to be presupposed.

Since certain deixis are selected from the point of view of the reporter, indirect speech, unlike direct reported speech, cannot purport to report the exact words of the original speaker. In fact, the discrepancy between the actual words and the reported version may extend beyond deictic differences. In this connection Coulmas (1986) remarks that:

[i]n indirect speech the reporter is free to introduce information about the reported speech event from his own point of view and on the basis of his knowledge about the world, as he does not purport to give the actual words that were uttered by the original speaker(s) or that his report is restricted to what was actually said. Indirect speech is the speech of the reporter: its pivot is the speech situation of the report.

(Coulmas 1986: 3)

Nevertheless, the reporter is not obligated to change anything beyond deixis. The result is that there are, broadly speaking, two chief types of indirect speech: *de dicto* and *de re* indirect speech. In the case of *de dicto* indirect speech, the reporter's analysis '[...]' consists in adjusting the original utterance to the deictic center of the report situation without changing any other part of its linguistic form' (Coulmas 1986: 5). Pütz (1989: 189) and Zifonun et al. (1997: 1765) point out that German *de dicto* indirect speech is marked as such through the absence of the subordinating conjunction *dass*: the embedded clause thus has main-clause word order.<sup>6</sup> Example (5) above exemplifies specifically German *de dicto* indirect speech and is repeated below as (5a):

(5a) *Australiens Aussenminister Smith sagt jedoch dem Fernsehsender Sky News, er gehe davon aus, dass der 27-Jährige in Australien ebenso warmherzig empfangen werde wie in Neuseeland.*

Thus the purported original utterance is (5b): since (5a) represents *de dicto* indirect speech the reporter intends the hearer to assume that the two versions differ only in terms of their pronominal deixis (though this is, of course, not necessarily the case): *ich* in the original utterance has been changed to *er* in order to reflect the deictic point of view of the reporter:

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<sup>6</sup> In German verbs appear at the end of a clause which is introduced by a subordinating conjunction.

(5b) *Ich gehe davon aus, dass der 27-Jährige in Australien ebenso warmherzig empfangen wird wie in Neuseeland.*

A *de re* analysis, on the other hand:

[...] allows the reporter to alter the form of the original utterance in accordance with what it means on the basis of this knowledge of the world in such a way that it may include inferences of which the original speaker is unaware.

(Coulmas 1986: 5)

For Pütz (1989: 189) and Zifonun et al (1997: 1765), German *de re* indirect speech is characterized by the use of *dass* and concomitant changes to the word order of the embedded clause. An example:

(10a) *Ein CNN-Korrespondent berichtet aus Port-au-Prince, dass Präsident*  
a CNN correspondent reports from Port-au-Prince that president

*René Préval zwar persönlich am Flughafen die ersten Hilfsflüge*  
René Préval indeed personally at the airport the first relief flights

*empfangen habe, es aber keine organisierte Verteilung der*  
received has it but no organized distribution of the

*Hilfsgüter gebe.*  
relief supplies gives

‘A CNN correspondent reports from Port-au-Prince that President René Préval met the first relief flights personally, but there was no organized distribution of the relief supplies.’

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 15.01.2010)

The original utterance which (10a) purports to report needs to *resemble* (10b) in terms of its propositional form if (10a) is to be considered faithful, but unlike (5a) and (5b), the propositional forms need not be identical:

(10b) *Präsident René Préval hat zwar persönlich am Flughafen die ersten Hilfsflüge empfangen, es gibt aber keine organisierte Verteilung der Hilfsgüter.*

Therefore, there will very often be a discrepancy between the original utterance that indirect speech *purports* to report and the actual original utterance: for this reason we shall continue to make frequent reference throughout this study to the ‘purported original utterance’. Even in cases where the reported utterance is identical to the original utterance (as is often true of direct reported discourse) or differs only in terms of certain deixis (*de dicto* indirect speech), a quotation will undergo a qualitative change as it is transferred from its original context to a new one. Here it will be subordinated to the overall discursive purpose of the producer of the host discourse, rather than to that of the text in which it originated. Of particular significance here is the role of the choice of *verbum dicendi*, for such a verb, including even the most neutral verb *sagen* (‘say’), will very often reflect the interpretive stance of the producer of the host discourse or indicate the relationship that the writer wishes the quotation to bear to her text as a whole. For the analyst, host-discourse considerations must always take priority.

### 1.5 The German reportative subjunctive: Introductory remarks

The German language possesses two types of subjunctive, each of which has a function with which it is more readily associated. The four forms *gehe*, *werde*, *habe* and *gebe* in examples (5a) and (10a) above are examples of a type of subjunctive which for all verbs (except *sein* (‘be’)) is formed from the stem of the present indicative. For this latter reason many authorities, for example Hentschel and Weydt (1994), Helbig and Buscha (1998) and Durrell (2002) refer to it as the ‘present subjunctive’. The chief function of the ‘present subjunctive’ is to mark indirect speech as in the examples above, although it is not restricted to this. For example it occurs in recipes (11) and formulaic wishes (12):

(11) *Man **nehme** drei Eier und 150 Gramm Zucker. Man*  
one takes.SUBJ three eggs and 150 grams sugar one

***rühre** die Eier mit dem Zucker.*  
mixes.SUBJ the eggs with the sugar

‘Take three eggs and 150 grams of sugar. Mix the eggs with the sugar.’

- (12) *Er lebe hoch!*  
he lives.SUBJ high

‘May he live well!’

The other type of subjunctive most often has the function of a conditional. This is formed from the stem of the imperfect indicative and is accordingly referred to by many scholars, including those mentioned above, as the ‘imperfect subjunctive’. Its function as a conditional is illustrated by example (13) below:

- (13) *Er wäre erleichtert, wenn er keine Hausaufgaben*  
he is.SUBJ (i.e. ‘would be’) relieved if he no homework

***hätte.***

has.SUBJ (i.e. ‘would have’)

‘He would be relieved if he had no homework.’

However, the ‘imperfect subjunctive’ often appears in indirect speech where it has the same function as the ‘present subjunctive’. In this study, we use the term *reportative subjunctive* to refer to both types of subjunctive when they occur in indirect speech.

How, precisely, are we to distinguish between instances of the *reportative subjunctive* and other uses, such as those in examples (11), (12) and (13)? To do so is not necessarily easy, as there are cases where, as we shall see, it is the function of the subjunctive as a reportative form to ensure that an utterance is understood as indirect speech. Thus one could easily become entangled in a circular argument: the reportative subjunctive can be employed only in indirect speech, whilst the reportative subjunctive has the function of marking – and is thus in a sense constitutive of – indirect speech. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to claim that a subjunctive form may be considered reportative when it occurs in an embedded clause and contextual considerations do not suggest a function other than marking indirect speech. For example, embedded ‘imperfect-subjunctive’ forms are clearly not reportative when they are to be analyzed as embedded conditionals, as in example (14):

(14) *Er sagte, er wäre erleichtert, wenn er keine*  
he said he is.SUBJ (i.e. 'would be') relieved if he no

*Hausaufgaben hätte.*

homework has.SUBJ (i.e. 'would have')

'He said he would be relieved if he had no homework.'

Above we have so far used the traditional terms 'present subjunctive' and 'imperfect subjunctive'. In this study we shall follow the modern conventional practice (followed by Engel (1996), Fabricius-Hansen (2006), Durrell (2011) and Whittle et al. (2011)) of referring to the present subjunctive and the imperfect subjunctive as subjunctive 1 (henceforth S1) and subjunctive 2 (S2) respectively. This is because in modern standard German both the past and present (strictly non-past) tenses may be formed from both types of subjunctive.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.6 Relevance theory: Introductory remarks

Relevance theory, which assigns crucial roles to both the semantic import of linguistic expressions and pragmatic considerations in utterance comprehension, provides an appropriate framework within which to investigate the German reportative subjunctive. On a superficial level, the relevance-theoretic framework seems suitable because the analysis of some aspects of the subjunctive may be said to fall within the domain of semantics, whilst the analysis of other aspects is rather a pragmatic pursuit. For example, the chief function of the reportative subjunctive is essentially semantic: we shall show in this study that it *ensures* that an utterance is understood as indirect speech. If the reportative subjunctive is present, then such an interpretation, unlike purely pragmatically recovered interpretations, cannot be cancelled. One *pragmatic* aspect of the subjunctive is as follows. We shall suggest in this study that the meaning which Zifonun et al. suggest for the subjunctive, i.e. 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*', does not preclude the possibility of the reporter using it to imply any interpretive stance, or attitude, towards the proposition she is reporting. For example, she may imply that she holds the proposition to be true, untrue, or she

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<sup>7</sup> In German the present tense is often used with future meaning. Alternatively the future tense may be formed periphrastically from the modal verb *werden* ('shall' or 'will') and the infinitive of the main verb.

may remain impartial. Recovering this attitude is therefore a pragmatic task. A hearer will also deploy a pragmatic process when interpreting instances of so-called *berichtete Rede* ('reported speech'), in which reportative-subjunctive reported discourse lacks an explicit matrix clause, as in example (15). The tense of the second sentence is understood to be subordinate to the same matrix *verbum dicendi* as the subordinate clause of the first sentence:

- (15) *Er sagt, er sei krank. Er gehe morgen nicht in die Schule.*  
he says he is.S1 ill he goes.S1 tomorrow not to the school

'He says he is ill [and that] he isn't going to school tomorrow.'

The fact that '*er sagt*' (most likely) serves as the antecedent of '*er gehe morgen nicht in die Schule*' is not (semantically) encoded. Instead, identifying it as the antecedent is a pragmatic process.

Relevance theory, however, does not merely provide a framework within which semantic phenomena can be analyzed on the one hand, and pragmatic phenomena on the other. Rather, linguistically encoded meaning is seen to be both subservient to, and to control, pragmatic processes. Linguistically encoded meaning delivers conceptual representations which are developed via pragmatic processes into those representations which are (assumed to be) intended by the speaker, i.e. what is (assumed) to be meant; the latter representations include the implicatures of an utterance. What is the nature of these pragmatic processes? Relevance theory's central claim may be summarized as follows: a hearer is guided towards the speaker's intended meaning by his expectation that the speaker's utterance is optimally relevant, i.e., the utterance is expected to generate maximum meaning in return for minimum processing effort. The first plausible meaning the hearer recovers is thus expected to be the speaker's intended meaning.

Relevance theory recognizes that there is not merely a discrepancy between linguistically encoded meaning and the actual meaning which the speaker intends the hearer to recover: there is also a discrepancy between the linguistically encoded meaning and the proposition expressed. This phenomenon, which Carston terms the *linguistic underdeterminacy thesis* (2002: 15-93), is illustrated well by example (15) above. The linguistically encoded meaning, which tells us that a male says that a male is ill and that somebody says that a male is not going to the school on the day after the proposition is uttered, must be developed via pragmatic inference into the proposition expressed. For instance, referents must be identified for all three

instances of *er*, the precise day denoted by the temporal deictic adverbial *morgen* must be identified and even *in die Schule gehen* must be given a specific interpretation. The linguistically encoded meaning corresponds to 'go to the school', but this is a set phrase which like English 'go to school' refers to what children do every weekday morning.

Now, if linguistic communication involved merely coding and decoding (we have in mind the pure form of the code model of communication, propounded by Aristotle right up to the modern semioticians) then hearers could be certain that the meaning they recover is the same as that conveyed by speakers. But in view of the above considerations, according to which pragmatic inference plays a considerable role in not just developing the proposition expressed into what is meant but also in developing linguistically encoded meaning into the proposition expressed, hearers do not have the benefit of this certainty. Instead, a crucial role is played in utterance comprehension by our innate ability to attribute intentions to others, in other words to use linguistic and non-linguistic clues in order to *metarepresent* the meanings that speakers (likely) intend.

Sperber (1994) describes three increasingly sophisticated stages in pragmatic development which each require an additional layer of metarepresentation. The first stage is that of the Naively Optimistic hearer (1994: 189-191), who takes utterances at face-value and assumes that the first acceptable interpretation of an utterance he recovers is the intended one. Concluding that this interpretation is that which the speaker intends involves a 'second-order meta-representational attribution of a first-order meta-representational intention' (1994: 192). The second stage is that of the Cautiously Optimistic hearer, (1994: 191-194), who assumes that the speaker is 'benevolent, but not necessarily competent' (1994: 192). In other words, such hearers understand that speakers sometimes unintentionally do not quite say what they mean: speakers often make slips of the tongue, for example. The Cautiously Optimistic hearer will therefore recover what he assumes to be the speaker's intended meaning by metarepresenting what the speaker is likely to have meant: here, '[...] second-order meta-representations may serve not just as conclusions, but also as premises' (1994: 192). The final stage is that where the hearer deploys the strategy of Sophisticated Understanding (1994: 194-196), whereby '[...] the speaker is not assumed to be benevolent or competent. She is merely assumed to intend to seem benevolent and competent' (1994: 196). In her account of Sperber (1994), Wilson (1999) uses lying as an example to illustrate Sophisticated Understanding:

Using the strategy of Sophisticated Understanding, [the hearer] may be able to understand [the speaker's] meaning even if he knows she is lying, by asking himself under what interpretation *she might have thought she would think* her utterance was relevant enough. In identifying the intended interpretation, he therefore has to metarepresent [the speaker's] thoughts about her thoughts.

(Wilson 1999: 138-139)

Significantly, relevance theory has been employed substantially in recent years to investigate phenomena which relate to reported discourse. Reported discourse is viewed in relevance theory as involving a type of metarepresentation, but not the metarepresentation of other people's intentions; rather it involves metarepresentation in the sense that '[...] the communicated information (the 'message') itself contains a metarepresentational element, which is intended to be recognised as such' (Noh 2000: 4). More specifically, varieties of reported discourse such as indirect speech (but not direct speech, see Chapter 3 section 3.4.2) are examples of a type of metarepresentational language known as *interpretive use*, which is defined by Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 228-229) as language which represents '[...] some other representation which also has a propositional form – a thought, for instance – in virtue of a resemblance between the two propositional forms'. Relevance theorists have analyzed linguistic expressions in some languages which serve to make explicit that an utterance is to be understood as an instance of interpretive use, for example the Japanese particle *tte* (Itani 1991, 1998) and Sissala *ré* (Blass 1988, 1989). These interpretive use markers have in common the property that, like the German reportative subjunctive, they are compatible with any interpretive stance that the reporter may imply contextually towards the attributed proposition. The analysis which we shall provide for the German reportative subjunctive will proceed along the lines of those suggested for these particles.

## 1.7 Overview of the thesis and research questions

The first half of Chapter 2 will constitute a detailed overview of the use of the German reportative subjunctive in indirect speech, paying attention to its form, the use of the tenses that it is capable of forming and its function. At the end of the first half we shall pause and consider those phenomena for which in our view a fully adequate analysis of the reportative subjunctive should account. These will form the basis of the questions which we shall seek to address in Chapters 4 and 5. We provide an overview of these questions over the next few paragraphs.

The first question will concern the precise nature of the German reportative subjunctive and query why its occurrence is largely restricted to indirect speech.

The second question will concern some of the types of verb under which the German reportative subjunctive may be embedded. We shall suggest that *verba dicendi* which introduce indirect speech with a reportative subjunctive are invariably understood non-factively. This being the case, how do we account for the fact that the subjunctive may be embedded under some essentially *factive* verbs? These factive verbs include verbs which report behaviours, such as *kritisieren* ('criticize') and verbs of emotional attitude such as *bedauern* ('regret').

There is a group of verbs in the subordinate clause of which, for reasons which we shall elucidate, the German reportative subjunctive is at first glance a little unexpected. This group is made up of verbs such as *bestreiten* and *verneinen*, each of which corresponds (though each with its own nuance) to the English verb 'deny'. Thus the third question to which we shall attempt to provide an answer over the course of this study will concern the use of the German reportative subjunctive in clauses that are subordinate to verbs of denial. Can we identify a common principle at work which accounts for the use of the subjunctive not only in clauses subordinate to conventional *verba dicendi* such as *sagen*, but also in clauses subordinate to verbs of denial?

In Chapter 2 we shall also discuss cases of so-called *berichtete Rede* ('reported speech'), mentioned briefly above. We shall suggest that the matrix clause to which an instance of reported speech is subordinate is not always as easily recovered from the preceding discourse as it is in example (15). Thus, as our fourth question, we shall enquire how the hearer of reported speech identifies the relevant matrix clause under which it needs to be understood to be embedded.

Our final question will concern the notion that the German reportative subjunctive is compatible with any interpretive stance held by the reporter towards the reported proposition. Our analysis will additionally suggest the mechanism by which the hearer recovers the reporter's intended interpretation.

In the second half of Chapter 2 we shall review existing accounts of the German reportative subjunctive and assess the extent to which they provide satisfactory answers to the above questions.

Chapter 3 will be devoted to an overview of relevance theory, and we shall consider the cognitive and communicative principles of relevance as well as the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure. We shall pay special attention to specific linguistic items which aid the hearer in his recovery of the speaker's intended meaning. Such linguistic items, which include discourse markers such as

'but' and 'nevertheless' are said to encode *procedural* meaning (Blakemore 1987, 1992, 2002, 2004; Wilson and Sperber 1993). We shall also consider interpretive use in detail and show how the Japanese and Sissala particles *tte* and *rɛ* encode procedural meaning since they cut down the amount of processing effort that the hearer must invest in inferring that an utterance is to be understood interpretively. The chapter will end with a consideration of some of the devices German uses in order to mark instances of interpretive use.

In the first half of Chapter 4 we shall attempt to answer the first and second questions mentioned above. We shall suggest that the German reportative subjunctive *can*, like Japanese *tte* and Sissala *rɛ*, be analyzed as a marker of interpretive use, albeit one restricted to a specific type of interpretive use: indirect (and reported) speech. We shall propose that the restriction of the reportative subjunctive to indirect speech, in which it may be embedded under certain factive verbs but not others, can be attributed to a specific procedural feature which the reportative subjunctive possesses. This feature ensures that an utterance with the syntactic structure of indirect speech is understood to conform to a specific *prototype* of indirect speech. In the second half of Chapter 4 we shall investigate the role of this feature, alongside that of the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure, in prompting the hearer to recover inferentially the matrix clause to which an instance of reported speech is understood to be subordinate. Thus a solution to our fourth question will be proposed.

Our concern in Chapter 5 will be our fifth question: how relevance theory accounts for the hearer's inferential recovery of the interpretive stance which the reporter holds towards the reported utterance. When investigating such attitudes, it is necessary to understand precisely what is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. We shall argue that in some cases it is the embedded proposition alone which is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject, whilst in other cases the matrix *verbum dicendi* also reports part of the original utterance. Our argument will rely to some extent on the relevance-theoretic distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts, so some space will be devoted to a discussion of these types of speech act. In the second half of the chapter we shall consider the attitudes which are contextually implied when the speech acts of concluding (*schließen*), criticizing (*kritisieren*), guaranteeing (*garantieren*) and agreeing (*zustimmen*) are reported. The chapter will end with a consideration of the fact that the reportative subjunctive may be embedded under verbs of denial such as *bestreiten* and *verneinen*. We shall suggest that such cases may be analyzed in the same terms as the report of the speech acts of guaranteeing and agreeing.

In the conclusion (Chapter 6) we shall summarize our findings of this study and make suggestions for further research. In doing so we shall make hypotheses regarding how our insights regarding the import of the reportative subjunctive can be applied to the report of interrogatives and imperatives, and consider other issues such as the implications of our findings for cases of indirect speech where the *verbum dicendi* is negated. We shall additionally use insights from this study in order to suggest a fundamental difference between cases of reported discourse marked as such by a discourse representative adverbial (see example (1a)) or a *wie*-clause (example (16) below) where the finite verb is an indicative form and similar cases where a reportative-subjunctive form is employed:

(16) Wie die Thurgauer Polizei mitteilt, **schossen** die Jugendlichen  
 as the Thurgau police informed shot.IND the youths

*aus Langweile und Übermut auf die vorbeigehende Frau.*  
 out of boredom and mischief on the passing woman

‘As Thurgau police reported, the youths shot at the passing woman out of boredom and mischief.’

(SZ 1997)

All these hypotheses may, in our view, form the basis of further research.

### 1.8 The corpus

The corpus of texts from which the examples analyzed in Chapter 5 are taken was compiled using COSMAS II of the Institut für Deutsche Sprache, Mannheim, which is the largest corpus of German texts in existence. A series of selective searches were performed to find examples of indirect speech with an embedded subjunctive so that not only the grammatical/syntactic form could be investigated but also the contextual features that attended each occurrence. For each of the verbs *schließen*, *kritisieren*, *garantieren* and *zustimmen*, COSMAS II was used to find 200 texts, each of which contained one example of the *verbum dicendi* in question. In the case of verbs of denial, a single search was carried out for 200 texts, each of which contained one example of one of *ableugnen*, *abstreiten*, *bestreiten*, *dementieren*, *leugnen* and *verneinen* accompanied by the subordinating conjunction *dass*. Whilst

*schließen*, *kritisieren*, *garantieren* and *zustimmen* occur both with and without *dass* when they introduce indirect speech, verbs of denial occur almost invariably with *dass*. The total size of the corpus compiled was 186,745 words, the total number of texts 1000 and the average length of texts was 187 words.

A difficulty was that most of these verbs occur in indirect-speech constructions of the type which is of interest to us, i.e. with an embedded subjunctive, only in a minority of cases. For example the verb *kritisieren* frequently governs a subordinate clause with an indicative finite verb, as in (17), it may accompany direct speech (18), and often takes a nominal direct object, as in (19):

- (17) *Die SP kritisiert, dass dafür Geld vorhanden war, für die vorgeschlagene Schulstarthilfe aber nicht.*  
 the SP criticizes that for that money available was.IND for the proposed aid for children starting school but not

‘The SP criticizes that money was available for that, but not for the proposed aid for children starting school.’

(*Niederösterreichische Nachrichten*: 06.10.2009)

- (18) *"Für mich ist die Haltung des Gremiums oft nicht erkennbar", kritisierte er.*  
 for me is the position of the committee often not recognisable criticized he

‘He made the criticism that “for me the position of the committee is often not recognizable”.’

(*Rhein-Zeitung*: 24.01.1997)

- (19) *Doch auch inhaltlich kann man den Plan kritisieren.*  
 but also in terms of contents can one the plan criticize

‘But one can also criticize the plan in terms of its contents.’

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 14.04.2011)

Therefore after the corpus had been compiled it was necessary to discard those examples which were not accompanied by a subjunctive embedded clause and thus could not be considered to be examples of the type of indirect speech which is of interest to us. Other real-life examples used in this study, particularly in Chapters 2 and 4, are taken from the original COSMAS 186,745-word corpus, i.e. before examples such as (17) to (19) had been removed.

The publications which the texts in the corpus come from are *St. Galler Tagblatt*, *Braunschweiger Zeitung*, *Burgenländische Volkszeitung*, *Hannoversche Allgemeine*, *Hamburger Morgenpost*, *Berliner Morgenpost*, *Mannheimer Morgen*, *Niederösterreichische Nachrichten*, *Nürnberger Nachrichten*, *Die Presse*, *Rhein-Zeitung* and *Die Südostschweiz*. They all date from the period 1990 to 2011. The insights of this study thus relate principally to the use of the reportative subjunctive in media texts rather than to other types of discourse, such as spoken German.

### 1.9 Some further preliminary considerations

The reader is not assumed to be familiar with the German language to any great degree and therefore instances of German are either translated (in the case of quotations from scholarly texts) or both glossed and provided with a back translation (in the case of examples of German in use). Glossing has been kept simple: the morphological form of words is indicated only in the case of subjunctive and indicative forms (marked S1, S2 or IND). Back translations are not intended to be elegant: they aim merely at giving the sense of the German original and may at times read as slightly unidiomatic English. In each chapter the meaning of German words used in the text is provided in brackets only on the first occasion when they occur.

German separable verbs present a difficulty, since the denotation of such a verb is often different from the meaning of the constituent root and separable prefix. Take the following examples which involve the verb *ausschließen* ('to exclude' or 'to rule out'):

(20a) *Ich schließe nicht aus, dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte.*

'I do not rule out the possibility that there could be difficulties.'

(20b) *Dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte, bleibt nicht ausgeschlossen.*

'That there could be difficulties is still not impossible.'

Now the basic meaning of the root *schließen* is 'conclude', whilst that of the separable prefix *aus* is 'out'. Thus (20a) could be glossed as (20c):

(20c) *Ich schließe nicht aus, dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte.*  
I conclude not out that it to difficulties come could

This means that in order to be consistent we would have to gloss (20b) as (20d):

(20d) *Dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte, bleibt nicht*  
that it to difficulties come could remains not

*ausgeschlossen.*

out-concluded

But in view of the fact that *ausgeschlossen* here means 'excluded' or 'ruled out', the glossing in (20d) is awkward. Our solution is to gloss cases of separable verbs where the root and prefix are written together with the denotation, and in cases where the root and prefix are separated the root is glossed with the denotation and the separable prefix is glossed SP. Hence (20a) is glossed as (20e) and (20b) as (20f):

(20e) *Ich schließe nicht aus, dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte.*  
I exclude not SP that it to difficulties come could

(20f) *Dass es zu Schwierigkeiten kommen könnte, bleibt nicht*  
that it to difficulties come could remains not

*ausgeschlossen.*

excluded

Our definition of 'presupposition' provided in section 1.4 above is in bold, and giving definitions in bold is a convention which we shall follow throughout this study. A further convention that we follow is one used by Sperber and Wilson (1986/95): we shall assume that the speaker of an utterance is female and the hearer male. This convention, however, is not always followed in citations from other works when quoted verbatim.

# The German reportative subjunctive: Form and function

## 2.1 Introduction

Before we embark on a relevance-theoretic analysis of the German reportative subjunctive it is necessary for us to give a thorough description of the rules and tendencies which characterize its use in indirect speech. Our task in the first half of this chapter (section 2.2) will be to provide such a description. At the end of this section we shall take stock and identify those phenomena of the German reportative subjunctive for which we would expect an adequate analysis of it to account. These phenomena will be presented as five research questions, proposing a solution to which within the relevance-theoretic framework will form the focus of Chapters 4 and 5. In the second half of this chapter (section 2.3) we shall provide a survey of some existing approaches to the reportative subjunctive, and shall assess the adequacy of each analysis against the extent to which it accounts for the various phenomena described at the end of section 2.2.

## 2.2 The subjunctive in German indirect speech

### 2.2.1 *Subjunctive 1, subjunctive 2 and their formation*

The German language has a special subjunctive conjugation whose endings resemble those of the present indicative. The endings of both verb forms are presented in the following table:

	ind.	subj.
<i>ich</i>	-e	-e
<i>du</i>	-(e)st	-est
<i>er/sie/es</i>	-(e)t	-e
<i>wir</i>	-en	-en
<i>ihr</i>	-(e)t	-et
<i>Sie</i>	-en	-en
<i>sie</i>	-en	-en

**Table 1: The endings of the non-past indicative and subjunctive**

Adding the subjunctive endings to the stem of the present indicative yields the form to which we refer as S1 (subjunctive 1), whilst adding the same endings to the stem of the imperfect indicative results in S2 (subjunctive 2).

Due to the similarity between the endings of the subjunctive and those of the present-indicative conjugations, there is a large amount of syncretism between S1 and present-indicative forms. This is particularly the case with verbs such as *finden* ('find'), which have the ending *-est* in the second-person singular and *-et* in the second-person plural in both the present indicative and S1. Consequently these verbs have just one unambiguous S1 form: the third-person singular (unambiguous forms are in bold):

	ind.	S1
<i>ich</i>	<i>finde</i>	<i>finde</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>findest</i>	<i>findest</i>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>findet</i>	<b><i>finde</i></b>
<i>wir</i>	<i>finden</i>	<i>finden</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>findet</i>	<i>findet</i>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>finden</i>	<i>finden</i>
<i>sie</i>	<i>finden</i>	<i>finden</i>

**Table 2: *Finden* in the non-past indicative and S1**

There is a group of verbs that end in *-et* in the second-person plural present indicative and S1 and undergo a vowel change in the second and third-person singular. As a result they have unambiguous S1 forms in just these latter two persons. Such verbs are *raten* ('guess') and *werden* ('will'/'become'). We use *werden* as an example:

	ind.	S1
<i>ich</i>	<i>werde</i>	<i>werde</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>wirst</i>	<b><i>werdest</i></b>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>wird</i>	<b><i>werde</i></b>
<i>wir</i>	<i>werden</i>	<i>werden</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>werdet</i>	<i>werdet</i>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>werden</i>	<i>werden</i>
<i>sie</i>	<i>werden</i>	<i>werden</i>

**Table 3: *Werden* in the non-past indicative and S1**

All verbs with three unambiguous forms have the ending *-t* in the second-person plural indicative but *-et* in the corresponding S1 form. They can be divided into two groups: those verbs such as *fahren* ('go' (by transport)) and *geben* ('give') which undergo a vowel change in the second and third-person singular indicative (*-a- → -ä-* and *-e- → -i-* respectively), and those such as *haben* ('have') and *schreiben* ('write') which do not. These verbs have unambiguous S1 forms in the second- and third-persons singular and the second-person plural. We give *geben* and *schreiben* as examples:

	<u><i>geben</i></u>		<u><i>schreiben</i></u>	
	ind.	S1	ind.	S1
<i>ich</i>	<i>gebe</i>	<i>gebe</i>	<i>schreibe</i>	<i>schreibe</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>gibst</i>	<b><i>gebest</i></b>	<i>schreibst</i>	<b><i>schreibest</i></b>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>gibt</i>	<b><i>gebe</i></b>	<i>schreibt</i>	<b><i>schreibe</i></b>
<i>wir</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>gebt</i>	<b><i>gebet</i></b>	<i>schreibt</i>	<b><i>schreibet</i></b>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>
<i>sie</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>geben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>	<i>schreiben</i>

**Table 4: *Geben* and *schreiben* in the non-past indicative and S1**

A total of seven verbs have unambiguous S1 forms in four persons. These are the six modal verbs *dürfen* ('be allowed to'), *können* ('can'), *mögen* ('may'), *müssen* ('must'), *sollen* ('should') and *wollen* ('want'), plus *wissen* ('know'), which have unambiguous forms throughout the singular and in the second-person plural. These verbs are characterized by a vowel change in the three singular persons in the indicative. *Dürfen* will serve to illustrate this:

	ind.	S1
<i>ich</i>	<i>darf</i>	<b><i>dürfe</i></b>
<i>du</i>	<i>darfst</i>	<b><i>dürfest</i></b>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>darf</i>	<b><i>dürfe</i></b>
<i>wir</i>	<i>dürfen</i>	<i>dürfen</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>dürft</i>	<b><i>dürfet</i></b>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>dürfen</i>	<i>dürfen</i>
<i>sie</i>	<i>dürfen</i>	<i>dürfen</i>

**Table 5: *Dürfen* in the non-past indicative and S1**

One verb has no ambiguous S1 forms: *sein* ('be'): this is to be attributed to the fact that its S1 forms are based on the stem *sei-* rather than the stem of the present indicative:

	ind.	S1
<i>ich</i>	<i>bin</i>	<b><i>sei</i></b>
<i>du</i>	<i>bist</i>	<b><i>sei(e)st</i></b>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>ist</i>	<b><i>sei</i></b>
<i>wir</i>	<i>sind</i>	<b><i>seien</i></b>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>seid</i>	<b><i>seiet</i></b>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>sind</i>	<b><i>seien</i></b>
<i>sie</i>	<i>sind</i>	<b><i>seien</i></b>

**Table 6: *Sein* in the non-past indicative and S1**

The S2 conjugation of weak (i.e. regular) verbs displays complete syncretism with that of the imperfect tense. The S2 conjugation of strong (i.e. irregular) verbs often differs from that of the imperfect tense in terms of a vowel change which affects the stem, and often this vowel change necessitates the addition of an umlaut in writing. The S2 of *machen* ('do' or 'make') (a weak verb), *kommen* ('come') (a strong verb) and the auxiliaries *haben* ('have') *sein* and *werden* are conjugated as follows:

	<u>machen</u>	<u>kommen</u>	<u>haben</u>	<u>sein</u>	<u>werden</u>
<i>ich</i>	<i>machte</i>	<i>käme</i>	<i>hätte</i>	<i>wäre</i>	<i>würde</i>
<i>du</i>	<i>machtetest</i>	<i>kämeest</i>	<i>hättest</i>	<i>wärest</i>	<i>würdest</i>
<i>er/sie/es</i>	<i>machte</i>	<i>käme</i>	<i>hätte</i>	<i>wäre</i>	<i>würde</i>
<i>wir</i>	<i>machten</i>	<i>kämen</i>	<i>hätten</i>	<i>wären</i>	<i>würden</i>
<i>ihr</i>	<i>machtet</i>	<i>kämet</i>	<i>hättet</i>	<i>wäret</i>	<i>würdet</i>
<i>Sie</i>	<i>machten</i>	<i>kämen</i>	<i>hätten</i>	<i>wären</i>	<i>würden</i>
<i>sie</i>	<i>machten</i>	<i>kämen</i>	<i>hätten</i>	<i>wären</i>	<i>würden</i>

**Table 7: S2 forms of *machen*, *kommen*, *haben*, *sein* and *werden*<sup>8</sup>**

In Chapter 1 we mentioned that S1 and S2 do not differ in terms of the tenses which they may express: the past, present and future tenses may be formed from both types of subjunctive. The tenses of the reportative subjunctive will form the focus of the next section. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between the tense of an original utterance and that employed in the reported version.

### 2.2.2 *The tenses of the subjunctive in indirect speech.*

German grammars (e.g. Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 535-537) and Durrell (2011: 325)) state that when the reportative subjunctive is used in indirect speech, its tense will correspond to that used in the original utterance. The reason for this is well-known: the tenses of the reportative subjunctive are understood in relation to the time at which the original utterance was produced. In this connection, Zifonun et al. (1997) describe the workings of the tenses of the reportative subjunctive as follows:

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<sup>8</sup> The stems of the corresponding imperfect-indicative forms of *kommen*, *haben*, *sein* and *werden* are *kam-*, *hatte-*, *war-* and *wurde-* respectively.

It is not the time at which an utterance is reported by a speaker or writer which forms the reference point for the temporal interpretation [of a subjunctive form], but the time at which the original utterance was produced [...]. This reported time  $t'$  (= the time at which the action denoted by the reporting verb takes place) takes over the role of the temporal reference point for the indirect speech from [...]  $t_0$  (= the time of reporting). This means that  $t'$ , the tense of the verb in the subjunctive, takes  $t'$  as its reference point.<sup>9</sup>

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1778)

In the remainder of this study the temporal deictic centre, or time coordinate, of the matrix (reporting) context will be referred to as  $t^0$ , and that to which the reportative subjunctive's tenses are understood to be relative will be referred to as  $t^1$ .

Because its tenses are understood in relation to the same temporal deictic centre to which the original speaker wished them to be understood to be relative, a clause whose finite verb is a reportative-subjunctive form needs to be subordinate to a *verbum dicendi*.<sup>10</sup> The tense of this verb is needed to fix  $t^1$  (the time of the original utterance) in time such that the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$  (the time of reporting) is explicit. In the first example below, the present tense of the original utterance (1a) is reproduced in the reported version with a corresponding present-tense subjunctive form (1b). (1a) is imagined to have been uttered in the past, so the past-tense *verbum dicendi* in (1b) locates  $t^1$ , to which the tense of the subjunctive form is understood to be relative ( $t^0$  of the original utterance (1a)), at a time anterior to  $t^0$  of the matrix context:

(1a) [uttered in the past]

*Ich komme morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
I arrive.IND tomorrow at ten o'clock SP

'I will arrive at ten o'clock tomorrow.'

(1b) *Er sagte, er komme morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
he said he arrives.S1 tomorrow at ten o'clock SP.

'He said he would arrive at ten o'clock tomorrow.'

<sup>9</sup> Als Bezugszeit der temporalen Interpretation gilt nicht die **Referatzeit**, also die Sprechzeit des aktuellen Sprechers/Schreibers, sondern die Ereigniszeit der referierten Rede [...]. Diese referierte Zeit  $t'$  (=Ereigniszeit des referatanzeigenden Verbs) übernimmt statt [...]  $t_0$  (=Referatzeit) die Rolle des temporalen Bezugspunktes für die indirekte Redewiedergabe, das heißt,  $t'$ , das Tempus des Verbs im Konjunktiv, wird auf  $t'$  bezogen.

<sup>10</sup> Throughout this study we use 'verbum dicendi' as an umbrella term to refer to all the types of verb under which the German reportative subjunctive may be embedded felicitously.

Example (2a) has a perfect-tense form, *hat geschrieben* ('has written' or 'wrote'). This is a periphrastic form, composed of the present-tense indicative of *haben* or *sein* followed by the past participle. The corresponding S1 form *habe geschrieben* is employed in the reported version, (2b). Since (2a) is imagined to be uttered in the future, the future-tense verbum dicendi in (2b) locates  $t^1$  at a time posterior to  $t^0$ :

(2a) [uttered in the future]

*Meine Mutter hat die Urlaubspläne berücksichtigt*  
 my mother has.IND the holiday plans considered.

'My mother has considered the holiday plans.'

(2b) *Sie wird hoffentlich schreiben, ihre Mutter habe die*  
 she will hopefully write her mother has.S1 the

*Urlaubspläne berücksichtigt.*  
 holiday plans considered

'She will hopefully write and say that her mother has considered the holiday plans.'

In (3a), the future tense form *wirst lesen* ('(you) will read') is also periphrastic: here the modal verb *werden* is inflected for the present tense indicative and accompanied by the infinitive. The reported version (3b) contains the corresponding S1 *werde lesen*. This present-tense verbum dicendi indicates that  $t^1$  is coterminous with  $t^0$ :

(3a) [uttered in the present]

*Wirst du das Buch lesen?*  
 will.IND you the book read

'Will you read the book?'

(3b) *Sie fragt ihn, ob er das Buch lesen werde.*  
 she asks him whether he the book read will.S1

'She asks him whether he will read the book.'

In German direct discourse, it is possible to use the present tense with past-time reference as an ‘historic present’. However, since the tense of the *verbum dicendi* locates  $t^1$  at a specific time relative to  $t^0$ , such instances of temporal deictic projection in an original utterance cannot be reproduced in the reported version. In example (4a), in spite of the time adverbial *49 v. Chr.* (‘49 B.C.’) which locates the time of the action in the distant past, the verb is in the present tense (example adapted from Zifonun et al. (1997: 1778)):

- (4a) *Im Jahre 49 v. Chr. überschreitet Caesar den Rubikon.*  
 in the year 49 B.C. crosses.IND Caesar the Rubicon

‘In 49 B.C. Caesar crosses the Rubicon.’

However, if the subjunctive is used in a report of this utterance, then a perfect-subjunctive form must be employed in the embedded clause:

- (4b) *In diesem Werk wird berichtet, dass Caesar im Jahre 49 v. Chr. den Rubikon überschritten habe.*  
 in this work becomes reported that Caesar in the year 49 B.C. the Rubicon crossed has.S1

‘In this work it is reported that Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 B.C.’

If a present-subjunctive form (which corresponds to the tense of the original utterance) were used, then this present tense would be understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed in time by the present-tense matrix *verbum dicendi*. This would have the effect of bringing this historical event into the time of reporting, and this time would clash with the time adverbial *im Jahre 49 v. Chr.*

The fact that an historic present in direct discourse cannot be reproduced in the reported version can be said to constitute an exception to the (pedagogically motivated) rule which states that the same tense must be employed in indirect speech as was used in the original utterance. There are two other situations where the tense employed in indirect speech does not correspond exactly to that of the original when the subjunctive is used. The first exception is a consequence of the fact that finite subjunctive forms inflect only for non-past tense. Since there is no synthetic subjunctive form with a past-tense meaning, the perfect subjunctive,

formed from the subjunctive of *haben* or *sein* as appropriate, followed by the past participle is used suppletively in indirect speech to report not only an original perfect tense, but also an original imperfect or pluperfect tense. Thus both (5a) and (5b) may be reported as (5c):

(5a) *Ich las das Buch.*  
I read.IND the book

‘I read the book.’

(5b) *Ich hatte das Buch gelesen.*  
I had.IND das book read

‘I had read the book.’

(5c) *Er sagte, er habe das Buch gelesen.*  
he said he has.S1 the book read

‘He said he had read the book.’

However, in spite of the fact that a single subjunctive tense corresponds to three indicative tenses, the subjunctive is not necessarily to be seen as temporally impoverished vis-à-vis the indicative in terms of the tenses that it is capable of forming.

The German indicative perfect has two functions. Firstly, as in English, it is employed for an action which took place in the past but is still of relevance at  $t^0$ . Secondly, it can be used in exactly the same way as the (simple) past: to refer to past actions which do not have relevance to the present. According to Durrell (2011: 287) this use is more common in speech than in writing, in which latter the past is more common. The subjunctive perfect corresponds to the indicative perfect and as such, significantly, is capable of functioning as both a perfect and as a past-tense form. Furthermore, it would be a little short-sighted to claim that the subjunctive is incapable of forming a pluperfect tense. Durrell (2011: 325) draws attention to the fact that ‘[c]omplex pluperfect forms are sometimes used if the original direct speech was in the pluperfect, e.g: *Sie sagte, sie habe es nicht gewusst gehabt* [‘She said she had not known’], although he concedes that ‘[s]uch constructions are not considered acceptable’. Engel (1996: 421) suggests that *Sie hatte das Buch gekauft*

(‘She had bought the book’) may appear in indirect speech as *Sie **habe** das Buch gekauft gehabt*, but makes no comment regarding its acceptability in standard German. For Zifonun et al. (1997: 1780) ‘Past-in-the-past can be expressed only in the colloquial language of certain regions, where highly complex forms are used’.<sup>11</sup>

The second situation where the tense used in indirect speech is not (necessarily) the same as that employed in the original utterance is as follows. Engel (1996: 421) and Durrell (2011: 325) observe that if an original present tense refers to the future, then it is common for the future subjunctive (with *werden*) to be used when transposing this into indirect speech. Durrell’s example (2011: 325), whereby (6a) may be reported as either (6b) or (6c), is as follows:

(6a) *Sie **heiratet** bald.*  
 she marries.IND soon

‘She will be getting married soon.’

(6b) *Sie sagte, sie **heirate** bald.*  
 she said she marries.S1 soon

‘She said she would be getting married soon.’

(6c) *Sie sagte, sie **werde** bald heiraten.*  
 she said she will.S1 soon marry

However, for Helbig and Buscha the opposite may be the case: an original future-tense utterance which includes *werden* may be reported without *werden*. Helbig and Buscha’s (1998: 199) example, whereby (7a) may be reported as (7b), is the following:

(7a) *Ich **werde** den Roman in nächster Zeit lesen.*  
 I will.IND the novel in nearest time read

‘I will read the novel soon.’

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<sup>11</sup> *Mit den nur in regionaler Umgangssprache gebräuchlichen superkomponierten Formen kann Vorvergangenheit ausgedrückt werden.*

(7b) *Sie hat mir gesagt, sie lese den Roman in nächster Zeit.*  
she has me said she reads.S1 the novel in nearest time

‘She told me she would read the novel soon.’

All the examples of the subjunctive in indirect speech given so far have used S1. In the next section we shall consider some aspects of the S1-vs.-S2 opposition in indirect speech.

### 2.2.3 Subjunctive 1 or subjunctive 2 in indirect speech?

German grammars assert that S1 is used to mark indirect speech whenever its form is morphologically distinct from that of the present indicative. Thus in all the examples considered above, the S1 form is used because it is distinct from the corresponding indicative form: the S1 desinence is -e, whilst that of the indicative is -t.

If the S1 form is identical with that of the present indicative, then the so-called ‘replacement rule’ is often applied (Hentschel and Weydt 1994: 111; Engel 1996: 419; Zifonun et al. 1997: 1773; Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 542; Durrell 2011: 325-326; Whittle et al 2011: 122), whereby the corresponding S2 form, which always differs from the present indicative, is substituted.<sup>12</sup> Thus, since the first-person plural S1 form *kommen* (‘come’) is identical with that of the indicative, the S2 form *kämen* is often used in indirect speech:

(8a) *Wir kommen morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
we arrive.IND tomorrow at ten o'clock SP

‘We’ll arrive at ten o’clock tomorrow.’

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<sup>12</sup> Helbig and Buscha (1998: 196) state that there are no firm rules which dictate whether an S1 or S2 form should be chosen in a given situation, and draw attention to the fact that the replacement rule is not always adhered to. Jäger (1971: 130) suggests that the replacement rule is problematic, and goes on to remark (1971: 136) that ‘[i]f an unambiguous S1 form can be formed, this does not mean that an S2 form would be superfluous; the absence of the possibility of forming an S1 form does not prove that S2 was chosen simply because of the ambivalence in form. (‘Kann eine eindeutige Konjunktiv-I-Form gebildet werden, so bedeutet das nicht, daß die Setzung des Konjunktiv II überflüssig wäre; das Nichtvorhandensein der Möglichkeit, einen Konjunktiv I zu bilden, ist kein Beweis dafür, daß der Konjunktiv II allein wegen der Ambivalenz der Form gewählt wurde.’)

(8b) *Sie sagten, sie kämen morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
they said they arrive.S2 tomorrow at ten o'clock SP

'They said they would arrive at ten o'clock tomorrow.'

The past and future tenses of S2 are formed in exactly the same way as those of S1, employing the S2 forms of *haben*, *sein* and *werden* as appropriate. (9d) may constitute a report of (9a), (9b) and (9c):

(9a) *Wir lasen das Buch.*  
we read.IND the book

'We read the book.'

(9b) *Wir haben das Buch gelesen.*  
we have.IND the book read

'We read/have read the book.'

(9c) *Wir hatten das Buch gelesen.*  
we had.IND the book read

'We had read the book.'

(9d) *Sie sagten, sie hätten das Buch gelesen.*  
they said they have.S2 the book read

'They said they had read the book.'

Likewise, (10b) may be understood as a report of (10a):

(10a) *Wir werden das Buch lesen.*  
we will.IND the book read

'We shall read the book.'

(10b) Sie sagten, sie **würden** das Buch lesen.  
 they said they will.S2 the book read

'They said they would read the book.'

German grammars agree that the replacement rule is also applied in the second-person plural since the equivalent S1 forms, although often distinct from the indicative, are rarely used (Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 542; Weinrich 2007: 259-260; Durrell 2011: 242). This also applies to the second-person singular forms (Eppert 1988: 88; Durrell 2011: 242). According to Fabricius-Hansen, however, the second-person singular S1 forms of *wissen* and the six modal verbs are used (2006: 542). Weinrich (2007: 290-295) essentially concurs, although according to him S2 forms tend to be substituted for the S1 forms of *dürfen* and *sollen* ('should') (*dürftest* and *solltest* instead of *dürfest* and *sollest* respectively).

#### 2.2.4 The würde construction

In the case of very many strong verbs the S2 form is considered to sound stilted and many are held to be obsolete. Examples are *beföhle* (from *befehlen* ('order')), *hülfe* (from *helfen* ('help')) and *verdürbe* (from *verderben* ('spoil')). Although such forms may be encountered in formal written German, they are avoided in speech and less formal registers. There is also a tendency to avoid the S2 forms of weak verbs due to the complete syncretism between the S2 and impresent-indicative forms. For example, as a result of the ambiguous S2 form the following has three possible interpretations outside a specific context if the *wenn*-clause is omitted:

(11) Die Schüler sagten, dass sie ihre Hausaufgaben **machten**,  
 the schoolchildren said that they their homework do.S2

(wenn sie genug Zeit hätten).  
 if they enough time have.S2<sup>13</sup>

(i) 'The schoolchildren said that they were doing their homework.' (if *machten* is understood as a S2 form)

<sup>13</sup> The occurrence of S2 in this *wenn*-clause has the function of a conditional.

- (ii) 'The schoolchildren said that they did their homework.' (if *machten* is understood as an impresent-indicative form)
- (iii) 'The schoolchildren said that they would do their homework (if they had enough time).' (if *machten* is understood as a S2 form with the force of a conditional)

According to the first interpretation (i), the S2 form *machten* has been employed in accordance with the replacement rule. It is therefore to be understood as non-past subjunctive. The second possibility (ii) is that *machten* is an imperfect indicative. But it can also be understood as a conditional (iii), which becomes the only possible interpretation only if the *wenn*-clause is added.

One way to avoid using an obsolete or ambiguous S2 form is to employ a periphrastic construction consisting of *würde* (the S2 of *werden*) and an infinitive. S2 functions chiefly as a conditional form and this is how it is most likely to be understood if the context provides no evidence that it is to be understood as a marker of indirect speech. Therefore the primary function of the *würde* construction may also be deemed to be that of a conditional. An example from Durrell (2011: 319):<sup>14</sup>

- (12) *Die Europäer wären erleichtert, wenn England wieder*  
 the Europeans would be relieved if England again

***austreten würde.***

pull out would

'The Europeans would be relieved if England pulled out again.'

However, like S2, the *würde* construction also often occurs in indirect speech, and for Engel (1996: 422), Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 547) and Durrell (2011: 327-328) this is frequent in two main circumstances: when the S2 form is the same as the imperfect indicative or if the S2 form is obsolete. For Helbig and Buscha (1998: 191-192) this happens if the S2 form is obsolete as well as in any case where a subjunctive form is the same as an indicative form (including the present indicative). In the following example, from Helbig and Buscha (1998: 191), the *würde* form has

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<sup>14</sup> In what follows we shall for the sake of simplicity gloss *würde* as 'would'.

been used because the S1 form (*leben* ('live')) falls together with the present indicative:

- (13) *Sie hat mir erzählt, ihre Eltern würden auf dem Land leben.*  
she has me told her parents would on the countryside live

'She told me her parents lived in the countryside.'

The following exemplifies the use of a *würde* construction in cases where the corresponding S2 form (*begänne* or *begönne*) is obsolete:

- (14a) *Wann beginnen die Konzerte?*  
when begin.IND the concerts?

'When do the concerts start?'

- (14b) *Sie fragte, wann die Konzerte beginnen würden.*  
she asked when the concerts begin would

'She asked when the concerts start.'

Although the *würde* construction as a replacement for obsolete and ambiguous S2 forms is frowned upon by purists, Helbig and Buscha point out that '[...] in the spoken language the preference for the *würde* form can be seen as a general tendency'<sup>15</sup> (1998: 192), whilst Fabricius-Hansen (2006) and Durrell (2011: 327) recognize its increasing significance in the written language:

In the spoken language this development has gone so far that one can view the *würde* construction as the normal means of forming the S2 'present tense' of non-modal and non-auxiliary verbs. This change is also taking place in the written language.<sup>16</sup>

(Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 547)

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<sup>15</sup> [...] [...] in der gesprochenen Sprache [ist] die Bevorzugung der *würde*-Form als eine generelle Tendenz zu sehen.

<sup>16</sup> Diese Entwicklung ist in der gesprochenen Sprache so weit vorangeschritten, dass man die *würde*-Konstruktion als die normale Realisierungsform des »Gegenwartstempus« im Konjunktiv II von Vollverben betrachten kann. [...] Die Entwicklung [...] [ist] auch in der Schriftsprache zu beobachten [...].

The literature indicates that there are a few restrictions on the use of S2 and *würde* forms. Firstly, verbs vary in terms of the extent to which their *würde* form is employed. The *würde* form of some verbs is almost never used; their S2 form is employed instead in both written and spoken German. German grammars agree that such S2 forms are *wäre* (from *sein*), *hätte* (from *haben*), *würde* (from *werden*) and those of the six modal auxiliaries. Weinrich (2007: 246) adds *brauchte* or *bräuchte* (from *brauchen* ('need')) to this list. According to Durrell (2011: 318) *käme*, *täte* (from *tun* ('do')) and *wüsste* (from *wissen*) are commonly heard in speech, as are their equivalents with *würde*. For Hentschel and Weydt (1994: 114) there are fixed expressions such as *Das würd' ich nicht behaupten wollen* ('I wouldn't want to claim that') in which modal verbs *do* occur in their *würde* form.

Durrell provides a list of verbs whose S2 forms and *würde* forms are 'roughly equally frequent in written German' (2011: 318):

infinitive	S2 form
<i>finden</i> ('find')	<i>fände</i>
<i>geben</i> ('give')	<i>gäbe</i>
<i>gehen</i> ('go')	<i>ginge</i>
<i>halten</i> ('hold')	<i>hielte</i>
<i>heißen</i> ('be called')	<i>hieße</i>
<i>kommen</i> ('come')	<i>käme</i>
<i>lassen</i> ('let')	<i>ließe</i>
<i>stehen</i> ('stand')	<i>stünde</i>
<i>tun</i> ('do')	<i>täte</i>
<i>wissen</i> ('know')	<i>wüsste</i>

**Table 8: Durrell's verbs whose S2 and *würde* forms are 'roughly equally frequent in written German'**

Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 547) essentially agrees with this list, although her text omits the S2 forms of *halten* and *heißen*. Weinrich's corresponding list includes the following verbs not mentioned by Durrell: *säße* (from *sitzen* ('sit')) *verstünde* (from *verstehen* ('understand')), *läge* (from *liegen* ('lie')) and *nähme* (from *nehmen* ('take')) (2007: 247).

The notion that the *würde* forms of *haben* and *sein* are hardly ever used entails our second restriction on the use of the construction in question: the

subjunctive perfect is not formed using *würde* in indirect speech. The following unacceptable example is from Helbig and Buscha (1996: 192):

- (15) ? *Er erzählte, er würde sie auf der Straße getroffen haben.*  
he told he would her on the street met have

‘He told me he met her in the street.’

Thirdly, Engel (1996: 424) draws our attention to the fact that the semantic properties of a verb can influence whether it can be used felicitously in its *würde* form in indirect speech. According to Engel, the *würde* construction is quite permissible in the case of verbs with perfective meaning. *Aufhören* (‘stop’) is such a verb:

- (16) *Sie schreibt, sie würde jetzt mit dem Rauchen aufhören.*  
she writes she would now with the smoking stop

‘She writes that she will stop smoking.’

However, durative verbs, such as *liegen* are less usually employed in indirect speech in their *würde* form:

- (17a) ? *Sie schreibt, sie würde seit drei Tagen im Bett liegen.*  
she writes she would since three days in the bed lie

‘She writes that she has been in bed for three days.’

With such verbs it would be more normal to employ an S1 form:

- (17b) *Sie schreibt, sie liege seit drei Tagen im Bett.*

Finally, Engel (1996) shows how the S2 form *möchte* (from *mögen*) is so strongly associated with the meaning ‘would like to’ that the *würde* form tends to be substituted in indirect speech:

The form *möchte* has to a large extent become independent of *mögen* in the course of historical development. Today it only rarely functions as the S2 of *mögen*;

essentially it has assumed the role of the present tense of *mögen*. Therefore one usually says *Möchtest du mitgehen* ('Would you like to come with us?') and not *Magst du mitgehen?* As a rule the S2 of *mögen* is formed using the *würde* construction.<sup>17</sup>

(Engel 1996: 422)

This is perhaps the place also to mention that in indirect speech *würde* tends to be used instead of *werde* in order to avoid such stylistically awkward combinations as *werden werde*. Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 545) gives the example:

(18a) *Er sagt, dass er später einmal Chefarzt werden würde.*  
he says that he later once chief physician become would

'He says that he will eventually become a chief physician.'

which is preferable to:

(18b) *Er sagte, dass er später einmal Chefarzt werden werde.*

although the latter is perfectly grammatical. However, the problem can be neatly resolved by leaving out *dass*:<sup>18</sup>

(18c) *Er sagte, er werde später einmal Chefarzt werden.*

### 2.2.5 'Unexpected' occurrences of subjunctive 2 in indirect speech

This section will be concerned with those occurrences of S2 in indirect speech where, according to the tendencies described in section 2.2.3 above, we would expect an S1 form. Thus we consider here instances of S2 even when a distinct S1 form exists. This usage is common in spoken German (Hentschel and Weydt 1994; Durrell 2011) where it is an alternative to the indicative, although, according to

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<sup>17</sup> *Die Form möchte hat sich allerdings im Laufe der geschichtlichen Entwicklung weitgehend verselbständigt. Heute fungiert sie nur selten noch als Konjunktiv II von mögen; im wesentlichen hat sie die Rolle der Präsensformen von mögen übernommen. Gewöhnlich sagt man also Möchtest du mitgehen? und nicht Magst du mitgehen? Der Konjunktiv II von mögen wird dann in der Regel durch die Umschreibung würde mögen wiedergegeben.*

<sup>18</sup> In German, verbs occur at the end of a clause introduced by a subordinating conjunction such as *dass* ('that'). If a subordinate clause is introduced by no subordinating conjunction, as in (18c), then the finite verb will be the second constituent of the clause, i.e. it will occupy the same position as in a main clause.

Durrell (2011: 327) '[...] it is often preferred when the main verb is in the past tense'.  
The following examples are from Durrell (2011: 327):

(19a) *Ich **komme** heute nicht.*  
I come.IND today not

'I won't be coming today.'

(19b) *Sie hat gesagt, sie **käme** heute nicht.*  
she has said she comes.S2 today not

'She said she wouldn't be coming today.'

(20a) *Ich **habe** es verstanden.*  
I have.IND it understood

'I understood it.'

(20b) *Sie hat gesagt, sie **hätte** es verstanden.*  
she has said she has.S2 it understood

'She said she understood it.'

(21a) *Ich **werde** den Brief noch heute schreiben.*  
I will.IND the letter still today write

'I will write the letter later today.'

(21b) *Sie hat gesagt, sie **würde** den Brief noch heute schreiben.*  
she has said she will.S2 the letter still today write

'She said she would write the letter later today.'

Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 542) and Durrell (2011: 327) both make reference to a significant inconsistency in literary texts in the application of the standard rules for subjunctive usage in indirect speech. Fabricius-Hansen, for example, remarks that:

[...] in this respect many writers behave in an extremely individual way. The way in which the reportative subjunctive is used has developed into a stylistic feature of specific genres and writers.<sup>19</sup>

(Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 542)

The following (from Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 542-543) exemplifies how in literary texts the interplay between S1 and S2 forms may be seen merely as a stylistic device; there is no reason for us to suggest that the preference for one verb form rather than another is semantically motivated.

(22) *Sie klopfte, Albrecht sah sie erst, als sie an seinem Bett stand.*  
she knocked Albrecht saw her only when she at his bed stood

[...] *Sie sagte, sie hätte nur Hallo sagen wollen. Sie käme*  
she said she has.S2 only hello say wanted she comes.S2

*gerade von Pete. [...] Ob sie etwas tun könne für ihn,*  
straight from Pete whether she something do can.S1 for him

*fragte Margarethe. Ob er etwas brauche. Ob sie*  
asked Margarethe whether he something needs.S1 whether she

*Manon etwas bestellen sollte.*  
Manon something order should.S2

‘She knocked, but Albrecht did not notice her until she was standing by his bed. She said she only wanted to say “hello” and that she said she had come straight from Pete. Margarethe asked if she could do anything for him. Whether he needed anything. Whether he wanted her to order anything for Manon.’

(M. Streeruwitz).

Not only does S2 sometimes occur in cases where an S1 form might be expected, as in (22) above, sometimes the indicative occurs in formal written German in places

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<sup>19</sup> [...] viele Autoren verhalten sich in diesem Bereich außerordentlich individualistisch. Die Verwendung des Indirektheitskonjunktivs hat sich in der Literatursprache zu einem genre- und autorenspezifischen Stilmittel entwickelt.

where the prescriptive tradition might call for a subjunctive. We shall consider such uses of the indicative in section 2.2.6.

### 2.2.6 *The indicative in German indirect speech*

There are a number of contexts where the indicative is commonly used in indirect speech. In colloquial German, the indicative is the norm in indirect speech (S1 and S2 in its replacement function are hardly ever employed) and so here the indicative mood is viewed as unmarked in indirect speech in spoken German. Importantly, '[...] the verb in indirect speech is usually in the tense of the original direct speech' (Durrell 2011: 328), a point also made by Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 521) who remarks that '[...] indicative tenses may be used as in the corresponding direct speech'.<sup>20</sup> In other words, indicative tenses in indirect speech are usually understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed relative to  $t^0$  by the matrix tense. The use of the indicative in indirect speech in spoken German is illustrated by the (b) examples below. In each case the tense of the matrix verbum dicendi fixes  $t^1$  in time in relation to  $t^0$ :

(23a) *Ich **komme** morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
I come.IND tomorrow at ten o'clock SP

'I will arrive at ten o'clock tomorrow.'

(23b) *Er sagte, er **kommt** morgen um zehn Uhr an.*  
he said he comes.IND tomorrow at ten o'clock SP

'He said he would arrive at ten o'clock tomorrow.'

(24a) *Meine Mutter **hat** die Urlaubspläne berücksichtigt*  
my mother has.IND the holiday plans considered.

'My mother has considered the holiday plans.'

---

<sup>20</sup> [...] *indikativische Tempora [können] wie in der entsprechenden direkten Rede gebraucht werden.*

(24b) Sie wird hoffentlich schreiben, ihre Mutter **hat** die  
she will hopefully write her mother has.IND the

*Urlaubspläne berücksichtigt.*

holiday plans considered

‘She will hopefully write and say that her mother has considered the holiday plans.’

(25a) **Wirst** du das Buch lesen?  
will.IND you the book read

‘Will you read the book?’

(25b) Sie fragt ihn, ob er das Buch lesen **wird**.  
she asks him whether he the book read will.IND

‘She asks him if he will read the book.’

However, it is also possible to apply a sequence-of-tense rule. Durrell (1991) remarks that:

[i]f the main verb is in the past tense, the verb in the subordinate clause is usually in the present (i.e. the tense of the original direct speech), but it may be in the past, with the tense shifted as in English.

(Durrell 1991: 314)

And Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 521) suggests the justification for a sequence-of-tense rule: ‘The simple past in the dependent clause is justified from the point of view of the reporter insofar as the action described took place in his past’.<sup>21</sup> Durrell’s example (26b) (1991: 314) is apparently to be understood as a report of an utterance which resembles (26a):

(26a) Ich **bin** zu weiteren Verhandlungen bereit.  
I am to further negotiations prepared

---

<sup>21</sup> *Das einfache Präteritum im abhängigen Satz ist aus der Sicht des referierenden Erzählers insofern berechtigt, als das beschriebene Geschehen in dessen Vergangenheit fällt.*

'I am prepared to enter into further negotiations.'

(26b) *Der Kanzler erklärte, dass er zu weiteren Verhandlungen bereit*  
der Chancellor declared that he to further negotiations prepared

**war.**

was

'The Chancellor declared that he was prepared to enter into further negotiations.'

The indicative is also common, even in written German, if indirect speech is introduced by the subordinating conjunction *dass* ('that'), '[h]owever if *dass* is omitted [...] then the subjunctive is regarded as obligatory in writing [...]' (Durrell 2011: 328). This rule likely exists in order to make explicit the distinction between direct and indirect speech, since otherwise, as Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004: 220) point out '[...] the lack of formal embedding causes an [...] ambiguity: the V2 clause might be interpreted as direct rather than indirect speech.'

According to Helbig and Buscha (1998: 196) and Durrell (2011: 328-329) it is normal to use the indicative when a first person is involved. Below is Durrell's example:

(27) *Er sagte ihr, von wo ich gekommen bin.*  
he said to her from where I come am

'He told her where I come from.'

Nevertheless, the following example from Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 533), in which the first-person singular pronoun is accompanied by an S1 form (*müsse*), demonstrates that this cannot be viewed as a hard and fast rule:

(28) *Ich habe gestern meiner Tochter gesagt, dass ich sie*  
I have yesterday my daughter said that I she

*leider enttäuschen müsse.*

unfortunately disappoint must.S1

‘Yesterday I told my daughter that I would unfortunately have to give her some disappointing news.’

According to Helbig and Buscha and Durrell, the first-person singular indicative form *muss* would be more usual in this example.

### 2.2.7 Reported speech

The instances of indirect speech considered so far have all been directly subordinate to a matrix verb of saying, thinking, or similar. However, German grammars and monographs on the subjunctive make a distinction between indirect speech (*indirekte Rede*) as discussed above and reported speech (*berichtete Rede*). Petrova describes reported speech as follows:

In the case of reported speech we are dealing with the fixed (obligatory) use of the subjunctive in a succession of indirect utterances which are dependent on an introductory verb, without having to repeat this verb in every sentence.<sup>22</sup>

(Petrova 2008: 136)

Therefore the introductory verb on which reported speech is dependent is supplied by the context. Example (29) illustrates what may be described as prototypical reported speech. The location in time of  $t^1$  relative to  $t^0$  needs to be made explicit. Therefore the reported speech (underlined) is understood as subordinate to the same matrix clause (*sagte der Staatsanwalt* (‘said the public prosecutor’)) to which the closest instance of indirect speech to the left is subordinate. It is the tense of this matrix verb which makes the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$  explicit:

(29) *Einen Tag später sei sie ins Koma gefallen, sagte der*  
one day later is.S1 she into the coma fallen said the

*Staatsanwalt. Daraus sei sie im Januar erwacht. Sie*  
public prosecutor out of that is.S1 she in the January awoken she

---

<sup>22</sup> [...] [Es] handelt [...] sich bei der berichteten Rede um den festen (obligatorischen) Gebrauch des Konjunktivs in einer Aufeinanderfolge von indirekten Äußerungen, die von einem redееinleitenden Verb abhängig sind, ohne dass dieses Verb notwendigerweise in jedem Satz wiederholt wird.

könne bis heute nur noch verschwommen sehen und sei  
can.S1 up to today only still blurred see and is.S1

vom Hals abwärts gelähmt.  
from the neck downwards paralyzed

‘The next day she fell into a coma, said the public prosecutor. [He said that] she awoke from it in January. [He said that] today her vision is still blurred and that she is paralyzed from the neck downwards.’

(Mannheimer Morgen: 28.09.2004)

However, as suggested by the next example (taken from Pütz (1994: 33)), the nature of the introductory verb on which the reported speech is dependent is not always so obvious from a casual glance:

(30) *Im Kunartal östlich von Kabul sollen sie die Felder mit*  
the Kunar Valley east of Kabul should they the fields with

*ätzenden Chemikalien unfruchtbar gemacht, Bewässerungsgräben*  
corrosive chemicals infertile made, irrigation canals

*planiert und Schafherden mit Maschinengewehren niedergemäht*  
levelled and herds of sheep with machine guns mown down

*haben. 20 Jahre werde es dauern bis im Kunartal wieder*  
have 20 years will.S1 it last until in the Kunartal again

Menschen leben könnten.  
people live can.S2

‘In the Kunar Valley to the east of Kabul the fields are said to have been made infertile by corrosive chemicals, irrigation canals have been levelled and herds of sheep are said to have been mown down by machine guns. [It is said that] it will be twenty years before people can live in the Kunar Valley again.’

(Spiegel 1981(10))

*Sollen* in the first sentence has in this context the meaning of ‘it is said that’, and this is understood as the introductory matrix clause on which the instance of reported speech is dependent.

Something corresponding to reported speech can also be distinguished in spoken German since S2 ‘[...] tends to be used if there is a longer stretch of indirect speech covering more than one sentence’ (Durrell 2011: 327). Durrell’s example:

(31) *Er sagt, er hat eben einen neuen Wagen gekauft. Der hätte über*  
 he says he has just a new car bought it has.S2 over

80.000 Euro gekostet und hätte eine Klimaanlage.  
 80,000 Euro cost and has.S2 an air conditioning unit

‘He said he had just bought a new car. [He said] it cost over 80,000 Euro and has air conditioning.’

The second sentence is understood to be subordinate to the *er sagt* (‘he says’) which introduces the first instance of indirect speech.

Thus reported speech requires a hearer to recover a matrix clause whose tensed verbum dicendi supplies  $t^1$  with a location in time relative to  $t^0$ . In other words, the hearer is required to understand that a matrix verbum dicendi is implied, and this fact prompts Jäger (1971: 33) to suggest that reported speech is elliptical.

We conclude this section on reported speech by mentioning examples of what Fabricius-Hansen (2002, 2006) terms *Übergangsformen*, i.e. cases which are intermediate between indirect speech and reported speech. In such cases, the matrix clause does not introduce the reported proposition, which is the case in more conventional indirect speech; rather this clause is either postposed, as in example (32), or interposed, as in (33). Both examples are taken from Fabricius-Hansen (2002: 22). In these examples the matrix clause, rather than the reported proposition, is underlined:

(32) *Gut durchdachte Konzepte zur Abfallmeidung **seien** bereits*  
 good thought-through concepts to the avoiding waste are.S1 already

vorhanden, würden aber nicht umgesetzt, sagte Roland  
 available become.S1 but not put into practice said Roland

Schnell von der Gruppe Müllnetz.

Schnell from the group Müllnetz

‘Well thought-through concepts for avoiding waste are already available but have not been put into practice, said Roland Schnell from the group Müllnetz.’

(33) *Das Unbehagen an der CDU, schreibt Peter Basilius Streithofen in*  
the discontent on the CDU writes Peter Basilius Streithofen in

seinem neuen Buch über den Niedergang der Kanzlerpartei.

his new book about the decline of the Chancellor Party

*lasse sich nicht “durch das hektische Hin- und Heragieren*  
allows.S1 itself not through the frantic acting here and there

*des Wolfgang Schäuble beseitigen”.*  
of the Wolfgang Schäuble eliminate

‘Discontent with the CDU, writes Peter Basilius Streithofen in his new book about the decline of the Chancellor Party, cannot be eliminated “by Wolfgang Schäuble’s frantic political zigzagging”.’

Example (32) initially reads as conventional reported speech since, in spite of the lack of an opening matrix *verbum dicendi*, the reader encounters an S1 form. Example (33) is perhaps closer to conventional indirect speech – the *verbum dicendi* occurs before the S1 form – but because the *verbum dicendi* is not in sentence-initial position, this example should also be considered an *Übergangsform*.

#### 2.2.8 What types of verb may function as *verba dicendi*?

In German, a wide range of verbs may introduce indirect speech. On the one hand there are *verba dicendi* as *sagen* (‘say’), *berichten* (‘report’), *mitteilen* (‘inform’ or ‘announce’), *ankündigen* (‘announce’) *flüstern* (‘whisper’) and *schreien* (‘shout’), all of which indicate that the purported original utterance was articulated, i.e. made ‘public’ through some means. On the other hand, indirect speech may be introduced

by verbs which denote mental processes, such as *denken* ('think'), *glauben* ('believe'), *hoffen* ('hope') and *meinen* ('think'). Verbs in this latter group do not explicitly indicate that the original utterance was actually articulated.

Many *verba dicendi* are non-factive and thus typically introduce indirect speech which exhibits the property indirectness as defined in the Introduction, regardless of whether an indicative or subjunctive form is embedded under them. There are, however, some essentially *factive* verbs<sup>23</sup> which are understood to introduce indirect speech with the property indirectness, i.e. they are understood non-factively, if the verb of their subordinate clause is analyzable as a reportative-subjunctive form.<sup>24</sup> Such verbs, which are mentioned Jäger (1971), Wichter (1978), Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004) and Fabricius-Hansen (2006), include verbs of emotional attitude, such as *sich ärgern* ('be angry'), *bedauern* ('regret') and *sich freuen* ('be glad'). The following example is taken from Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004: 214):

(34) *Das Gericht bedauerte, dass es nicht ermächtigt sei, ein*  
the court regretted that it not empowered is.S1 a

*Berufsverbot zu verhängen.*

work ban to issue

'The court regretted (i.e. said or announced with regret) that it did not have the authority to issue a work ban.'

When they function as *verba dicendi*, the tense of these verbs, like that of more conventional *verba dicendi*, locates  $t^1$  in time in relation to  $t^0$ .

Other factive verbs which introduce indirect speech that displays indirectness when a reportative subjunctive is embedded under them include *kritisieren* ('criticize') and *loben* ('praise'); such verbs are mentioned in Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 539) and are the subject of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø's 2011 paper 'Behabitive reports'. The example below has been (slightly) adapted from Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 539):

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<sup>23</sup> It will be remembered from Chapter 1 that we follow Huddleston and Pullum in considering a factive verb to be one whose '[...] content clause complement is normally presupposed [...]' (Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1008).

<sup>24</sup> As we suggested in the Introduction, a subjunctive form may generally be considered to be *reportative* in cases where it occurs in an embedded clause and contextual considerations do not suggest a function other than marking indirect speech.

- (35) *Einstein kritisierte energisch, dass Bohr voreilig die Erhaltungssätze und damit die Kausalität aufgegeben habe.*  
 Einstein criticized energetic that Bohr prematurely the laws of conservation and with it the causality abandoned have.S1

‘Einstein voiced with conviction the criticism that Bohr abandoned the laws of conservation and with them causality prematurely.’

These considerations provide evidence that indirectness along with concomitant non-presupposition of the embedded proposition is a consistent property of indirect speech whose embedded finite verb is a reportative-subjunctive form. As such it contrasts with indirect speech with an embedded indicative. The latter will be understood to exhibit indirectness if the matrix verb is non-factive. If, however, the matrix verb is understood factively then the indirect speech will not possess the property indirectness.

On the other hand, there are many factive verbs, such as *entschuldigen* (‘excuse’), *vergessen* (‘forget’), *verstehen* (‘understand’) and *wissen* (‘know’) under which an embedded subjunctive is ungrammatical. An example from Eisenberg (2004: 117):

- (36) *Karl versteht / vergißt / entschuldigt / weiß, daß Egon bleiben*  
 Karl understands/forgets/ excuses / knows that Egon stay

**will** (\*wolle).

wants.IND (S1)

‘Karl understands/forgets/excuses/knows that Egon wants to stay.’

### 2.2.9 Verbs of denial and the German reportative subjunctive

There is one environment where the frequent occurrence of the German reportative subjunctive is in our view anomalous: clauses which are subordinate to verbs which indicate that the embedded proposition is held to be *untrue* by the matrix subject. German examples are *ableugnen*, *abstreiten*, *bestreiten*, *dementieren*, *leugnen* and *verneinen*, all of which have their own nuances but essentially correspond to the

English verb ‘deny’. We therefore refer to them using the term *verbs of denial*. The embedding of the subjunctive under such verbs has received little attention in the literature: to our knowledge it is mentioned only by Kaufmann (1976), Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004), Schwager (2010) and they are the subject of Lilley (2012).

In the case of indirect speech where the matrix verb is not a verb of denial, the semantics of the matrix verb does not contradict the polarity of the embedded proposition. Thus (37a) constitutes an accurate report of (37b): the original speaker uttered something that resembles *Der neue Zug ist noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden* (‘The new train has not yet been sufficiently tested at all’) and she is reported as having said this:

(37a) *Der «SonntagsBlick» berichtete in seiner letzten Ausgabe, dass der*  
 The *SonntagsBlick* reported in its latest edition that the

*neue Zug aber noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden sei.*  
 new train but yet at all not sufficient tested become is.S1

‘The *SonntagsBlick* reported in its latest edition that the new train has not yet been sufficiently tested at all.’

(*Die Südostschweiz*: 09.06.2009)

(37b) *Der neue Zug ist noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden.*  
 the new train is yet at all not sufficient tested become

‘The new train has not yet been sufficiently tested at all.’

However, the matrix verb of denial in (38a) below indicates that the matrix subject considers the subordinate proposition to be untrue; the matrix subject is thus not understood to have uttered the embedded proposition herself. Therefore (38a) cannot be said to constitute a report of an utterance which resembles (38b) in terms of its propositional content in the same way that (37a) is understood as a report of an utterance which resembles (37b):

(38a) *Uhde verneint aber, dass eine Prüfung der Räume durch die*  
 Uhde denies but that a check of the rooms through the

*Heimaufsicht der Stadt stattgefunden habe.*  
home supervision of the town took place have.S1

‘But Uhde denies that the rooms have been checked by the local authority.’

(*Braunschweiger Zeitung*: 26.02.2009)

(38b) *Eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt*  
a check of the rooms through the home supervision of the town

*hat stattgefunden.*

has taken place

‘The rooms have been checked by the local authority.’

Thus, when the matrix verb is a verb of denial, the relationship between the embedded proposition and the matrix verb differs from the equivalent relationship when the superordinate verb is a *verbum dicendi* such as *berichten* or *sagen*.

In spite of these considerations, instances of the subjunctive when embedded under these verbs are clearly instances of the *reportative* subjunctive, and evidence for this is provided by the following example:

(39) *Vehement dementierte er, dass seine MDC in Botswana oder sonstwo*  
vehement denied he that his MDC in Botswana or elsewhere

*in Afrika Militärausbildungslager unterhalte und einen gewaltsamen*  
in Africa military training camps supports.S1 and a violent

*Sturz des Mugabe-Regimes anstrebe, wie es von dessen*  
overthrow of the Mugabe regime aims at.S1 as it of its

*Propaganda behauptet wird. Die MDC sei eine demokratische*  
propaganda claimed becomes the MDC is.S1 a democratic

*Bewegung, die ihre politischen Ziele auf friedlichem Wege*  
movement which its political aims on peaceful way

**verfolge.**

pursues.S1

‘He [Morgan Tsvangirai] denied vehemently that his MDC party supports military training camps in Botswana or elsewhere in Africa and that he is planning to overthrow Mugabe regime in a violent fashion, as Mugabe’s propaganda claims. [He went on to say that] the MDC is a democratic movement that pursues its political aims peacefully.’

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 20/01/2009)

Furthermore, the reportative nature of the construction verb of denial + subjunctive in (39) is such that *er dementierte* at the beginning renders the subsequent reported speech (which begins *Die MDC sei eine demokratische Bewegung*) pragmatically acceptable: both have the same subject (*er*, which refers to Morgan Tsvangirai). However, the *verbum-dicendi* under which the reported speech needs to be understood to be embedded will not be a verb of denial: Tsvangirai is understood to have *said* that ‘the MDC is a democratic movement that pursues its political aims peacefully’, rather than *denied* this.

Kaufmann (1976) and Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004) both provide an analysis of cases where the subjunctive is embedded under a verb of denial which differs to some extent from the analysis that they provide for other *verba dicendi*. For Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø, what differs is how the ‘semantically uniform’ reportative presupposition that the reportative subjunctive in their view carries is accommodated (see section 2.3.5 below). Kaufmann (1976) suggests that when the *verbum dicendi* is a verb of denial, the matrix subject is presented as denying that a proposition attributed to *somebody else* is true:

If the *inquit* contains a verb like [...] *bestreiten*, *in Abrede stellen* [‘deny’ or ‘dispute’], *leugnen*, *ableugnen*, then speaker S2 indicates that speaker S1 [...] denies the content of an utterance produced by speaker S0.<sup>25</sup>

(Kaufmann 1976: 88)

Thus in (38a) above (repeated below), S0 (whose identity is not explicitly stated) is understood to have uttered a proposition which resembles (38b) in terms of its

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<sup>25</sup> *Enthält die Redeeinleitung Verben wie [...] bestreiten, in Abrede stellen, leugnen, ableugnen, so erwähnt der Sprecher S2, daß ein Sprecher S1 den Inhalt der Äußerung eines Sprechers S0 [...] bestritt.* ‘*Inquit*’ is the term which Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004) use to refer to the element which introduces indirect speech.

propositional content. S1, i.e. Uhde, has then denied this proposition. In (38a) S2, i.e. the reporter, says that Uhde denied (38b):

(38a) *Uhde verneint, dass eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt stattgefunden **habe**.*

(38b) *Eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt hat stattgefunden.*

#### 2.2.10 *The reportative subjunctive and the expression of reporter attitudes*

Scholars of the German language have often suggested that the reporter's choice of mood (S1, S2 or indicative) indicates the attitude towards the embedded proposition that she intends to convey. Russ (1994: 209-210) provides a brief survey of some authorities who have held such views. According to him, the view is put forward by Flämig (1959: 56), Helbig and Buscha (1974: 165) and is expressed in earlier editions of DUDEN, i.e. those up to and including the third edition of 1973. This view is also accepted by Jäger (1970: 24, 1971: 172) who '[...] discusses these cases in detail' and suggests that S2 may be used '[...] to express distancing on the part of the speaker' (Russ 1994: 209). Russ finishes by pointing out that such views are no longer accepted, and remarks that:

[t]he difficulty here is that a linguistic variant has been taken up by prescriptive grammarians and a distinction, possibly an artificial one, made and taught. This could then, in turn, influence linguistic usage.

(Russ 1994: 209-210)

For Durrell (2011) S1 is chiefly used in indirect speech in order to '[...] indicate that we are simply reporting what someone else said, without committing ourselves to saying whether we think it is true or not' (2011: 326). In general, however, he does not recognize a semantic distinction between the indicative, S1 and S2 in indirect speech. Ultimately, the choice between these verb forms is determined '[...] not by meaning, but by register, stylistic considerations and norms of usage [...]' (2011: 329). The function which Durrell assigns to the reportative subjunctive in indirect speech is essentially the same as that of Zifonun et al. (1997), with their claim that the reporter's attitude to a reported proposition with the property indirectness can be summed up as 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*' (1997: 1762).

However, this (in our view correct) *default* attitude does not preclude the possibility of (both forms of) the subjunctive and the indicative being compatible with *any* attitude towards the embedded proposition that the reporter might wish to imply contextually. In support of this statement we provide an example in which the reporter can be said to consider the embedded propositions to be false. In this example the hearer is told that the original speakers are tricksters who lie in order to be allowed into people's homes:

- (40) [CONTEXT] Mainz police are warning people of tricksters who pretend to be police officers in order to gain access to other people's homes. The most recent victim was an 86-year-old woman who was spoken to by two men in Parcus Street, just before 17:50 on Tuesday.<sup>26</sup>

*Die falschen Polizisten gaben an, in ihre Wohnung sei*  
 the false police officers stated in her flat is.S1

*eingebrochen worden und sie müssten feststellen, was gestohlen*  
 broken in become and they must.S2 establish what stolen

*worden sei.*  
 become is.S1

'The bogus police officers stated that her flat had been broken into and that they must establish what had been stolen.'

(*Rhein-Zeitung*: 06.05.1999)

In summary, both S1 and S2 in indirect speech possess in our view the same semantic potential: they are both compatible with the contextual implication of *any* reporter attitude.

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<sup>26</sup> *Die Mainzer Polizei warnt vor Trickdieben, die sich als Polizeibeamte ausgeben und sich so Eintritt in fremde Wohnungen verschaffen. Jüngstes Opfer war eine 86-jährige Frau, die am Dienstag gegen 17.50 Uhr in der Parcusstraße von zwei Männern angesprochen wurde.*

### 2.2.11 *What should be expected of a comprehensive account of the German reportative subjunctive?*

The foregoing considerations suggest that there are a number of phenomena for which a fully adequate analysis of the German reportative subjunctive needs to account. However, before we consider these phenomena, we need to describe some (relatively) uncontroversial assumptions which can be gleaned from the above account of the reportative subjunctive in indirect speech and on which a comprehensive account of this verb form needs to be predicated.

Firstly, the reportative subjunctive has an arguably fully developed tense system. The *only* difference between the tense system of the indicative and that of the subjunctive is that the former possesses a (simple) past. Semantically, however the past is comparable to the perfect tense, the chief distinction between the two forms being stylistic: the past tense is more common in written German whilst the perfect is generally preferred in speech (Durrell 2011: 287). It is true that for the formation of one tense of the German indicative – the pluperfect – the past tense is necessary; this tense is composed of the past of *haben* and the past participle. However, we saw above that it is possible to form a *pluperfect-subjunctive form* such as *Sie sagte, sie **habe** es nicht **gewusst gehabt*** ('She said she had not known'). Significantly, the restrictions on the occurrence of this form appear to be stylistic rather than semantic. Thus the German reportative subjunctive is ultimately capable of expressing exactly the same temporal relations as the indicative.

Secondly, in spite of a great deal of variation in descriptive grammars regarding the use of mood in indirect speech, there is in practice little, if any, difference in function and meaning between the different subjunctive forms. If we accept that the 'replacement rule' is undermined by the notion that S2 frequently occurs where we might expect an S1 form, there seem to be only two restrictions regarding the subjunctive form that can be used in indirect speech, and these both concern *würde* forms. On the one hand there is the semantically motivated exclusion of the *würde* construction from reporting duratives (e.g. example (17a) above: ? *Sie schreibt, sie würde seit drei Tagen im Bett liegen*). On the other hand the S2 form of some verbs is preferred over the *würde* periphrasis. For example the S2 forms *wäre* and *hätte* are always used instead of *würde sein* and *würde haben*, as a result of which the subjunctive perfect is not formed using *würde* in indirect speech (e.g. example (15) above: ? *Er erzählte, er würde sie auf der Straße getroffen haben*). Other preferences, for example for the use of the *würde* form

instead of certain obsolete and obsolescent S2 forms, are arguably stylistically motivated.

Thirdly, the tenses of the reportative subjunctive are always understood in relation to  $t^1$  and the relation of this to  $t^0$  is made explicit by the tense of the matrix *verbum dicendi*. In the case of indirect speech this *verbum dicendi* is explicitly encoded, whilst in that of reported speech it is supplied by the context. Because the tense of the *verbum dicendi* locates  $t^1$  at a specific point in time, the subjunctive is infelicitous if  $t^1$  clashes with a time adverbial, e.g. in cases of temporal deictic projection.

Fourthly, all German indirect speech whose embedded finite verb is in the reportative subjunctive exhibits the property indirectness, i.e. the matrix verb is understood to be non-factive which means that the embedded proposition is not presupposed. Importantly, this does not mean that the subjunctive is excluded from any clause which is subordinate to a factive verb: some verbs, such as *kritisieren* and *bedauern*, are understood to be non-factive when the embedded verb is subjunctive. Thus the reportative subjunctive allows these verbs to introduce indirect speech with the property indirectness, like non-factive *verba dicendi*.

Fifthly, we have seen that the reportative subjunctive may be embedded under verbs of denial, which we consider to be interesting because the reporter cannot be understood to be reporting the embedded proposition in the same way she does when the *verbum dicendi* is a verb such as *sagen*.

Finally, the reportative subjunctive is used not only to indicate that the reporter wishes to withhold his opinion regarding whether the embedded proposition is true or false: it is compatible with *any* attitude that the reporter may wish to imply contextually towards the reported proposition. Evidence for this is provided by example (40) where we suggested that it can be inferred that the reporter holds the reported propositions to be untrue.

This puts us in a position to enumerate those phenomena for which an adequate analysis of the German reportative subjunctive should, in our view, account. We present these phenomena in the form of five questions which this study ultimately seeks to address.

Firstly, what is the precise nature of the German reportative subjunctive vis-à-vis the indicative? How do we account for the fact that the German reportative subjunctive is restricted to indirect speech with the property indirectness, where its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$ , even, as in the case of reported speech, if there is no explicit matrix clause? After all, the reportative subjunctive has, as we have suggested, a tense system which is as rich as that of the indicative.

Secondly, we might expect the fact that all reportative-subjunctive indirect speech displays the property indirectness to imply that the subjunctive is restricted to clauses which are subordinate to non-factive *verba dicendi*. However, the subjunctive has the effect of ensuring that some factive verbs (*kritisieren, bedauern*) are understood non-factively: the subjunctive thus allows them to introduce indirect speech with the property indirectness. Thus a fully adequate analysis of the subjunctive will account for this phenomenon in plausible terms.

Thirdly, an adequate account of the German reportative subjunctive will account for the fact that it may be embedded under verbs of denial. Ideally, such cases will turn out not to be remarkable after all: the same principle which accounts for the occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in clauses which are subordinate to 'conventional' *verba dicendi* will also explain its occurrence in clauses embedded under verbs of denial.

We observed in section 2.2.7 *that* in the case of reported speech a matrix clause needs to be constructed whose tense makes the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$  explicit. However, we did not consider *how* a hearer does so. In example (29) above identifying the clause is a relatively straightforward process, but this cannot be said of example (30), where it is, on closer inspection, an instance of *sollen* which provides the necessary clue. Thus, in our view, a comprehensive account of the German reportative subjunctive will explain in plausible terms the mechanism a hearer deploys in recovering the ellipsed matrix clause. This nature of this mechanism forms the focus of our fourth question.

Finally, a fully adequate account of the reportative subjunctive will recognize the circumstance that the subjunctive is compatible with any interpretive stance that the reporter may hold towards the reported proposition, and will also consider how this stance is recovered.

The account of the German reportative subjunctive given in Chapter 3 and developed in Chapter 4 will show how the theory described in the next chapter, relevance theory, provides a framework within which a comprehensive analysis of the reportative subjunctive can be conducted. Importantly, relevance theory enables us to provide plausible answers to the five questions given above. The remainder of this chapter will comprise a review of some previous accounts of the reportative subjunctive.

## **2.3 The use and function of the subjunctive in indirect speech: Some existing views**

### *2.3.1 Introductory remarks*

In this section we shall look at the work of a number of authorities and shall consider their views regarding the use and function of the subjunctive in indirect speech. Firstly we shall consider the early 'classics', Flämig (1959) and Jäger (1971). This will be followed by a look at what contemporary grammars and reference works have to say: the texts we shall consider are Zifonun et al. (1997) Helbig and Buscha (1998), Fabricius-Hansen's (2006) account in the seventh edition of the DUDEN grammar, Whittle et al. (2011) and Durrell (2011). We shall then review three texts which investigate questions of (non-)factivity: Thieroff (1992), Eisenberg (1986/2004) and Diewald (1999). Finally, we shall consider the semantic approach of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004). For each authority, an assessment will be provided of the extent to which the analysis provided is in our view adequate. As a yardstick to measure this adequacy we shall use, where appropriate, the extent to which it provides a plausible solution to the questions we posed in section 2.2.11.

### *2.3.2 The early classics: Flämig (1959) and Jäger (1971)*

We shall suggest quite a lot of problems and shortcomings in the accounts of Flämig (1959) and Jäger (1971). However, they are included here for two reasons. Firstly, they enjoy a status as relative classics within the literature on the German subjunctive and have been cited regularly by other authors. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, their influence, particularly with regard to the meanings that have been ascribed to S1 and S2, can be felt in many works which were subsequently written, including some that are mentioned in this chapter.

#### *2.3.2.1 Flämig (1959)*

A relatively early work is Flämig's 1959 study *Zum Konjunktiv in der deutschen Sprache der Gegenwart*. The significance of this text lies in Flämig's endeavour to

provide an ‘assessment of the meanings of the different moods in current German’<sup>27</sup> (1959: 3). To this end, Flämig bases his study on a selection of ‘[...] particularly interesting cases [...] which will prove to be useful in accounting for the multi-layered modal system’<sup>28</sup> (1959: 2). Flämig’s corpus is based on texts from the period 1896-1947 (relatively recent at the time), ‘[...] which means that current intuitions about language are sufficient for its interpretation’<sup>29</sup> (1959: 3). The corpus consists for the most part of the novels and short stories of Thomas Mann, and Flämig investigates both written and spoken standard German.

Central to Flämig’s claims is the distinction he makes between subjunctive use that is determined by the linguistic system (*systembedingt*) and subjunctive use that is determined by the communicative situation (*situationsbedingt*) (1959: 171). S1 is considered to be the ‘normal mood’ (*Normalmodus*) in indirect speech, as is S2 in those cases where S1 and the indicative are identical in form; such uses of S1 and S2 are said to be *systembedingt*. The corresponding use of these forms in reported speech (in the sense described in section 2.2.7 above) is also considered to be *systembedingt*, since in such cases the subjunctive is the only means of making explicit that an utterance is reported. In cases where the use of S1 (and S2 as a replacement form) is *systembedingt*, it is held by Flämig to express: ‘[...] a generally indirect statement of the speaker: without guarantee’<sup>30</sup> (1959: 55).

Deviations from the above tendencies, for example the use of S2 or an indicative form in cases where an S1 form is expected are considered by Flämig to be *situationsbedingt*. For instance, ‘S2 indicates indirect speech alongside a speaker attitude of rejection’<sup>31</sup> (1959: 57), and Flämig gives the following example of this:

(41) *Er sagte, er tränke Petroleum.*  
 he said he drinks.S2 paraffin

‘He said he drank paraffin.’

Here the use of S2, as opposed to S1, supposedly indicates that the speaker does not believe that the original speaker really drinks paraffin. Flämig also considers

<sup>27</sup> *‘die Feststellung der heute geltenden Modusinhalt’.*

<sup>28</sup> *‘[...] besonders interessante Fälle [...], die sich für die Darstellung des geschichteten Modusystems als fruchtbar erweisen’.*

<sup>29</sup> *‘[...] so daß es vom lebendigen Sprachgefühl her interpretiert werden kann’.*

<sup>30</sup> *‘eine allgemein mittelbare Stellungnahme des Sprechers: Ohne Gewähr’.*

<sup>31</sup> *‘Der Konj. II bezeichnet die mittelbare Wiedergabe, verbunden mit der ablehnenden Stellungnahme des Sprechers.’*

subjunctive use to be *situationsbedingt* in cases where the matrix verbum dicendi is in the present tense. In such cases, Flämig claims that the indicative is the *Normalmodus*, and a subjunctive form indicates that the reporter's attitude to the reported proposition is one of rejection (*ablehnende Stellungnahme*) (1959: 70).

An obvious problem with Flämig's analysis is the fact that he bases his study, which is intended to encompass both written and spoken German, on a corpus of works by Thomas Mann. Thus the result is, at best, a study specifically of Thomas Mann's use of the subjunctive. At worst, it does not even provide profitable insights into that, since the functions he assigns to subjunctive forms in different situations, both *systembedingt* and *situationsbedingt*, appear to be based on his own individual intuitions rather than rigorous empirical investigation. This is particularly noticeable, for example, in the case of the meaning *ablehnende Stellungnahme* which he projects on to S2 forms where S1 is expected, and on to S1 where an indicative form is expected, i.e. when the superordinate verbum dicendi is present tense. In the absence of access to a given author's own thoughts it is impossible to see how it can be proven that she intended through her decision to use, say, S2 instead of S1 to express such-and-such an attitude to the reported proposition.

To what extent does Flämig address the questions posed above in section 2.2.11? Flämig's aim was to identify the essential semantic content of S1 and that of S2, and he was driven in this aim partly by the need he perceived to improve on the accounts of the German subjunctive which existed at the time. We would thus perhaps not be justified in criticizing Flämig for the fact that his analysis does not suggest why the subjunctive is restricted to indirect and reported speech where its tenses are understood only in relation to  $t^1$ , does not acknowledge or account for the effect of the subjunctive when embedded under certain factive verbs, and does not consider the fact that the subjunctive may occur in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial.

Flämig does, however, address in a sense the question of the attitudes that a reporter may hold towards a reported proposition. But, in suggesting specific modal nuances for S1 and S2, he undermines the role played by context: he sees the expression of different attitudes as the task of the verb form chosen rather than contextual features.

### 2.3.2.2 Jäger (1971)

Another important text is Jäger's 1971 study *Der Konjunktiv in der deutschen Sprache der Gegenwart*. He states his aims as follows:

- (1) to show the distribution of subjunctive forms,
- (2) to determine the syntactic meaning of subjunctive 1 and subjunctive 2 vis-à-vis the indicative. Therefore the main question concerns [...] how it is that two sentences, which apart from the difference in mood are completely identical, are different in meaning and also, of course, whether they are different in meaning.<sup>32</sup>

(Jäger 1971: 25)

For Jäger the principal function of S1 is the following:

Subjunctive 1 does not denote the author's judgement, neither is it primarily used in order to mark indirect discourse. It may establish the relationship between what is said and the original speaker because it indicates the distance between the current speaker (writer) and what is said and thus attributes what is said to another speaker.<sup>33</sup>

(Jäger 1971: 127-128)

For Jäger, there are three types of indirect reported discourse. Reported discourse is marked as such three times (*dreifach bestimmt*) if it is subordinate to a *verbum dicendi*, if the subordinating conjunction *dass* is included and if the embedded verb is an S1 form. It is marked twice (*zweifach bestimmt*) if two of these elements are present, one of which needs to be the *verbum dicendi*, and it is marked once (*einfach bestimmt*) if the only indication of indirect discourse is provided by an embedded S1 form (i.e. reported speech as defined in section 2.2.7). However, Jäger claims that the presence of S1 is obligatory if an utterance is to be regarded as an instance of indirect discourse. This leaves him with the problem of how to treat those cases of indirect discourse which are *zweifach bestimmt* and whose finite verb is an indicative. He attempts to tackle this problem by introducing

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<sup>32</sup> 1) die Distribution der Konjunktivformen aufzuzeigen, 2) die syntaktische Bedeutung des Konjunktiv I und des Konjunktiv II in Opposition zum Indikativ zu ermitteln. [...] Die Grundfrage lautet also, [...] wodurch zwei Sätze, die bis auf den Unterschied des Modus völlig identisch sind, verschiedene Aussagen, natürlich auch, ob sie verschiedene Aussagen.

<sup>33</sup> Der Konjunktiv I bezeichnet keine urteilende Stellungnahme des Autors, noch dient er primär zur Kennzeichnung mittelbarer Wiedergabe. Er kann die Beziehung zwischen Besprochenem und ursprünglichem Sprecher herstellen, weil er die Distanz zwischen dem jetzigen Sprecher (Autor) und dem Besprochenen kennzeichnet und so das Besprochene einem anderen Sprecher zuweist.

the rather nebulous concepts 'indirect speech in a broader sense'<sup>34</sup> and 'report which is similar to (indirect) speech'<sup>35</sup> for sentences that have finite verbs in the indicative but otherwise '[...] contain all the prerequisites for indirect speech'<sup>36</sup> (1971: 28).

Another spurious idea proposed by Jäger concerns the meaning of S2, since for him the latter *always* expresses greater distance between the current speaker and what is being reported. According to Jäger this is the case not only in unexpected cases of S2, where according to the standard rules a S1 form should be used, but also when S2 is employed as a replacement form. Jäger himself recognizes the (unhappy) consequence of this, but seems content to live with it; he gives an example in which S2 is used as a replacement form and then remarks:

[s]ince no subjunctive 1 form is available, one needs to resort to the device associated with conscious distancing, although no reason for this can be discerned from the attitude of the reporter.<sup>37</sup>

(Jäger 1971: 170)

Jäger understands that the tenses of the subjunctive are understood to be relative to the temporal reference point of the original:

The time relations which are established are not, as can be shown easily, ones which hold between the utterance and speaking time of the reporter, rather they exist between the utterance and speaking time of the original [...] speaker. Regardless of whether the temporal reference point is at some time in the past or future, using the different tenses of the subjunctive one can describe a situation as taking place in the past, present or future from the point of view of this reference point.<sup>38</sup>

(Jäger 1971: 109-110)

However, like Flämig, he does not explicitly account for the restriction of the reportative subjunctive to indirect-speech contexts. Jäger undermines the role played by context when specific reporter attitudes towards a reported proposition

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<sup>34</sup> *indirekte Rede im weiteren Sinne*

<sup>35</sup> *redenaher Bericht*

<sup>36</sup> [...] *[enthalt]en alle Voraussetzungen für indirekte Rede [...]*

<sup>37</sup> *[d]a dafür keine Konjunktiv-I-Form zur Verfügung steht, muss zum Mittel der bewussten Distanzierung gegriffen werden, obwohl sich dafür aus der Haltung des Berichtenden kein Grund ablesen lässt.*

<sup>38</sup> *Die durch den Konjunktiv hergestellten zeitlichen Relationen sind nun nicht, wie leicht gezeigt werden kann, solche zwischen Aussage und Sprechzeitpunkt des Erzählers, sondern sie bestehen zwischen Aussage und Sprechzeitpunkt des ursprünglichen Sprechers. Ob dieser Sprechzeitpunkt irgendwo in der Vergangenheit oder in der Zukunft liegt: durch die verschiedenen Konjunktivtempora kann von diesem Zeitpunkt aus die Vergangenheit, Gegenwart oder Zukunft eines geschilderten Sachverhalts bezeichnet werden.*

are implied, instead ascribing the expression of specific attitudes to the subjunctive form itself, e.g. scepticism in the case of S2. The other three phenomena for which in our view a comprehensive account of the German reportative subjunctive should account, i.e. how the hearer identifies the ellipsed matrix clause, the effect of the subjunctive when subordinate to certain factive verbs and the notion that the subjunctive may be embedded under verbs of denial, arguably do not fall within Jäger's remit and thus are also not addressed.

### 2.3.3 Reference works and grammars

In this section we review five recent reference works and grammars which are based on current insights regarding the function and use of the German reportative subjunctive. The texts are Zifonun et al. (1997), Helbig and Buscha (1998), Fabricius-Hansen (2006), Durrell (2011) and Whittle et al. (2011).

#### 2.3.3.1 Zifonun et al. (1997)

Central to Zifonun et al.'s (1997) account of the German reportative subjunctive is their concept of 'indirect context', which we first considered in Chapter 1. We repeat their definition:

INDIRECT CONTEXTS are contexts [...] in which the speaker does not directly address a piece of propositional knowledge as though it is valid for himself at the time of speaking, rather he reports it by referring to another source.

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1753)

In indirect contexts, two principles are understood to operate. These are the 'propositional principle' (*Propositionsprinzip*) and the 'referential principle' (*Referatsprinzip*). According to the former, only the proposition expressed by the original utterance can be transferred into indirect speech, whilst the speech act performed must be described: this is the task of the matrix verb and it will always provide an *interpretation* of the original utterance (1997: 1756). By 'speech act', Zifonun et al. seem to understand the status of the original utterance as a declarative, an interrogative or an imperative. They go on to suggest (1997: 1757) that the matrix verb may also describe the effect of the original utterance, such as

when the matrix verb is *vorwerfen* ('reproach'), *warnen* ('warn') and *zugeben* ('admit'). Alternatively, the verb may describe the place of the reported utterance within the original discourse: this is true in the case of *antworten* ('answer') and *fortfahren* ('continue'). A third possibility is that the matrix verb may describe how the original utterance was articulated. The latter is the case when the matrix verb is, for example, *keifen* ('nag'), *jammern* ('moan'), *stottern* ('stammer') and *flüstern* ('whisper').

Zifonun et al. formulate the referential principle as follows:

Referential identity must exist between the original utterance and reported discourse. This means that an expression which reports an expression which is used referentially in the original utterance must refer to the same object as the corresponding expression in the original utterance.<sup>39</sup>

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1760)

Consequently, in order to ensure that the same objects are referred to, in indirect speech deixis (but not necessarily tenses) must be adjusted such that they are understood from the point of view of the reporter.

Importantly, for Zifonun et al. – and this is true specifically in the case of the report of assertions – in indirect contexts the reporter herself does not express her level of commitment to the original utterance, rather she leaves open whether it is true or not. Thus the attitude of the reporter towards the reported proposition can be expressed as follows: 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*<sup>40</sup> (1997: 1762). Significantly, this claim is made without any reference to the subjunctive-vs.-indicative opposition: it is seen as a 'default' feature of indirect contexts in German, and is in essence indifferent to mood. On the other hand, in direct discourse the attitude of a speaker towards what she is saying is typically 'I, A, say that *P*<sup>41</sup> (1997: 1762).

Zifonun et al. go on to suggest that in indirect speech, the function of the subjunctive is consistently to indicate that the indirect context is of the default variety, i.e. the attitude of the reporter towards the reported proposition is 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*'. The function of the indicative, however, is more complex and how it is understood depends ultimately on contextual considerations. On the one hand, it may, like the subjunctive, be used

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<sup>39</sup> *Zwischen Originaläußerung und Redewiedergabe muß referentielle Identität gewährleistet sein. Das heißt, ein Ausdruck, der einen referentiell gebrauchten Ausdruck der Originaläußerung wiedergibt, muß auf denselben Gegenstand verweisen, wie der entsprechende Ausdruck der Originaläußerung.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ich, B, sage, daß A sagt, daß p, aber ich lasse offen, ob ich sage, daß p.*

<sup>41</sup> *Ich, A, sage, daß p.*

in typical indirect speech; this will tend to be the case, for example, in everyday speech where the subjunctive is rarely used (1997: 1768-1769). This is also frequently the case in the formal written language where the minimum requirement is for just one linguistic device to be used in order to mark indirect speech. Thus, if *dass* is used, then the indicative might be used: the subjunctive could be considered redundant (1997: 1768). But Zifonun et al. suggest that in such formal language where the subjunctive is essentially the unmarked mood in indirect speech, the use of the indicative may indicate 'X says that, and I say that as well'<sup>42</sup> (1997: 1768). A third possibility is that the indicative marks the transition into a direct, factive context, in other words the indicative does not really mark indirect speech at all.

Zifonun et al. draw a distinction between 'modality' (*Modalität*) which for them indicates 'possibly the case' (*möglicherweise der Fall*) and 'non-factivity' (*Nicht-Faktizität*) by which they mean 'definitely not the case' (*keinesfalls der Fall*) (1997: 1773). They suggest that S2 *may* be used in indirect speech in order to indicate modality or non-factivity, as in example (42), which they quote from Kaufmann (1976: 55):

(42) *Mir meldet er aus Linz, er läge krank. Doch hab ich sichre*  
to me informs he from Linz he lies.S2 ill but have I reliable

*Nachricht, daß er sich zu Frauenberg versteckt beim Grafen*  
news that he himself to Frauenberg hidden with the count

*Gallas.*

Gallas

'He informs me from Linz that he is ill. But I have heard from a reliable source that he has hidden himself away in Frauenberg at the home of Count Gallas.'

However, for Zifonun et al. this usage is by no means consistent, and they point out that '[...] even in contexts where non-factivity is signalled both the indicative and present subjunctive [i.e. S1] are possible'<sup>43</sup> (1997: 1774). As an example where the

<sup>42</sup> *X sagt das, und ich sage das auch.*

<sup>43</sup> [...] [A]uch in Kontexten mit signalisierter Nicht-Faktizität sind sowohl Indikativ als der Konjunktiv der Präsensgruppe möglich.

indicative is used, even though the context indicates that the reported proposition is false, they provide (43):

(43) *Die meisten „Kranken“, die eingewiesen werden, sind*  
the most patients who admitted become are

*kerngesund. Die Ärzte haben ihnen nur eingeredet, dass sie*  
completely healthy the doctors have them only convinced that they

*krank sind.*  
ill are.IND

‘Most of the “patients” who are admitted are completely healthy. Only the doctors have convinced them that they are ill.’

Zifonun et al. recognize that the tenses of the reportative subjunctive are to be understood in relation to the same temporal deictic centre as that of the original utterance, and formulate the workings of the tenses as follows, quoted previously above in section 2.2.2:

It is not the time at which an utterance is reported by a speaker or writer which forms the reference point for the temporal interpretation [of a subjunctive form], but the time at which the original utterance was produced [...]. This reported time  $t'$  (= the time at which the action denoted by the reporting verb takes place) takes over the role of the temporal reference point for the indirect speech from [...]  $t_0$  (= the time of reporting). This means that  $t'$ , the tense of the verb in the subjunctive, takes  $t'$  as its reference point.

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1778)

However, they do not address the question of the precise nature of the subjunctive vis-à-vis the indicative; they do not account for the restriction of the reportative subjunctive to indirect contexts. Furthermore, Zifonun et al. do not explicitly draw a distinction between indirect speech and reported speech: for them reported speech seems to be an example of an ‘indirect context’, marked explicitly as such by the subjunctive and thus does not warrant special attention. However, they do recognize

that in all cases '[...] indirectness must be explicitly indicated'<sup>44</sup> (1997: 1787) before going on to claim that:

[a] complete sentence in the present subjunctive such as *Er habe sich stets richtig verhalten* ['He always behaves himself correctly'] is a correct indirect statement only if an indirect context with appropriate linguistic devices has been opened and not yet closed again.<sup>45</sup>

(Zifonun et al. 1997: 1786-1787)

Thus they hint at the sort of environment in which examples such as *Er habe sich stets richtig verhalten*, are felicitous, without indicating how the hearer identifies the relevant linguistic devices that make such indirect discourse, as reported speech, possible.

Zifonun et al. acknowledge that a range of attitudes may be implied contextually towards a reported utterance. Importantly, whilst they hold that certain verb forms *may* be understood to communicate specific attitudes, e.g. 'X says that, and I say that as well' in the case of the indicative, and non-factivity and modality (as they understand the terms) in the case of S2, they do recognize the considerable role played by context, text type and register. Thus not only S2 but also S1 and the indicative may be used to indicate 'non-factivity'. Ultimately, Zifonun et al. acknowledge that in cases of indirectness the default attitude towards the reported proposition, 'I, B, say that A says that *P*, but I leave open whether I say that *P*', does not preclude the possibility of implying contextually any attitude towards it.

Finally, Zifonun et al. do not consider cases where the German reportative subjunctive is embedded under factive verbs, such as *kritisieren* or *bedauern* or verbs of denial.

### 2.3.3.2 Helbig and Buscha (1998)

Helbig and Buscha's (1998) grammar is the only text we shall review which can be said to acknowledge explicitly not only that the tenses of the German reportative subjunctive are relative but also that the temporal reference point in relation to which they are understood is fixed by the tense of the matrix verb:

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<sup>44</sup> [...] Indirektheit [muß] explizit angegeben werden.

<sup>45</sup> Ein Vollsatz im Konjunktiv Präsens wie etwa *Er habe sich stets richtig verhalten ist nur dann ein korrekter Aussagesatz der indirekten Redewiedergabe, wenn ein Indirektheitskontext mit geeigneten Sprachmitteln eröffnet und noch nicht wieder geschlossen wurde.*

One is dealing with *relative* tenses if the time of the action described by the [reported] utterance is referred to as being in the present, past or future in relation to the speech time stated in the matrix clause.<sup>46</sup>

(Helbig and Buscha 1998: 195)

They devote a small amount of space to the types of verb which may serve as *verba dicendi*, and divide these into four classes: verbs of saying, verbs of asking, verbs of telling and *verba dicendi* which report thoughts and feelings (1998: 197).

Helbig and Buscha describe the use of the subjunctive as 'obligatory' (*obligatorisch*) in reported speech, '[...] otherwise the sentences would be understood [...] to be independent and the utterance would be understood as [...] a direct utterance of the speaker'<sup>47</sup> (1998: 197). They imply that reported speech cannot occur in isolation; they state that in the case of reported speech '[...] several indirect utterances follow one another in succession and *the matrix verb is not repeated*<sup>48</sup> (emphasis mine) (1998: 197).

This text does not recognize any semantic difference between S1 and S2 in reported discourse, claiming that '[i]t [...] cannot be proven that specific forms are used to express a particular speaker intention (for example a greater distance to the content of the utterance)' <sup>49</sup> (1998: 196). Thus, Helbig and Buscha's view seems to be consistent with our own claim that the reportative subjunctive is compatible with any attitude that the reporter may wish to imply contextually towards the reported proposition.

In summary, it is true that Helbig and Buscha recognize the relative nature of the tenses of the reportative subjunctive and have, in our view, a satisfactory approach to the issue of reporter attitudes in indirect speech. However, they do not mention the effect of the subjunctive when embedded under certain factive verbs, and they do not mention the fact that verbs of denial may be superordinate to a reportative-subjunctive embedded proposition. Ultimately, this text is intended for learners of German as an additional language, and so we should not be justified in criticizing it for its emphasis on *describing* German usage. The question as to the ultimate reason for the restriction of the reportative subjunctive to indirect speech is arguably justifiably not addressed. There is some attempt to address the question

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<sup>46</sup> *Um relative Zeiten handelt es sich, wenn man von Gleich-, Vor- oder Nachzeitigkeit der in der Rede gegebenen Aktzeit im Verhältnis zu der in der Redeeinleitung gegebenen Sprechzeit spricht.*

<sup>47</sup> *[...] da sonst die Sätze [...] als selbständige Hauptsätze und die Rede [...] als direkte Äußerung des Sprechers verstanden würde.*

<sup>48</sup> *[...] mehrere indirekte Äußerungen [...] folgen [aufeinander] und das redееinleitende Verb nicht wiederholt wird.*

<sup>49</sup> *Es ist [...] nicht nachweisbar, daß mit bestimmten Formen eine besondere Sprecherintention (etwa eine größere Distanz zum Redehalt) ausgedrückt wird.*

of reported speech. However, their account – according to which a series of subjunctive sentences follow each other and the matrix verb is not repeated – is in our view too simplistic: identifying the relevant matrix clause is often rather less straightforward.

### 2.3.3.3 Fabricius-Hansen (2006)

In her account in the 2006 DUDEN grammar, Fabricius-Hansen pays careful attention to the tenses of the subjunctive and makes remarks similar to those of Zifonun et al. (1997) regarding the temporal deictic centre to which they are understood to be relative:

The tenses of the reportative subjunctive [*Indirektheitskonjunktiv*] take the original speaker's 'now' – the time when the original utterance was produced – as a superordinate temporal reference point. In other words, they are used logophorically [...]. In this respect subjunctive 1 and subjunctive 2 are similar [...].<sup>50</sup>

(Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 535)

She believes that the subjunctive in reported speech essentially indicates that the speaker is merely reporting the words of another without expressing any specific level of commitment to the truth of the reported statement. Thus her account overlooks the role of context in prompting the hearer to infer the reporter's attitude to the reported proposition. The role of the reportative subjunctive is summarized as follows:

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<sup>50</sup> *Als übergeordneten zeitlichen Bezugspunkt nehmen die Tempora des Indirektheitskonjunktivs das Figuren-Jetzt – den Sprechzeitpunkt der wiedergegebenen Äußerung - ;d.h. sie werden logophorisch [...] verwendet. Der Konjunktiv I und der Konjunktiv II sind in dieser Hinsicht gleichwertig [...].*

With the subjunctive the speaker indicates that he wants the content of the sentence to be understood as an indirect report of another person's utterance, and he [the reporter] himself does not indicate whether or not he considers the utterance to be valid at the time of the report. In appropriate contexts this can also apply to the thoughts of another person. Indirectness means that deictic pronouns are chosen from the point of view of the [reporting] speaker; other deictic categories in a broader sense can in certain circumstances reflect the point of view of the original speaker.<sup>51</sup>

(Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 538)

Fabricius-Hansen holds that the subjunctive has the same function as the indicative in indirect speech (2006: 538). Significantly, she considers the reportative subjunctive to be 'superfluous' (*überflüssig*) in indirect speech in *dass*-clauses when embedded under such verbs as *sagen*, *behaupten*, *fragen* ('ask') and *schreiben*: '[e]ven with an indicative the dependent clause will be understood as indirect speech'<sup>52</sup> (Fabricius-Hansen 2006: 539). Fabricius-Hansen provides the following example (2006: 539):

(44) *Um 18.57 Uhr erwähnt er nebenbei, dass die DDR ihre Grenzen*  
 at 18.57 hour mentions he in passing that the GDR its borders

*öffne / öffnet, und zwar für alle.* (M. Wein)  
 opens.S1 opens.IND and it is true for everyone

'At 18.57 he mentions in passing that the GDR opened its borders, for everyone, in fact.'

As a result of the use of the conventional *verbum dicendi* *erwähnt* and the presence of the subordinating conjunction *dass*, for Fabricius-Hansen the meaning of (45) remains unchanged, regardless of whether the subjunctive form *öffne* or indicative *öffnet* is employed.

However, she describes the subjunctive as the 'normal mood' (*Normalmodus*) in indirect speech when *dass* is omitted because, since its tenses are understood unambiguously in relation to *t*<sup>1</sup>, the subjunctive rules out the possibility of the reported utterance being understood as direct speech (2006: 539).

<sup>51</sup> *Mit dem Konjunktiv gibt der Sprecher (Erzähler) zu verstehen, dass er den Satzinhalt als indirekte Wiedergabe einer »fremden« Äußerung verstanden wissen will, für die er selber im Sprechzeitpunkt keinen Gültigkeitsanspruch erhebt. In geeigneten Kontexten kann es sich auch um »fremde Gedanken« handeln. Indirektheit bedeutet, dass deiktische Pronomen aus der Sprecher-/Erzählerperspektive gewählt sind; andere i.w.S. deiktische Kategorien können unter Umständen die Figurenperspektive widerspiegeln.*

<sup>52</sup> *Man wird den abhängigen Satz auch im Indikativ als indirekte Rede verstehen.*

Fabricius-Hansen does not mention cases where the reportative subjunctive is embedded under verbs of denial. However, she does address an important distinction that the subjunctive-vs.-indicative opposition makes to how verbs such as (*dafür*) *tadeln* ('reproach'), *loben* ('praise'), *verantwortlich machen* ('make responsible') and *kritisieren* ('criticize') are understood. In cases such as example (45), where the indicative is used, '[...]' the hearer may – or must – assume that the speaker [...] wants the content of the dependent clause to be considered to be given'<sup>53</sup> (2006: 539):

- (45) [...] *und er kritisierte* [...], *dass Bohr voreilig die Erhaltungssätze*  
 and he criticized that Bohr prematurely the laws of conservation  
  
*und damit die Kausalität aufgegeben hatte.*  
 and in so doing the causality abandoned had.IND

'[...] and he [Einstein] criticized [...] the fact that Bohr had given up the laws of conservation prematurely and in doing so causality as well.'

If, however, the subjunctive is used, then '[the speaker] intends [the content of the subordinate clause] to be understood merely as the report of an utterance whose purpose is described by the matrix clause'<sup>54</sup> (2006: 539):

- (46) [...] *und er kritisierte* [...], *dass Bohr voreilig die Erhaltungssätze*  
 and he criticized that Bohr prematurely the laws of conservation  
  
*und damit die Kausalität aufgegeben habe.*  
 and in so doing the causality abandoned had.S1

'[...] and he made the criticism [...] that Bohr had given up the laws of conservation prematurely and in doing so causality as well.'

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<sup>53</sup> [...] *so darf – oder muss – der Hörer davon ausgehen, dass der Sprecher [...] den Inhalt des abhängigen Satzes als gegeben betrachtet wissen will.*

<sup>54</sup> *Er [der Sprecher] will ihn [den im Nebensatz beschriebenen Sachverhalt] bloß als Inhaltswiedergabe einer Äußerung verstanden haben, deren kommunikativen Zweck der redekomentierende Satz beschreibt.*

Fabricius-Hansen goes on to suggest that a similar distinction can be made between verbs of emotional attitude such as *bedauern*, *sich ärgern* and *sich freuen* with an indicative in their embedded clauses and those with a subjunctive form.

Fabricius-Hansen does not consider how the hearer recovers the ellipsed matrix clause in the case of reported speech, and why the tenses of the subjunctive cannot be understood in relation to  $t^0$ . However, Fabricius-Hansen's reticence in these matters can be attributed to the fact that the DUDEN grammar is ultimately a descriptive reference work rather than an explanatory text.

#### 2.3.3.4 Durrell (2011)

Durrell's purpose is to describe German grammar and usage to learners of German as a foreign language, which naturally influences how his claims are presented. He acknowledges implicitly that the tenses of the reportative subjunctive are understood in relation to  $t^1$ , however this is presented in learner-friendly terms: '[t]he basic principle is that the same tense of *Konjunktiv I* is used for the indirect speech as was used in the indicative in the original direct speech [...]' (2011: 325). Naturally no explanation for *why* the subjunctive is restricted to indirect and reported speech is provided; this does not fall within his remit.

Durrell's remarks on reported speech are brief. He points out that '*Konjunktiv I* is such a clear indication of indirect speech that it can be used on its own to show that a statement is simply reported' (2011: 326) and provides an example. However he does not suggest what sort of contextual information needs to be present to make an instance of reported speech pragmatically acceptable, thus he may be misunderstood as implying that reported speech may occur isolated.

He pays some attention to the sort of attitude that the reporter may indicate, using the reportative subjunctive, that she holds towards the reported proposition. He comments on the distinction in meaning which is held to exist by some speakers between instances of indirect speech with S1, those with S2 and those which employ an indicative finite verb (2011: 329), a distinction that has likely been reinforced by the work of authorities like Flämig and Jäger. According to Durrell, whilst the use of S1 enables the speaker to report someone else's statement neutrally, as in (47a) below, the use of S2, as in (47b), is sometimes understood to indicate that the speaker believes that Manfred's utterance is not true:

(47a) *Manfred sagt, dass er krank gewesen sei.*  
Manfred says that he ill been is.S1

‘Manfred says that he has been ill.’

(47b) *Manfred sagt, dass er krank gewesen wäre.*

The use of the indicative, however, ‘[...] would acknowledge that it is a fact that he had been ill’ (2011: 329):

(47c) *Manfred sagt, dass er krank gewesen ist.*

Durrell concludes by pointing out that this distinction is never consistently maintained and considers the choice between indicative and subjunctive to be determined primarily by stylistic considerations (2011: 329). His own point of view regarding the ‘meaning’ of the subjunctive is that ‘[b]y using *Konjunktiv I* we can indicate that we are simply reporting what someone else said, without committing ourselves to saying whether we think it is true or not’ (2011: 326). Thus Durrell appears to undermine the notion that the reportative subjunctive is in reality compatible with any interpretive stance that the reporter may hold towards a reported proposition.

#### 2.3.3.5 Whittle et al. (2011)

Another pedagogical grammar is that of Whittle et al. (2011). Their comments concern primarily the form of the subjunctive in indirect speech; rather less is said about its tenses and function. Like Durrell (2011) their comments regarding the tense of the reportative subjunctive in indirect speech are presented in learner-friendly terms: ‘German keeps the tense of the original but shifts the form of the verb into subjunctive I’ (2011: 125). No remarks at all are made about reported speech.

Particularly interesting are Whittle et al.’s remarks about the attitudes that different subjunctive forms may be used to imply towards a reported proposition. For them, S1 is used in neutral reports. However:

[w]here German speakers use both subjunctive I and subjunctive II for reported speech, the use of the second subjunctive usually implies a greater distance

between the speaker and the truth of what is being reported, even an air of doubt and scepticism.

(Whittle et al. 2011: 125)

Their example is (48):

- (48) Actual words: *Ich habe keine Zeit.*  
I have no time
- Neutral report: *Er sagte, er **habe** keine Zeit.*  
he said he has.S1 no time
- Report with possible doubt: *Er sagte, er **hätte** keine Zeit.*  
he said he has.S2 no time

‘He said he didn’t have any time.’

Later on (2011: 339) Whittle et al. reiterate this view about the function of S2 in indirect speech, claiming that ‘[i]n order to imply severe doubts about the truth of what has been said, subjunctive II may be employed’ (emphasis mine). This time their example is:

- (49) *Er sagt, er **hätte** kein Geld / er **hätte** angerufen.*  
he says he has.S2 no money he has.S2 telephoned

‘He says he has no money/he called (but I don’t believe it)’.

But these claims are contradicted when they recognize the inconsistency which characterizes the use of S1 and S2: ‘[...] some speakers tend to favour subjunctive II as the preferred form for much reported speech, so usage varies considerably’ (Whittle et al. 2011: 123).

Ultimately, Whittle et al. fail to consider the role played by context in determining the attitude which a reporter holds towards a proposition.

### 2.3.4 *Issues of (non-)factivity*

In this subsection we look at the work of three authorities who assign particular importance to the question of (non-)factivity and indirect speech. We shall take Thieroff (1992) and Eisenberg (1986/2004) together, since they both consider the viewpoint of the host discourse and hold that the function of the German reportative subjunctive is to signal non-factivity. This will be followed by a consideration of Diewald (1999) who argues that the function of the reportative subjunctive is to signal that the original speaker assigned the value [-non-factive] to her original utterance.<sup>55</sup>

#### 2.3.4.1 *Non-factivity: Eisenberg (1986, 2004) and Thieroff (1992)*

For Eisenberg the reportative subjunctive '[...]' is not associated with indirect speech, it is rather more generally associated with non-factivity<sup>56</sup> (Eisenberg 2004: 119). He divides verbs which require a subordinate clause into three classes (2004: 117):

- a. *Karl meint / behauptet / hofft / glaubt, dass Egon bleiben*  
Karl thinks claims hopes believes that Egon stay

**will/wolle.**

wants.IND/S1

'Karl think/claims/hopes/believes that Egon wants to stay.'

- b. *Karl versteht / vergisst / entschuldigt / weiß, dass Egon bleiben*  
Karl understands forgets excuses knows that Egon stay

**will/\*wolle**

wants.IND/\*S1

'Karl understands/forgets/excuses the fact that/knows that Egon wants to stay.'

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<sup>55</sup> The small minus sign in [-non-factive] indicates 'not non-factive'.

<sup>56</sup> [...] ist nicht an die indirekte Rede, sondern allgemeiner an Nichtfaktivität gebunden.

- c. *Karl berichtet / erzählt / teilt mit / sagt, dass Egon bleiben will/wolle*  
 Karl reports tells announces says that Egon stay wants.IND/S1

'Karl reports/tells/announces/says that Egon wants to stay.'

It is those verbs in classes A and C that are of interest to us, since class B verbs are by definition factive in the sense that they presuppose their complement proposition and thus, according to Eisenberg, can only be accompanied by indicative verbs. Eisenberg claims that there is no difference in meaning between an indicative *dass*-clause following a class A verb and a *dass*-clause with a subjunctive finite verb in the same position, since these verbs are always non-factive (and thus do not presuppose their complement proposition): '**Karl hofft, dass Egon bleiben will and Karl hofft, dass Egon bleiben wolle** mean the same. The subjunctive has no function in the case of the verbs in group a.'<sup>57</sup> (2004: 118). On the other hand, according to Eisenberg, it can make a difference whether a speaker uses an indicative or a subjunctive in a *dass*-clause following a class C verb. In the 1989 edition Eisenberg holds that the presence of an indicative in such a *dass*-clause (as in (50a)) instructs the hearer to understand the matrix verb factively, while a subjunctive (as in (50b)) will indicate that the speaker intends the hearer to understand the matrix verb as non-factive (examples from page 131):

- (50a) *Bild berichtet, dass der Graf verhaftet worden ist.*  
 Bild reports that the count arrested become is.IND

- (50b) *Bild berichtet, dass der Graf verhaftet worden sei.*  
 Bild reports that the count arrested become is.S1

'Bild reports that the count has been arrested.'

Furthermore, Eisenberg claims that verbs with both a factive and a non-factive variant are those '[...] which are factive in their basic meaning'<sup>58</sup> (1989: 132). However, in a critique of Eisenberg, Thieroff (1992: 254) points out that some verbs which are non-factive in their basic meaning (i.e. Eisenberg's class C verbs) *can* be

<sup>57</sup> **Karl hofft, dass Egon bleiben will und Karl hofft, dass Egon bleiben wolle** bedeuten dasselbe. Der Konjunktiv ist bei den Verben in a. funktionslos.

<sup>58</sup> [...] die in ihrer Grundbedeutung faktiv sind.

understood factively if accompanied by an indicative. An example of these verbs is *schreiben*:

- (51) *Bild hat jetzt endlich geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden ist.*  
Bild has now finally written that the count arrested become is.IND

‘*Bild* has at last written that the count has been arrested.’

The most plausible interpretation of (51) is that it is a known fact that the *Graf* has been arrested and that this fact is therefore presupposed. Thus the emphasis is on the fact that *Bild* has now reported this. This, according to Thieroff, becomes even clearer in the negative (1992: 254):

- (52a) *Bild hat nicht geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden ist.*  
Bild has not written that the count arrested become is.IND

‘*Bild* has not written that the count has been arrested.’

The implication here is that the *Graf* is known to have been arrested, but *Bild* has not reported it. However, if we substitute a subjunctive:

- (52b) *Bild hat nicht geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden sei.*

then (52b) should be understood ‘[...] as a contradiction of the claim that *Bild* has announced the arrest of the count’<sup>59</sup> (Thieroff 1992: 254). Thieroff concludes this part of his comments on Eisenberg by remarking that:

[f]rom this it follows that non-factive verbs can actually have a factive and a non-factive variant in their basic meaning as well. Sentences with such verbs in their main clause are clearly ambiguous if their complement clause is in the indicative, and unambiguously non-factive when the complement clause is in the subjunctive.<sup>60</sup>

(Thieroff 1992: 254)

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<sup>59</sup> [...] als Widerspruch zu der Behauptung, ‚Bild‘ habe die Verhaftung des Grafen gemeldet.

<sup>60</sup> [d]araus folgt, dass in der Tat auch in ihrer Grundbedeutung nicht-faktive Verben eine factive und eine nicht-faktive Variante haben können. Sätze mit solchen Verben im Obersatz sind offenbar ambig, wenn der Komplementsatz im Indikativ steht, eindeutig nicht-faktiv, wenn der Komplementsatz im Konjunktiv steht.

In the 2004 edition of his text, Eisenberg revises his position and comes closer to that of Thieroff in assuming that class C verbs can be understood as either factive or non-factive if accompanied by an indicative:

The indicative as the unmarked modal category does not force a factive reading, but it makes one possible. This is true of all verbs in group c. In the case of these verbs the function of the subjunctive is to signal non-factivity. These verbs are neither unambiguously factive nor non-factive, but they can be understood in both ways. Thus the signalling of non-factivity is marked.<sup>61</sup>

(Eisenberg 2004: 118)

Thus Eisenberg holds that the presence of a subjunctive in a complement clause ensures a non-factive reading, whilst in the case of an embedded indicative either a factive or a non-factive reading is possible; such cases are ambiguous.

Eisenberg makes some valid insights regarding the function of the subjunctive in ensuring that an utterance is understood as indirect speech: his observations concerning the difference that the subjunctive can make when the matrix verb can be understood either factively or non-factively are particularly illuminating. Thus Eisenberg offers a possible response to our second question: how do we account for the fact that certain *factive* verbs can introduce indirect speech with the feature indirectness when the subjunctive is embedded under them. On Eisenberg's account, verbs such as *kritisieren* and *bedauern* can be considered to have both a factive and a non-factive variant. However, Eisenberg apparently does not recognize the compatibility of the German reportative subjunctive with any interpretive stance of the reporter towards the reported proposition. Furthermore, he focusses on the function of the reportative subjunctive in indicating non-factivity to the extent that other crucial aspects, such as how its tenses are understood in indirect speech and the question of reported speech, are overlooked. In this latter connection Thieroff (1992) remarks:

[The case of reported speech] is not considered at all in Eisenberg (1989), indeed one gets the impression that the subjunctive of non-factivity is restricted to complement clauses and that it does not mark indirect speech in any case.<sup>62</sup>

(Thieroff 1992: 257)

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<sup>61</sup> *Der Indikativ als unmarkierte Moduskategorie erzwingt die faktive Leseart nicht, aber er macht sie möglich. Das gilt so für alle Verben aus der Gruppe C. Bei ihnen dient der Konjunktiv zur Signalisierung von Nichtfaktivität. Diese Verben sind weder einfach faktiv noch nichtfaktiv, sondern sie können auf beide Weisen verstanden werden. Dabei ist die Signalisierung von Nichtfaktivität markiert.*

<sup>62</sup> *[Der Fall der berichteten Rede] bleibt in Eisenberg 1989 gänzlich unberücksichtigt, ja es steht der Eindruck, als sei der Konjunktiv der Nicht-Faktivität auf Komplementsätze beschränkt und er könne in keinem Fall indirekte Rede anzeigen.*

We believe that Thieroff is right in his view that Eisenberg believes that the (chief) function of the subjunctive is to mark non-factivity in subordinate clauses. On our own view, the fact that reportative-subjunctive indirect speech is understood non-factively is a consequence of the fact that the primary function of the subjunctive is to indicate indirect speech which bears the property indirectness.

The account of Thieroff (1992), who in addition to questions of factivity considers the tenses of the German reportative subjunctive, is rather more satisfactory. He recognizes the relative nature of the tenses of the subjunctive, and remarks that '[...] in indirect speech the tenses of the subjunctive necessarily refer to the time of the original utterance (1992: 232).<sup>63</sup> Later on, Thieroff (1992: 231-232) addresses the issue of temporal deictic projection, or rather the fact that it is not possible to reproduce temporal deictic projection in reportative-subjunctive indirect speech. According to him, (53a) with its present-tense forms can be reported as (53b) but not as (53c):

(53a) *Ich wollte gerade klingeln, da springt mich plötzlich ein Hund an.*  
 I wanted just ring when jumps at me suddenly a dog SP

'I was just about to ring the bell when a dog suddenly jumps up at me'

(53b) *S1 erzählte, er **habe** gerade klingeln wollen, da **habe** ihn plötzlich ein Hund angesprungen.*  
 S1 explained he has.S1 just ring wanted when has.S1 him suddenly a dog jumped at

'S1 [i.e. speaker 1] explained that he was just about to ring the bell when a dog suddenly jumped up at him.'

(53c) ? *S1 erzählte, er **habe** gerade klingeln wollen, da **springe** ihn plötzlich ein Hund an.*

Thieroff's explanation for the unacceptability of (53c) is as follows. Earlier in his 1992 book, he claims that the basic meaning of the present tense is 'E [event time]

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<sup>63</sup> [...] in der indirekten Rede [...] [sind] die konjunktivischen Tempora notwendig auf den referierten Zeitpunkt bezogen.

not-before S (speech time)<sup>64</sup> (1992: 100). However, the fact that formulations such as that in (53a), i.e. with an historic present, are (depending on pronunciation) permissible is evidence that in the case of the indicative some deviations from 'E not-before S' are possible and that this is a 'purely pragmatic phenomenon of use' (1992: 232).<sup>65</sup> But the unacceptability of (53c) shows that 'E not-before S' applies to the subjunctive without exception. However, in spite of his accurate observations regarding how the tenses of the subjunctive in indirect speech are understood, Thieroff does not suggest *why* 'E not-before S' always applies to the subjunctive present (or non-past).

In his discussion of reported speech, Thieroff, unlike the authorities mentioned so far, considers the question of what makes a stretch of reported speech acceptable. He claims that in some cases being able to infer who the original speaker is will make an instance of reported speech felicitous (1992: 258). He quotes an example from Pütz (1989):

(54) *Manager der Neuen Heimat erledigen Dienstliches bisweilen*  
 managers of the New Homeland carry out official occasionally

*auch im Puff – das sei im Geschäftsleben nicht*  
 also in the brothel that is.S1 in the business life not

*ungewöhnlich.*

unusual

'Managers of the *New Homeland* also occasionally perform 'official' duties in the brothel – [they say] that is not unusual for business life.'

In this case it is clear that the original speakers are the managers. However, Thieroff ultimately appears not to recognize the need for any specific sort of context that would make an instance of reported speech acceptable (1992: 258). He quotes the following example from Engel (1998: 113) (Thieroff 1992: 258):

(55) *Sein Vater war Tuchhändler gewesen, aber schon vor dem Krieg*  
 his father was draper been but already before the war

<sup>64</sup> E [Ereigniszeit] nicht-vor S [Sprechzeit]

<sup>65</sup> rein pragmatische Verwendungsweise

*gestorben. Die Mutter hatte dann als Lehrer gearbeitet und in*  
died the mother had then as teacher worked and in

*dieser Funktion vielen in Not Geratenen geholfen. Nach der*  
this function many in need ended up helped after the

*Besetzung sei sie in die galizischen Wälder gegangen. Einmal noch*  
occupation is.S1 she in the Galician woods gone once still

*sei sie in ihrer Geburtsstadt gesehen worden.*  
is.S1 she in her town of birth seen become

‘His father had been a draper but had died before the war. After that his mother worked as a teacher and in this capacity she helped many people in need. [They say that] after the occupation she went into the Galician woods and that she was seen one more time in the town where she was born.’

According to Thieroff the original speakers are ‘unnamed informants’ (*ungenannte Informanten*), and concludes that ‘[i]ndirect speech therefore even occurs (in the form of reported speech) completely independently of introductory verbs or other corresponding expressions’ (1992: 258).<sup>66</sup>

Thieroff does not explain how the hearer understands the tenses of reported speech to be relative to  $t^1$ . This is arguably the case because, due to the existence of examples such as (55) where the subjunctive occurs ‘in the absence of any supporting context’<sup>67</sup> (Thieroff 1992: 258, quoting Engel (1988: 113)) he sees no need to do so. However, Thieroff does make some valid comments about the tenses of the reportative subjunctive specifically in relation to the concept of temporal deictic projection. Finally, as a consequence of emphasizing the role of the reportative subjunctive in signalling non-factivity, Thieroff, like Eisenberg, underestimates the range of attitudes, including factivity, with whose contextual expression the reportative subjunctive is demonstrably compatible.

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<sup>66</sup> *Indirekte Rede kommt also (in der Form der berichteten Rede) auch völlig unabhängig von redevleitenden Verben oder anderen entsprechenden Ausdrücken vor.*

<sup>67</sup> *wenn kein stützender Kontext vorhanden ist*

#### 2.3.4.2 Diewald (1999)

Diewald's (1999) chief purpose is to describe the semantics of the German reportative subjunctive from an essentially modal point of view. She proceeds from the premise that '[t]he central function of S1 is [...] the indication of indirect speech'<sup>68</sup> (1999: 182). She claims that the reporting speaker refers to the quoted speaker as the origin (*Origo*) of the quotation and '[...] presents the relationship between the quoted speaker and the quotation as factive, i.e. he [the reporter] maintains that the quoted speaker uttered the quotation'<sup>69</sup> (1999: 182). For Diewald, the function of S1 in indirect speech is to indicate the degree of factivity that the original speaker assigned to her utterance, namely the value [-non-factive]. Therefore, '[a] paraphrase for the meaning of the subjunctive is [...]: the current speaker says that it is factive that the quoted speaker says that the proposition is factive'<sup>70</sup> (1999: 183).

From the point of view of the host context, the subjunctive is used to express the distance between the reporter and the alleged factivity of the reported proposition, '[...] and not, as is often assumed, the doubts of the current speaker regarding the degree of factivity assigned by the original speaker [...]'<sup>71</sup> (1999: 183). In this connection she points out that '[i]n scientific texts and reports [...] the subjunctive provides an economical means of indicating the origin of utterances which are reported with no doubt as to their truth [...]'<sup>72</sup> (1999: 183). In other words, for Diewald the subjunctive may be used to signal factivity not only from the point of view of the original speaker, but also from that of the reporter, whilst still making explicit that the utterance concerned is to be understood as indirect speech. Interestingly, Diewald claims that reporter attitudes such as doubt regarding the truth of the reported proposition are recovered by the hearer via conversational implicature (1999: 183), although she does not suggest the nature of this process.

Diewald's approach has a clear advantage over those of Flämig (1959), Jäger (1971), Eisenberg (1986, 2004), Thieroff (1992), Durrell (2011) and Whittle et al. (2011) in that it acknowledges the range of reporter attitudes that the reportative subjunctive may play a role in prompting the hearer to infer. More specifically, the

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<sup>68</sup> *Die zentrale Funktion des Konjunktivs I ist [...] die Kennzeichnung indirekter Rede.*

<sup>69</sup> *[...] stellt die Relation zwischen zitiertem Sprecher und Zitat als faktisch dar, d.h. er behauptet, daß der zitierte Sprecher das Zitierte gesagt hat.*

<sup>70</sup> *Eine Umschreibung für die Bedeutung des Konjunktivs ist [...]: der aktuelle Sprecher sagt, es ist faktisch, daß der zitierte Sprecher sagt, die Proposition ist faktisch.*

<sup>71</sup> *[...] und nicht, wie oft angenommen, die Zweifel des aktuellen Sprechers an der Faktizitätsbewertung des zitierten Sprechers.*

<sup>72</sup> *[i]n wissenschaftlichen und berichtenden Textsorten [...] dient der Konjunktiv als ökonomisches Mittel zur Kennzeichnung der Herkunft von Aussagen, die ohne Zweifel an ihrer Richtigkeit wiedergegeben werden [...]*

'default' attitude is that of the original speaker from the point of view of the reporter, i.e. the reporter asserts the reported proposition is factive for the original speaker. This, however, does not preclude the possibility of the reporter implying her own attitude towards the reported proposition inferentially. On the other hand, her account does not address questions such as how the tenses of the subjunctive are understood, the effect of the subjunctive when subordinate to factives such as *kritisieren* and *bedauern*, the embedding of the subjunctive under verbs of denial and she does not consider reported speech.

### 2.3.5 Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004)

One of the more important accounts of the German reportative subjunctive produced in recent years is that of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004), a complex analysis which is conducted within the framework of discourse representation theory.

For Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø those German indirect-speech contexts in which the reportative subjunctive may occur form a continuum with prototypical indirect speech at one extreme and totally independent reported speech without any explicit inquit in the context at the other. Between these two extremes there are intermediate cases, such as the subjunctive embedded under verbs of emotional attitude like *bedauern* and *sich ärgern*, as well as cases where the subjunctive occurs in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial, such as *bestreiten* and *verneinen*. Thus they aim to suggest a semantics for the reportative subjunctive which accounts for all these uses, and in their conclusion claim that '[...] the reportive [sic.] subjunctive emerges as a semantically uniform sign whose variability is a function of contextual variation' (2004: 254). Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø claim that '[t]he RS [reportative subjunctive] performs two functions: It turns a DRS [discourse representation structure] into a DRS in intension – a proposition – and it introduces the presupposition that somebody says –normally, claims – that proposition' (2004: 232-233).

In prototypical indirect speech this reportative presupposition is verified: this means that the indicative can be substituted '[...] without a noticeable change in meaning: it seems redundant [...]' (2004: 213). In such cases the subjunctive receives a concord reading. This is the case in example (56):

- (56) *Der «SonntagsBlick» berichtete in seiner letzten Ausgabe, dass der neue the SonntagsBlick reported in its latest edition that the new*

*Zug aber noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden sei.*  
train but yet at all not sufficiently tested become is.S1

‘In the latest edition of *SonntagsBlick* it was reported that the new train has not yet been adequately tested at all.’

(*Die Südostschweiz*: 09/06/2009)

Elsewhere the reportative presupposition must be partially accommodated. In the case of reported speech the sentence, which is syntactically independent, ‘[...] is understood as if it were, after all, in a *verbum dicendi* context where the utterer and other aspects of the utterance situation are provided by the preceding context’ (2004: 226). Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø provide a complex explanation of two ways in which the reportative presupposition is accommodated. If there is no explicit inquit in the preceding discourse then the presupposition will be accommodated both intra- and intersententially: ‘The utterer (and utterance time [...]) is verified in the preceding context [intersentential accommodation], whereas the utterance relation is accommodated on top of the sentence itself [intrasentential accommodation]’ (Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2004: 247). If there is an explicit inquit in the context, then the reportative subjunctive’s reportative presupposition is accommodated intersententially alone: ‘[...] the speaker (and the speech time [...]) is, as before, verified in the context [...]’ and the speech relation already present is reused (Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2004: 248).

An example provided by Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø where the subjunctive is embedded under a verb of denial is the following (2004: 243):

(57) *Er dementierte nicht, Geishas für Liebesbeziehungen bezahlt zu haben,*  
he denied not Geishas for love relations paid to have

*bestritt aber, dass das unmoralisch sei.*  
denied but that that immoral is.S1

‘He did not deny that he had paid geishas for love relations, but he did deny that that was immoral.’

Their own explanation of this is the following:

Intrasententially, the presupposition is blatantly falsified: the assertion expresses the exact opposite of what it should to verify this presupposition. The reason the presupposition can still be justified is that it can transcend the sentence boundary, finding an antecedent in a piece of preceding discourse expressing that someone else has claimed what the subject disclaims. This shows that the RS presupposition is not so special after all; its relevant context is [...] the merge of that sentence and the larger context.

(Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2004: 243)

Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø seem to be saying that in cases such as (57) the reportative presupposition which the subjunctive carries is accommodated globally.

There is evidence that the view that the reportative subjunctive carries a reportative presupposition is mistaken. Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø suggest (2004: 240-241) that the occurrence of the subjunctive in example (58), where it is embedded under the first-person singular present-tense form *ich teile die Auffassung*, is to be explained in the same terms as its occurrence in clauses subordinate to verbs of denial (example from page 241):

(58) *Ich teile die Auffassung, dass das Gemälde eine Fälschung sei.*

I share the view that the painting a forgery is.S1

'I share the view that the painting is a forgery.'

Thus, according to Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø, the presupposition is satisfied by the notion that someone else has claimed that the painting is a forgery. If they are right, then it ought to be possible to embed the subjunctive under a first-person singular present-tense verb of denial:

(59) \* *Ich bestreite, dass das Gemälde eine Fälschung sei.*

Again, the fact that someone else has claimed that the painting is a forgery ought to motivate the subjunctive. However, like other cases where the subjunctive occurs in a clause which is embedded under a first-person singular present-tense matrix verb, (59) is ungrammatical.

Schwager (2010) holds that if Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø were right then we would expect the instance of S1 in (60) both to be felicitous and to receive a global reading because the preceding context supposedly '[ensures] that the [reportative] presupposition attributed to the GRS [German reportative subjunctive] is satisfied

globally' (Schwager 2010: 240):

(60) (*Hans hat gestern behauptet, dass Legrenzi sein Lehrer gewesen*  
Hans has yesterday claimed that Legrenzi his teacher been

*sei.*) ? *Es ist jedoch höchst unwahrscheinlich, dass Legrenzi sein*  
is it is however highly improbable that Legrenzi his

*Lehrer gewesen sei.*

teacher been is.S1

'(Hans claimed yesterday that Legrenzi used to be his teacher.) However, it is highly improbable that Legrenzi used to be his teacher.'

But this instance of S1 is not felicitous in standard German. Furthermore, in our view, if Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø's analysis were correct then we would expect its occurrence in such clauses to depend primarily on stylistic, rather than contextual, considerations. In other words, we would expect it to occur regularly in these clauses in formal written German, in the same way that it is regularly embedded under verbs such as *sagen* and *berichten* in more formal contexts. However, as we suggested above in section 2.2.9, the reportative subjunctive is generally embedded under verbs of denial in *reportative* contexts, as in example (39) (repeated below). In this case, a single person (Morgan Tsvangirai) is reported as having denied the embedded propositions on a specific occasion. Additionally, the prototypical indirect speech in the next sentence is understood as a continuation of the same report:

(39) *Vehement dementierte er, dass seine MDC in Botswana oder sonstwo in Afrika Militärausbildungslager **unterhalte** und einen gewaltsamen Sturz des Mugabe-Regimes **anstrebe**, wie es von dessen Propaganda behauptet wird. Die MDC **sei** eine demokratische Bewegung, die ihre politischen Ziele auf friedlichem Wege **verfolge**.*

In less obviously reportative contexts, such as example (61), where the focus is on the illocutionary act of denying the embedded proposition, an indicative form is more likely:

(61) *Daneben steht der Iran, ein Land, das zwar offiziell*  
alongside stands the Iran a country which it is true official

*noch leugnet, dass sein Atomprogramm der Waffenproduktion*  
till denies that its atomic programme the production of weapons

*dient, aber dessen Ambitionen ein offenes Geheimnis sind.*  
serves.IND but whose ambitions an open secret are

‘There is also Iran, a country which admittedly still officially denies that its atomic programme serves the production of weapons, but whose ambitions are an open secret.’

(*Hannoversche Allgemeine*: 28/05/2009)

In this example no specific act of denying is reported. Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø’s account, however, predicts that a reportative subjunctive is likely to occur because the verb of denial *leugnen* presupposes that it has previously been claimed that Iran’s atomic programme serves the production of weapons.

### 2.3.6 Existing views: Conclusions

The texts we have considered above are diverse in terms of their purpose and scope. Some of them have a purely pedagogical purpose and are intended for foreign learners of German (e.g. Durrell 2011; Whittle et al. 2011) and as such are descriptive rather than explanatory. Some are reference works intended for native speakers, whilst also being informed by recent linguistic insights (Zifonun et al. 1997; Eisenberg 2004; Fabricius-Hansen 2006) whilst a third group are essentially academic in spirit: these include Flämig (1959), Jäger (1971), Thieroff (1992), Diewald (1999) and, especially, Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004).

None of the texts presents, in our view, a fully adequate account of the German reportative subjunctive. The only analysis which benefits from being conducted within a particular framework is that of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004). However, we have shown that the notion that the reportative subjunctive carries a reportative presupposition is ultimately untenable because it does not adequately account for its distribution, for example it incorrectly predicts certain usages.

These accounts also do not, in our view, sufficiently account for the essential difference between the indicative and reportative subjunctive, i.e. the notion that the tenses of the latter can be understood only in relation to  $t^1$  and that the subjunctive is restricted to indirect speech which bears the property indirectness. (However, as we have suggested, the authors of pedagogical texts should not be criticized for this: accounting for such phenomena does not fall within their remit.)

A shortcoming which characterizes several of these works concerns the attitude which a reporter will convey towards the reported proposition through her use of the German reportative subjunctive. This is often seen as a *semantic* question, particularly when the meaning of S2 (not in its replacement function) is considered: S2 is often seen as indicating that the reporter considers the reported proposition to be false. An adequate account, however, will proceed from the empirically substantiable premise that the subjunctive is compatible with *any* attitude that the reporter may wish to imply contextually and that, furthermore, identifying this interpretive stance falls within the domain of *pragmatics* rather than semantics.

In the next chapter we shall consider a specific framework in some detail: that of relevance theory. This is a general theory of utterance comprehension which is predicated on the assumption that human beings come with an innate endowment which allows them to metarepresent the intentions of others and thus to engage in inferential communication. Within relevance theory the German reportative subjunctive may be seen, alongside many other linguistic expressions, as a device which facilitates a hearer's process of metarepresenting the meaning which the speaker intends to convey, in other words it helps the hearer recover the interpretation intended by the speaker. More specifically, we shall show that it aids the hearer's process of understanding an utterance as an instance of indirect speech, which is seen in relevance theory as a specific variety of a type of language called interpretive use. Importantly, in the case of interpretive use, '[...] the communicated information (the 'message') itself contains a metarepresentational element, which is intended to be recognised as such' (Noh 2000: 4). Our relevance-theoretic analysis of the German reportative subjunctive will allow us to answer, in cognitively plausible terms, *all* of the questions we posed in section 2.2.11.

## 2.4 Chapter summary

In the first half of this chapter we considered in some detail the form and function of the German reportative subjunctive in indirect speech. In section 2.2.11 we

presented some (relatively) uncontroversial assumptions regarding the reportative subjunctive which we had gleaned from section 2.2, and from which a comprehensive account of the reportative subjunctive needs, in our view, to proceed. After this we stated the five phenomena of the German reportative subjunctive for which we ourselves intend to account in the remainder of this study: if our analysis can account for these phenomena then it can be said to be adequate.

Our first question concerns the precise nature of the distinction between the indicative and the reportative subjunctive. How do we account for the fact that the reportative subjunctive is restricted to indirect-speech which displays indirectness? Secondly, how do we account for the fact that the subjunctive may be embedded under some factive verbs, such as *kritisieren* and *bedauern* such that they are understood to introduce indirect speech with the property indirectness? Thirdly, how do we account for the fact that verbs of denial are capable of accepting a reportative subjunctive in their complement clause? Fourthly, in the case of reported speech, how does the hearer identify and construct the ellipsed matrix clause on the level of mental representation? Finally, how do we account for the fact that the German reportative subjunctive is compatible with the contextual expression of any interpretive stance of the reporter towards the reported proposition?

In the second half of this chapter, we considered what some authorities have previously said about the German reportative subjunctive, and in the case of each we identified some shortcomings in the analysis provided.

# 3

## Relevance theory, procedural meaning and interpretive use

### 3.1 Introduction

Relevance theory is a theory of communication which was first developed in a series of papers written by the French scholar Dan Sperber and the British scholar Deirdre Wilson between the late 1970s and 1986. In 1986, as a culmination of the previous years' work, Sperber and Wilson published the first edition of their influential book *Relevance: Communication and Cognition*. The theory put forward in this book builds on the Gricean model of inferential communication in the sense that it takes as its basis a claim which is central to Grice's concept of nonnatural meaning, known as meaning<sub>NN</sub> (Grice 1989: 213-223). This claim is that the expression and recognition of intentions is essential to human communication. However, Sperber and Wilson also deviate from Grice's theory: they attempt to identify a cognitive basis for the mechanisms that a hearer deploys in utterance comprehension and in doing so they eliminate Grice's conversational maxims whilst privileging the concept of relation (relevance).

This chapter is structured as follows. The first part will deal with the essential elements of relevance theory, beginning with a critical consideration of Grice's model of inferential communication. We shall look at relevance theory's cognitive and communicative principles of relevance, the processes that a hearer must deploy in order to arrive at the meaning intended by a speaker, and the concepts of explicature and implicature. In the next section we shall investigate in some detail the relevance-theoretic concept of procedural meaning, which will be of particular importance to us in Chapter 3 when we look at the procedural meaning which the German reportative subjunctive encodes. The final part of this chapter will be devoted to a consideration of the distinction made by relevance theorists between descriptive and interpretive uses of language. The chapter will end with an examination of some linguistic devices associated with interpretive use.

## 3.2 Relevance theory

### 3.2.1 Grice's theory of conversational implicature

The theory of conversational implicature proposed by Grice occupies a special position within the philosophy of language and pragmatics. Grice's central idea is that when a speaker produces an utterance, the speaker intends '[...] the utterance of *x* to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention' (Grice 1989: 220). Grice suggests that the hearer will be aided in his recovery of the speaker's specific intention by his expectation that the speaker is conforming to certain standards, alongside contextual considerations and observations concerning the speaker's behaviour. He expresses the standards in terms of nine conversational maxims, divided into four categories. These categories are *quantity* (make your contribution no more and no less informative than is required), *quality* (be truthful), *relation* (be relevant) and *manner* (be concise, avoiding obscurity and ambiguity of expression). Importantly, the nine maxims are held to be subservient to an underlying principle: the *Cooperative Principle*.

For Grice, 'what is said' is the truth-conditional content of an utterance, and he referred to any non-truth-conditional meanings carried by an utterance using the term *implicature*. The most important type of implicature is called *particularized conversational implicature* by Grice. Such an implicature can be generated in two ways: by observing the maxims and by flouting them. Either way, the Cooperative Principle is said to hold. The implicature in (1b) (below), for example, is arrived at when the hearer understands the speaker to have observed the third maxim of relation. Despite the apparent discrepancy, on purely linguistic grounds, between Andrew's question and Jennifer's response, Andrew expects Jennifer's answer to be relevant, and this expectation guides him towards Jennifer's intended meaning:

(1a) ANDREW: What did you think of the hotel where you stayed?

JENNIFER: It was miles from the beach and the air-conditioning didn't work.

(1b) Jennifer did not like the hotel.

Grice's work has exerted considerable influence over the domains of pragmatics and philosophy of language. However, although many scholars (importantly Horn (1984, 1989, 2004) and Levinson (1987a, 1987b, 1991, 2000) who reduce Grice's maxims to two and three principles respectively) are now working within neo-Gricean frameworks, some criticisms can be directed against his ideas. If

Grice's theory of conversational implicature is to be plausible as a pragmatic theory which is applicable to all human verbal communication, then it needs to be demonstrated that the conversational maxims are innate and therefore universal. However, this is one place where Grice's theory fails; indeed, Grice himself suggests that they are learnt:

[I]t is just a well-recognized empirical fact that people do behave in these ways; they learned to do so in childhood and have not lost the habit of doing so; and, indeed, it would involve a good deal of effort to make a radical departure from the habit.

(Grice 1989: 29)

Furthermore, there exists empirical evidence that suggests that the conversational maxims, as Grice conceived of them, are acquired. For example, there appear to be cultures in which a maxim of politeness plays a role in communication, and this maxim overrides the other maxims, particularly those of quality and manner. One such culture is that of Japan, and Loveday (1982: 364) shows that in Japanese it can be offensive to say 'no', and that it can even be preferable to lie rather than use this word.

The notion that Grice's conversational maxims are arguably ultimately culture-specific does not itself preclude the existence of an underlying maxim or principle which cannot be flouted and is thus understood to hold in all circumstances. However, as Wilson and Sperber (2004: 613) claim, the underlying principle (the 'Cooperative Principle') which Grice proposed is inadequate. For them, evidence for this is the fact one cannot use silence in conversation in order to implicate that one is *unwilling* to supply information. Rather, silence can implicate only *inability*, and then only if it results from a clash with the quality maxims. Wilson and Sperber continue:

Unwillingness to make one's contribution "such as is required" is a violation of the Cooperative Principle; and since conversational implicatures are recoverable only on the assumption that the Cooperative Principle is being observed, it is impossible in Grice's framework to implicate that one is unwilling to provide the required information.

(Wilson and Sperber 2004: 613)

The process by which a hearer derives a given implicature can also be challenged. When a given utterance prompts the hearer to derive an implicature, there will be an infinite number of potential implicatures which are not incompatible

with the maxims and which are not made implausible by the specific context of the utterance. Some of these will be easily accessible, whilst others will be recoverable as a result of extending the context, which is in theory infinitely extendable. For example, the context in which Andrew processes Jennifer's response in (1a) potentially contains every assumption that one could possibly entertain about beaches and air-conditioning. For instance, beaches consist of trillions of grains of sand, whilst air-conditioning has been linked to the spread of Legionnaire's disease. Each of these assumptions could itself give rise to implicatures, and any one of these implicatures could be understood as that intended by the speaker. What Grice's model fails to explain is how the hearer selects the precise context in which the utterance is to be processed and thus selects from all the possible implicatures the implicature(s) which the speaker intends. Why is it that the remaining potential implicatures are normally automatically discarded, without even being entertained? How is it that, in a given context, answering 'I'm driving' in response to 'Would you like another drink?' is more likely to implicate 'No, I would not like another drink' than 'Yes, but it needs to be non-alcoholic'? Grice's model does not explain this.

What we are suggesting is that Grice's approach is not adequate as a model of inferential utterance interpretation. Ultimately, as our last criticism suggests, Grice does *not* achieve what he set out to do: explain how we recover the speaker's intended meaning. What follows is an overview of Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory. This is a model of communication that is held to be genuinely universal thanks to its being grounded in innate features of human cognition: it recognizes, for example, that human beings have an innate ability to metarepresent the intentions of others and that this plays a crucial role in the comprehension of utterances. Thus relevance theory suggests in plausible terms how hearers regularly recover the speaker's intended meaning.

### 3.2.2 *The cognitive principle of relevance*

Sperber and Wilson hold that human cognition has evolved such that the search for relevance is one of its essential features, and this is captured in Sperber and Wilson's cognitive principle of relevance. This principle states that (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 262):

**[...] human cognition *tends* to be organised so as to maximise relevance.**

But what do we mean by 'relevance'? At any time, there will be many assumptions, or '[...] thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world [...]' (1986/95: 2) that are *manifest* to an individual. An assumption is assumed to be manifest to an individual at a given time '[...] if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true' (1986/95: 39). For Sperber and Wilson, an input is *relevant* if when processed in a context of manifest assumptions a *positive cognitive effect* is generated. Wilson and Sperber (2004: 608) define 'positive cognitive effect' as '[...] a worthwhile difference to the individual's representation of the world: a true conclusion, for example'.

Given the tendency of humans to maximize relevance, it is possible for any stimulus or internal representation that supplies an input to cognitive processes to interact at some point with manifest assumptions and thus yield a positive cognitive effect. For example, I might leave my house one morning and start walking down the street towards the corner shop. I am surrounded by a considerable number of phenomena to which I *could* pay attention. There may be a gentle breeze blowing, a steady flow of traffic and a number of other people in the street, none of whom I know. However, I pay no heed to any of these. But then I look up and notice that there are some black clouds in the sky. In my mind I have available a highly accessible assumption about black clouds, namely, that they mean that it is likely to rain soon. So the visual stimulus of black clouds is processed in the context of this assumption with the result that I form a new assumption, namely that it will quite possibly rain soon, and maybe other assumptions, for example I may soon need an umbrella. This type of cognitive effect, where an input interacts with existing assumptions (old information) and as a result a fresh assumption is formed, is called a *contextual implication*. There are two other types of positive cognitive effect.

One type of positive cognitive effect is the confirmation or strengthening of existing assumptions. For example, later the same day I decide to visit a café for lunch which you have recommended to me. You have told me that the food is exceptionally good. The food comes to the table, and having cleared my plate, I am as impressed as you were. Thus an assumption I already held (that the food is very good) is confirmed.

Alternatively, I might find the food mediocre, the staff rude and the café overpriced. In this case I am likely to *abandon* the assumption that I held prior to my visit. Abandoning an already existing assumption as a result of processing an input is the third type of positive cognitive effect.

However, as Cummings (2005) points out, '[c]ognition has at its disposal finite resources – no cognitive process has access to a memory of infinite capacity,

and so on' (2005: 18). Therefore, it is not unexpected that the processing of an input '[...] will proceed in a cost-benefit fashion' (2005: 18). This means that the relevance of an input in the relevance-theoretic framework is measured not only in terms of the cognitive effects that are generated when it is processed but also in terms of the amount of effort that the individual must invest in order to process the input. The more cognitive effects generated, the greater the relevance of an input, but, inversely, the greater the effort required in order to process the input, the lesser its relevance. Wilson and Sperber formulate the relevance of an input to an individual thus (2004: 609):

- A. Other things being equal, the greater the positive cognitive effects achieved by processing an input, the greater the relevance of the input to the individual at that time.**
- B. Other things being equal, the greater the processing effort expended, the lower the relevance of the input to the individual at that time.**

The following is a slightly condensed and adapted version of a (somewhat artificial) example supplied by Wilson and Sperber (2004: 609-610). Jennifer has been invited to a dinner party but because she is allergic to chicken she telephones her host beforehand to find out what will be served. Below are two ways in which her host could answer her query:

- (2a) We are serving chicken.
- (2b) Either we are serving chicken or  $7^2 - 3$  is not 46.

Both of these responses to Jennifer's query are adequate in the sense that they will answer Jennifer's question, but the above definition of the relevance of an input predicts that the answer in (2a) will be more relevant because it requires less processing effort. It is thus the answer that her host is more likely to produce. Her host might conceivably respond with (2b) only if she believes that the extra processing effort it requires of Jennifer will be offset by additional positive cognitive effects which are worth her processing.

As we have seen, the cognitive principle of relevance states that human beings have a tendency to maximize relevance. Jennifer may exploit this natural tendency by modifying Andrew's environment in order to make manifest to this person an assumption, but without wishing to make her intention to do so overt. Wilson and Sperber explain this as follows:

[...] I may be able to produce a stimulus which is likely to attract your attention, activate an appropriate set of contextual assumptions and point you toward an intended conclusion. For example, I may leave my empty glass in your line of vision intending you to notice and conclude that I might like another drink.

(Wilson and Sperber: 2004: 611)

Such a person is said to have an *informative intention*, a term which Sperber and Wilson define thus (1986/95: 58):

***Informative intention: to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions I.***

However, Wilson and Sperber's example, for the specific reason that Jennifer does not wish Andrew to *recognize* her intention to make an assumption manifest, cannot yet be described as an instance of communication. Precisely why this is the case should become clear in the ensuing discussion of the communicative principle of relevance.

### 3.2.3 *The communicative principle of relevance*

Scholars working within the relevance-theoretic framework refer to inferential communication as they understand the concept using the term *ostensive-inferential communication*. The informative intention is fundamental to this type of communication, but in order for a communicative act to be considered an instance of ostensive-inferential communication we must add a second layer of intention (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 61):

***Communicative intention: to make it mutually manifest to audience and communicator that the communicator has the informative intention.***

At this juncture we should clarify how we understand the term *mutually manifest*. Essential here is Sperber and Wilson's concept of *cognitive environment*, and an individual's cognitive environment '[...] is a set of facts that are manifest to him' (1986/95: 39). No two people share the same cognitive environment, but there may be assumptions common to the cognitive environments of two people, i.e., their cognitive environments may intersect. The intersection of the total cognitive environment of two people constitutes their total shared cognitive environment. If it

is manifest which people share a shared cognitive environment, then this shared cognitive environment is a *mutual cognitive environment* (1986/95:41). Sperber and Wilson go on to suggest that the circumstance that a given assumption is manifest to those who share a mutual cognitive environment is itself manifest. Thus, '[...] in a mutual cognitive environment, every manifest assumption is what we will call *mutually manifest* (1986/95: 41-42)'.

Essential to ostensive-inferential communication is an *ostensive stimulus*. It is the purpose of an ostensive stimulus to attract a person's attention and to create expectations that it is worth attending to a phenomenon, i.e., expectations that a phenomenon is relevant. Moreover, it is not just expectations of relevance that are created when an ostensive stimulus is employed; rather its use generates expectations of a particular level of relevance. Sperber and Wilson call this level of relevance *optimal relevance* and they make the claim that (1986/95: 260):

**[e]very act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own optimal relevance.**

This is their communicative principle of relevance. However, the term 'presumption of optimal relevance' requires some clarification. Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 270) define this as follows:

***Presumption of optimal relevance***

- A. The ostensive stimulus is relevant enough to be worth the addressee's effort to process it.**
- B. The ostensive stimulus is the most relevant one compatible with the communicator's abilities and preferences.**

According to clause A, an ostensive stimulus should give rise to at least sufficient positive cognitive effects for the amount of processing effort required of the audience to be justified. Clause B makes allowances for the eventuality of the communicator being unable or unwilling to make her utterance more relevant than this. The role of clause B is illustrated in the case of someone who is attempting to communicate in a foreign language of which she has limited knowledge. The extent to which processing effort is minimized will ultimately depend on her imperfect linguistic competence. However, she is still assumed to put her hearer to *as little processing effort as possible* in recovering her intended meaning.

When an utterance is produced, a hearer's task is to recover, on the assumption that the utterance has been produced in accordance with the

communicative principle of relevance, the speaker's intended meaning. As suggested in Chapter 1, this requires the hearer to attribute intentions to the speaker: it requires the hearer to engage in a series of *metarepresentations* of the speaker's likely meaning and may, in the case of the hearer who is using the strategy of 'Sophisticated Understanding', require the hearer to metarepresent the speaker's thoughts about her own thoughts (Sperber 1994; Wilson 1999). For the task of arriving at the meaning intended by the speaker, the hearer deploys the relevance-theoretic comprehension procedure (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 613):

- A. **Follow a path of least effort in computing cognitive effects: Test interpretive hypotheses (disambiguations, reference resolutions, implicatures, etc.) in order of accessibility.**
- B. **Stop when your expectations of relevance are satisfied (or abandoned).**

Central to this process is the identification of the *propositional form* of an utterance. This will exercise us in the next section.

#### 3.2.4 *Identifying the propositional form of an utterance*

Grice recognized that the semantic representation of an utterance, or linguistically encoded meaning, is often incomplete and that in order to arrive at what he considered to be 'what is said', which for Grice was the truth-conditional content of an utterance, ambiguities must be resolved, deixis must be fixed and the meaning encoded by lexical items must be enriched (Grice 1989: 25). What Grice failed to recognize is that the recovery of this *explicit* content of an utterance, like that of implicatures, is an inferential process and thus falls within the domain of pragmatics (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 182-183). For Sperber and Wilson the fully fleshed-out semantic representation of an utterance is the propositional form. It is the discrepancy between encoded linguistically meaning and the propositional form of an utterance that Carston had in mind when she formulated her *linguistic underdeterminacy thesis*, touched upon in Chapter 1 (Carston 2002: 15-93).

In relevance theory, the hearer's first task in recovering the propositional form of an utterance is to derive through a process of decoding an incomplete logical form from the linguistically encoded logical form of the utterance. Thus the incomplete logical form that a hearer of (3a) will derive will be something like (3b) (adapted from Wilson and Sperber 1993: 10):

(3a) Andrew told Jennifer that he was tired.

(3b) x told y that z was tired.

According to the relevance-theoretic view, this process of identifying the incomplete logical form of an utterance is the only element of utterance comprehension which involves decoding; all other processes involved are inferential. Once an incomplete logical form such as (3b) has been derived, it has to be completed, inferentially, into a propositional form, such as (3c):

(3c) Andrew told Jennifer that Andrew was tired.

How can we be sure that a given propositional form, say (3c), is the intended propositional form? x and z in (3b) are imagined to refer to the same person in the propositional form (3c). But this did not have to be the case; in different circumstances, exactly the same utterance (3a) and incomplete logical form (3b) could have yielded the propositional form in (3d):

(3d) Andrew told Jennifer that David was tired.

The relevance-theoretic answer to the question as to how we can be expected to recover the speaker's intended meaning is that ultimately we metarepresent that meaning which is optimally relevant and therefore consistent with the communicative principle of relevance:

At every stage in disambiguation, reference assignment and enrichment, the hearer should choose the solution involving the least effort, and should abandon the solution only if it fails to yield an interpretation consistent with the [communicative] principle of relevance.

(Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 185)

What follows is a discussion of five pragmatic processes that a hearer will deploy in constructing the propositional form of an utterance: disambiguation, saturation, reference assignment, free enrichment and *ad hoc* concept construction.

*Disambiguation* is necessary when the linguistic system provides a given lexical item with two or more potential senses and we need to identify the precise sense intended by the speaker. An example of the kind of process involved here is given by Huang (2007: 189) (slightly adapted):

- (4a) Andrew and Jennifer passed the port in the evening.  
a. port = harbour  
b. port = wine

A hearer, presuming that the speaker is aiming at optimal relevance, will assume that the intended meaning of the semantically ambiguous lexical item is that which is the most accessible in the context. If, for example, if it is mutually manifest that Andrew and Jennifer have been away on a cruise, then the sense of 'port' that will satisfy his expectations of relevance is likely to be that given in (4b):

- (4b) Andrew and Jennifer passed the harbour in the evening.

*Saturation*, or 'linguistically mandatory completion' (Carston 2004: 637), is necessary if the derivation of the propositional form involves saturating, i.e. filling, a given slot, position or variable in the semantic representation of the utterance. In the following examples from Carston (2004: 637), the need for the slots marked [Ø] to be saturated before a propositional form can be derived is demonstrated by the bracketed questions:

- (5a) Paracetamol is better [Ø]. [than what?]  
(5b) It's the same [Ø]. [as what?]  
(5c) He is too young [Ø]. [for what?]  
(5d) It's hot enough [Ø]. [for what?]  
(5e) I like Sally's shoes [Ø]. [shoes in what relation to Sally?]

Thus, according to relevance theory, in the process of deriving the complete propositional form of an utterance a hearer may recognize the necessity for an empty slot [Ø] to be saturated by the most readily accessible item. Crucial roles are played here by the context and the assumption that the speaker must be aiming at optimal relevance.

Saturation is the process that comes in to play in cases of *reference assignment*. The potential meanings of the ambiguous item are not provided linguistically; rather '[...] the linguistic element used – for instance, a pronoun – indicates that an appropriate contextual value is to be found, that is, that a given position in the logical form is to be saturated [...]' (Carston 2004: 637). In all cases, the presumption of optimal relevance ensures that the hearer understands the

intended referent to be that which is most accessible. Consider example (6) (taken from Huang 2007: 185):

- (6) *Advice given by the government during an outbreak of salmonella in the UK*  
Fried eggs should be cooked properly and if there are frail or elderly people in the house, *they* should be hard-boiled.

There is nothing encoded here which instructs the hearer to understand the intended referent of 'they' to be 'eggs' rather than 'frail or elderly people'. What guides us towards the obvious intended meaning is our assumption that the speaker must be aiming at optimal relevance. Specific mutually manifest assumptions come into play, namely that it is eggs that one hard-boils, not frail or elderly people.

In the case of *free enrichment*, there is nothing more in terms of disambiguation and saturation that need be added to an utterance in order to derive a fully determinate proposition. However this minimal proposition is not normally that which the speaker intended to communicate. In some cases, the minimal proposition is trivial. Carston (2004: 639) gives the following example:

- (7a) She has a brain.

The minimal proposition expressed here is so obvious that outside a very specific context (say, one where a bizarre new species has been discovered, and scientists are now debating whether the example they have found, which they believe to be female, is a plant or an animal) a speaker is unlikely to go to the trouble of expressing it. However, the most accessible meaning that the speaker could have intended, and the one that will require the hearer to expend the least processing effort in order arrive at it, is the proposition in (7b):

- (7b) She has a high-functioning brain.

The final pragmatic process that we consider in this section is *ad hoc concept* construction. The notion of *ad hoc* concept construction was first suggested by Barsalou (1983) and refers to the pragmatic adjustment of a lexical concept in the decoded logical form. Lexical concepts used in such a way will have elements in common with their conventional denotation, and it is expected that the hearer, who assumes that the speaker is aiming at optimal relevance, will be able to identify the salient common features and discard those which the speaker cannot have in mind.

There are two essential processes involved in *ad hoc* concept construction: *lexical broadening* and *lexical narrowing*. Examples of lexical broadening provided by Carston (2004: 642) include the following:

(8) There is a **rectangle** of lawn at the back.

This area of lawn is unlikely to be strictly rectangular, and the speaker expects the hearer to understand this. Thus here we have not the encoded concept RECTANGLE but a broader concept RECTANGLE\*. Nevertheless, this is an economical way of describing the rough shape of the lawn and will yield the necessary cognitive effects.

The following example (Carston 2004: 642), which was uttered by a witness at a murder trial, contains an example of lexical narrowing:

(9) He was upset, but he wasn't upset.

We do not understand this as a contradiction because our expectation of optimal relevance ensures that we understand each occurrence of 'upset' here slightly differently. The first occurrence of the word may be said to encode the concept UPSET in a more literal sense. The second occurrence, however, '[...] carries certain implications (e.g. that he was in a murdering state of mind) that the first one does not [...]', and the witness is denying that these implications are applicable to the defendant.

This brings us to the end of our discussion of how a hearer's assumption that the speaker is aiming at optimal relevance guides him towards the intended propositional form of the utterance. In the next section we shall consider the relevance-theoretic concept of *explicature*.

### 3.2.5 *Explicature, truth conditions and relevance*

Above we considered the propositional form of an utterance: this is its fully fleshed-out semantic representation, whereby all semantic indeterminacies and ambiguities have been resolved. Another term used in relevance theory to refer to the propositional form of an utterance is 'proposition expressed'; the two terms are used interchangeably.

Of particular importance to relevance theory is the concept of *explicature*. Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 182) define 'explicature' as follows:

**An assumption communicated by an utterance *U* is *explicit* [i.e. an explicature] if and only if it is a development of a logical form encoded by *U*.**

We should draw the reader's attention to the word 'communicated' because here lies a crucial distinction between the proposition expressed by an utterance and its explicatures: the proposition expressed is not an explicature of the utterance unless it is communicated in the sense that it is put forward as true or probably true (Wilson and Sperber 2004: 623; Carston 2002: 117). In those cases where the proposition expressed is communicated, it represents a type of explicature which Wilson and Sperber (2004: 623) call a *basic explicature*. Thus if the speaker of (3a) above wishes to communicate the proposition encoded by the propositional form (3c), then (3c) will also be the basic explicature of (3a):

(3a) Andrew told Jennifer that he was tired.

(3c) Andrew told Jennifer that Andrew Browne was tired.

However, the proposition expressed does not necessarily constitute part of what is communicated by an utterance. This is true, for example, in the case of metaphor and ironical utterances. (10a) is an example of irony (slightly adapted from Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 224):

(10a) (i) Andrew is quite well-read. (ii) He's even heard of Shakespeare.

(11a) is a metaphor:

(11a) This room is a pigsty.

In these cases, the propositions 'Andrew is quite well read' and 'this room is a pigsty' are not communicated. Thus they are not explicatures. The only obvious explicatures of (10a) and (11a) are (10b) and (11b), where the hearer has integrated them into a higher speech-act description:

(10b) The speaker is saying that Andrew is quite well-read.

(11b) The speaker is saying that this room is a pigsty.

Another case where the proposition expressed is not communicated is that of questions, for example yes-no questions. For instance, the proposition expressed by (12a) is (12b), but (12b) is not put forward as true or probably true:

(12a) Would you like another cup of tea?

(12b) The hearer would like another cup of tea.

What is explicitly communicated by (12a) is (12c):

(12c) The speaker is asking whether the hearer would like another cup of tea.

The speech-act descriptions in (10b), (11b) and (12c) are examples of another type of explicature. This is *higher-level explicature*, and it is defined by Blakemore (2002: 75) as:

**[...] assumptions which are derived by developing the semantic representation of an utterance [...] so that an explicature [...] is recovered and embedding it under a propositional attitude or speech act description.**

The following mini dialogue (slightly adapted from Blakemore 2002: 73) should illustrate the concept of higher-level explicature further:

(13a) ANDREW: Why aren't you going away this summer?

JENNIFER: I have to finish my book.

Firstly, Andrew will need to deploy the pragmatic processes outlined in the previous section in order to recover the propositional form of Jennifer's utterance (Blakemore 2002: 75):

(13b) Jennifer must finish the processes involved in preparing the book which Jennifer is authoring for publication.

Let us assume that (13b) is not only the propositional form of Jennifer's utterance; she also wishes to communicate it. Then it also functions as a basic explicature. (13b) may now be embedded under a propositional attitude or speech act description. This will produce higher-level explicatures such as (13c) and (13d)

(2002: 75). (Hereinafter explicatures that must be recovered inferentially will be placed in curly brackets):

(13c) {The speaker regrets that} she must finish the processes involved in preparing the book she is authoring for publication.

(13d) {The speaker says that} she must finish the processes involved in preparing the book she is authoring for publication.

Note that whilst inference is required in the construction of such higher-level explicatures, they are nevertheless considered to be explicitly communicated: they are not implicatures.

How are we to distinguish between the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance, i.e. its various explicatures? The earlier literature on relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95; Blakemore 1987; Itani-Kaufmann 1990; Ifantidou 1993) assumed that the difference between the proposition expressed and higher-level explicatures could be explained in truth-conditional terms. It seems to have been taken for granted that the proposition expressed by an utterance was coextensive with its truth-conditional content whilst its higher-level explicatures were non-truth-conditional. Thus it was assumed that any utterance expresses a single proposition and has a single set of truth conditions.

However, the current relevance-theoretic position is that in utterance comprehension the semantic representation of an utterance is developed by pragmatic inference into multiple conceptual representations (explicatures), and each of these conceptual representations has its own truth conditions. (Blakemore 2002, 2004). This position is supported by a variety of evidence. Firstly, sentence adverbials such as 'frankly', 'regrettably' and 'sadly' are generally seen as making their contribution on the level of higher-level explicature, and were therefore formerly considered to be non-truth-conditional. But the higher-level explicature to which it contributes clearly has its *own* truth conditions. Evidence for this is provided by the fact that a speaker '[...]' can lay herself open to charges of untruthfulness in its use '[...]' (Wilson and Sperber 1993: 18), as in (14):

(14) ANDREW: Frankly, you're probably going to fail the exam.  
JENNIFER: That's not true. You're not being frank.

Additionally, lexical items which are conventionally seen as non-truth-conditional may function on the level of the proposition expressed. 'On the record' and 'off the

record' in (15), which one might expect to be understood as non-truth-conditional and thus as contributing to the higher-level explicatures of the utterance, need to be understood as part of the proposition expressed, otherwise the result would be a contradiction (example, slightly adapted, from Wilson and Sperber 1993: 19):

(15) ANDREW: What can I tell our readers about your private life?

JENNIFER: On the record, I'm happily married. Off the record, I'm about to divorce.

If an utterance communicates multiple assumptions, each of which has its own truth conditions, then the question as to how we should distinguish between the respective contributions made by these assumptions remains as yet unanswered. Blakemore (2002: 76-77) uses the following (slightly adapted) example to illustrate her response to this question. Jennifer strenuously denies eating Andrew's chocolates, before eventually uttering, in a weary tone of voice:

(16a) OK, I ate them.

Naturally, it will not be sufficient for Andrew to recover merely the proposition in (16b) in order for his expectations of optimal relevance to be satisfied; after all, he was already sufficiently convinced that Jennifer had eaten the chocolates:

(16b) Jennifer ate Andrew's chocolates.

Instead, Andrew needs to recover the higher-level explicature in (16c), for it is in this explicature that the *main* relevance of Jennifer's utterance lies. (From now on, in the case of higher-level explicatures, the part in which the main relevance lies will be given in bold):

(16c) {**Jennifer admits that**} she ate Andrew's chocolates.

Thus Blakemore suggests that '[...] we may distinguish between the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance according to their relative contributions to *relevance*' (emphasis mine) (2002: 77). There is therefore no need to mention truth conditions when distinguishing between the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance.

This raises the question of how ‘main relevance’ should be defined. Franken (1997) holds that the main relevance of an utterance lies in that communicated assumption which produces the greatest number of positive cognitive effects. Whilst this may correctly predict which communicated assumption carries the main relevance of an utterance, it defines main relevance in *relative* terms: explicature *x* carries the main relevance because it generates more positive cognitive effects than explicatures *y* and *z*. Instead, we propose the following definition of main relevance which captures the notion that the main relevance of an utterance lies in that assumption which satisfies the hearer’s expectation of optimal relevance:

**The main relevance of an utterance lies in that assumption which in the specific context communicates sufficient positive cognitive effects to satisfy the hearer’s expectation of optimal relevance.**

In (16c) above it is the cognitive effects yielded by the higher-level explicature which will satisfy the hearer’s expectations.

In summary, given that all the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance have their own truth conditions, it is ultimately their relative contributions to relevance that enable us to distinguish between them. Since the main relevance of an utterance may reside in the proposition expressed or a higher-level explicature, the notion of main relevance cuts across the distinction between proposition expressed and higher-level explicature. The notions of higher-level explicature and main relevance will be of particular concern to us in Chapter 5 when we look at the relevance-theoretic approach to speech acts and discuss their report.

### 3.2.6 *Implicature*

There are many cases where it is necessary to do more than deploy explicature-derivation processes for one’s expectations of relevance to be satisfied. In such cases an individual needs to look beyond that which is explicitly communicated and consider an utterance’s implicatures. We understand an implicature to be a context-dependent meaning which is implicitly communicated by an utterance, i.e., it results from the interaction between the proposition expressed and mutually manifest contextual assumptions.

Relevance theory distinguishes two chief types of implicature: implicated premise and implicated conclusion. Let us return to an example we used towards the beginning of this chapter:

(1a) ANDREW: What did you think of the hotel where you stayed?

JENNIFER: It was miles from the beach and the air-conditioning didn't work.

The result of fleshing out the semantic representation of Jennifer's response to Andrew's question is the propositional form in (1c). However, as a basic explicature of Jennifer's utterance, it does not answer Andrew's question:

(1c) The hotel in which Jennifer stayed at during her holiday was too far from the nearest beach to be conveniently located for Jennifer, and the air-conditioning system in the hotel did not work during Jennifer's holiday.

Andrew, who assumes that the optimally relevant interpretation is the one that Jennifer intends, will need to consider the implicatures of Jennifer's utterance. First he will need to process the first clause of Jennifer's utterance in a context containing assumptions about hotels and beaches and the second clause in a context containing assumptions about air-conditioning. These contexts will contain the following two assumptions, which Jennifer assumes to be highly accessible to Andrew:

(1d) → Hotels which are a long way from the nearest beach are inconveniently located.

(1e) → If the air-conditioning does not work then it is too hot for comfort.

Each of these assumptions functions here as an *implicated premise* (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 195).<sup>73</sup> However, neither of these yet provides an adequate answer to Andrew's question. In order for his expectations of relevance to be satisfied, Andrew must take his processing one step further. Since Jennifer has made two negative remarks about the hotel, the most easily accessible assumption that will provide an adequate answer to Andrew's question is that given in (1b):

(1b) ⇒ Jennifer did not like the hotel.

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<sup>73</sup> Implicated premises will be marked → in the remainder of this study.

Such an implicature is what Sperber and Wilson call an *implicated conclusion* (1986/95: 195).<sup>74</sup> They make the claim that '[a]ll implicatures [...] fall into one or the other of these categories' (1986/95: 195).

### 3.3 Procedural meaning

Relevance theory claims that a hearer is entitled to presume that a speaker is aiming at optimal relevance. This means that a speaker's utterance is assumed to be relevant enough to be worth processing, and that the level of relevance is the highest that the parameters of the speaker's abilities and willingness will allow. This claim of relevance theory has prompted its proponents to identify semantic devices whose function is to assist the hearer in recovering the interpretation consistent with the communicative principle of relevance. These devices achieve this by reducing the amount of processing effort required and guiding the hearer towards the intended positive cognitive effects. They ensure that the hearer recovers these effects by constraining the inferential computations which are performed over conceptual representations: these devices are therefore said to encode *procedural meaning*. Paradigm examples of lexical items which encode procedural meaning are discourse connectives such as 'after all', 'but', 'however' and 'so'. In the following example, taken from Blakemore (1987: 88), the procedural expression 'you see' instructs the hearer to access, as an implicated premise, the assumption that there is a causal connection between ice and slipping. It therefore ensures that the hearer recovers the implicated conclusion in (17b) and thus understands the second proposition as an explanation for the event described by the first:

- (17a) She slipped. You see, the road was icy.  
(17b)  $\Rightarrow$  She slipped because the road was icy.

Procedural meaning is to be contrasted with *conceptual meaning* which is encoded by linguistic expressions such as nouns, adjectives and verbs. They encode constituents of the conceptual representations which a hearer constructs in utterance comprehension. They thus provide an input to the decoding phase of comprehension.

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<sup>74</sup> Implicated conclusions will be marked  $\Rightarrow$  in the remainder of this study.

In her 1987 book *Semantic Constraints on Relevance*, Blakemore attempted to analyze the Gricean notion of conventional implicature in relevance-theoretic terms. She tried to show that the distinction between conceptual and procedural meaning was essentially a cognitively grounded version of the traditional speech-act theoretic distinction between describing and indicating. In doing so she argued that those lexical items which encode conceptual meaning were consistently truth-conditional. Procedural meaning, on the other hand, aided the recovery only of what is implicit in an utterance, as in example (17a) above, and its import was therefore assumed to be consistently non-truth-conditional.

This position was challenged by Wilson and Sperber (1993). They point out that illocutionary adverbials such as 'frankly', 'regrettably' and 'sadly', which should be conceived of in conceptual terms, do not contribute to the truth conditions of an utterance. Blakemore's analysis, however, predicts that they should be truth-conditional. This prompts Wilson and Sperber to claim that such adverbials are conceptual but non-truth-conditional (Wilson and Sperber 1993: 17-19). Personal pronouns do not themselves encode constituents of conceptual representations, but they do encode procedures for constructing them. Wilson and Sperber therefore claim that they are procedural but have truth-conditional import (1993: 19-21). In addition, Wilson and Sperber suggest that subject-verb inversion in English interrogatives can be analyzed as encoding a constraint on higher-level explicatures, as can the dialectal French particle *ti* (1993: 21). Both of these ensure that an utterance is understood as a yes-no question.

However, these insights came about at a time when contributions to truth conditions were still seen as *the* key factor when differentiating between the assumptions communicated by an utterance. In section 3.2.5 we saw that relevance theory no longer views an utterance as communicating one proposition with a single set of truth conditions. Rather, utterance comprehension is now seen as a process whereby conceptual representations are developed by pragmatic inference into representations, all of which possess their own truth conditions. This has an important consequence: it no longer makes sense to distinguish between lexical items in terms of whether they are themselves truth-conditional or non-truth-conditional. Rather, '[...] the question that matters is [...] what kind of cognitive information it encodes – conceptual or procedural' (Blakemore 2004: 230). With contributions to truth conditions out of the picture, the question arises as to how we should distinguish between lexical items which encode conceptual meaning and those which encode procedural meaning.

Blakemore (2002: 82-88) looks at how procedural and conceptual items differ in terms of the properties they display, and we shall now review some of the more salient differences.

Firstly, conceptual items are easier to bring to consciousness than procedural items; we can form a mental representation of a tree, someone running or the colour blue. Additionally, we can usually think of a synonym for a conceptual item, and describe the extent to which the two words are truly synonymous. Even if we cannot think of a synonym, we may feel that we *should* be able to do so. Procedural items, however, are much harder to represent mentally, since '[w]e have direct access neither to grammatical computations nor to the inferential computations used in comprehension' (Wilson and Sperber 1993: 16). Thus, if asked to provide a definition of a word such as 'but' or 'however', it is generally easier to give an example of how it is used. Furthermore, even if a synonym for a procedural lexical item is suggested, '[...] native speakers are unable to judge whether two of these expressions [...] are synonymous without testing their inter-substitutability in all contexts' (Blakemore 2002: 83).

Secondly, conceptual items display semantic compositionality in that they can combine with other conceptual items to form semantically complex expressions. This can be seen in the case of sentence adverbials which, as we have seen, generally make their contribution on the level of higher-level explicature. In each of the following examples, example (b) is semantically more complex than (a) (adapted from Blakemore 2002: 84):

(18a) In confidence, she has been promoted.

(18b) In total, absolute confidence, she has been promoted.

(19a) Speaking frankly, I don't think people ever ask themselves those kind of questions.

(19b) Speaking quite frankly, I don't think people ever ask themselves those kind of questions.

(20a) Putting it brutally, you're sacked.

(20b) Putting it more brutally, you're sacked.

However, since we are unable to form a mental representation of an inferential computation, we would not expect procedural items to display semantic compositionality. The unacceptability of Blakemore's example (2002: 84) demonstrates that this is the case:

(21) ? Tom likes pop art. Totally however, Anna prefers Renaissance art.

Bezuidenhout (2004: 106) points out, however, that procedural items *can* display semantic compositionality and be modified by (conceptual) adjectives and adverbs. For example:

(22a) She is interested in our job. But we'll have to offer her much more money.

(22b) She is interested in our job. But, and this is a big but, we'll have to offer her much more money.

(23a) Photoshop allows us to digitally manipulate photographic images. So photography has become more like painting.

(23b) Photoshop allows us to digitally manipulate photographic images. So, although not obviously so, photography has become more like painting.

Bezuidenhout goes on to conclude that '[...] the compositionality test is not a reliable one for distinguishing the procedural from the conceptual' (Bezuidenhout 2004: 106). In (22b), we would argue that 'but' has been nominalized and as such is essentially treated conceptually, and itself therefore does not necessarily pose a challenge to the validity of this test. However, (23b) suggests that Bezuidenhout may have a point. The fact that 'so' can be modified with '(not) obviously so' can be linked to the fact that some procedural lexical items *can* in some contexts be conceived of in conceptual terms. Significantly, Grice attempted to provide an essentially *conceptual* analysis for discourse markers such as 'so', 'after all' and 'on the other hand', suggesting, for example, that when a speaker uses 'on the other hand':

[...] he is [...] performing a higher-order speech-act of commenting in a certain way on the lower-order speech-acts. He is *contrasting* in some way the performance of some of these lower-order speech-acts with others, and he signals his performance of this higher-order speech act in his use of the embedded enclitic phrase "on the other hand".

(Grice 1989: 362)

Blakemore (1987), however, shows that a conceptual analysis such as that proposed by Grice for 'on the other hand' is not always appropriate. For example whilst for Grice 'so' indicates (conceptually) that the speaker is performing the speech act of explaining, it is less clear how a conceptual account of 'so' in Blakemore's example (24) can be provided (1987: 86):

(24) So you've spent all your money.

Here, according to Wilson and Sperber, '[t]he speaker is not *explaining* the fact that the hearer has spent all her money, but drawing a conclusion from an observation she has made' (Wilson and Sperber 1993: 15).

The third difference between lexical items which encode conceptual meaning and those whose import is procedural concerns the fact that both types of lexical item may be used as fragmentary utterances. Example (25) consists of a single conceptual item (from Blakemore (2002: 85)):

(25a) Coffee.

Depending on the contextual assumptions which are assumed to be mutually manifest, the hearer will develop this using pragmatically constrained inference into an explicature, two suggestions for which are given in (25b) and (25c). (25b) is a suggestion for the basic explicature, whilst in (25c) an alternative basic explicature is embedded under a higher-level explicature:

(25b) It is time to have a coffee break.

(25c) {The speaker believes that} coffee needs to be bought.

Significantly, the single conceptual item which enters into the inferential computations features in both (25b) and (25c): they are developments of the concept which 'coffee' encodes. (26a) contains an example of a fragmentary occurrence of a procedural item (adapted from Blakemore (2002: 85). In the imagined context, a secretary is informing a university professor of a student's reasons for not handing in her assessed work:

(26a) SECRETARY: She's had a very difficult time this semester.

PROFESSOR: Nevertheless.

This may prompt the hearer to recover a range of assumptions, such as (26b)-(26e):

(26b) The student could have handed in some of the work.

(26c) The student's circumstances do not justify bending the rules.

(26d) There are other students whose circumstances have been difficult.

(26e) The student has not tried hard enough.

However, unlike 'coffee' in (25b) and (25c), 'nevertheless' does not feature in the conceptual representations (26b)-(26e) whose recovery it constrains; they are not developments of the concept encoded by 'nevertheless'. According to Blakemore:

Although there is a whole range of assumptions that the hearer of [26a] might have justifiably constructed, it does not matter what assumption the hearer constructs as long as it gives rise to the right sort of cognitive effects. More specifically, it does not matter what assumption the hearer constructs provided that it achieves relevance in the way that is prescribed by the meaning of *nevertheless*. In other words, the speaker's intention in [26a] is simply that a hearer construct an assumption which gives rise to the cognitive effects consistent with the constraint encoded by *nevertheless*.

(Blakemore 2002: 86-87)

Above it was mentioned that personal pronouns are considered within relevance theory to encode procedural meaning. In Chapter 4 (section 4.4) we shall suggest that the German reportative subjunctive encodes a procedural constraint not unlike that of personal pronouns. It will thus be profitable to continue by considering the procedural import of personal pronouns.

For Hedley (2007) there is strong evidence that the import of personal pronouns is procedural rather than conceptual. He points out that '[t]he computations we perform in interpreting a pronoun relate to the identification of a referent, and the insertion of that referent into the proposition expressed' (2007: 42). Importantly, the result of this is an output, i.e. 'the representation that enters into the proposition expressed', which differs from the original input, or the decoded linguistic form. For Hedley, this suggests that:

[i]t is clear that we are looking at a different sort of meaning here, and one that is more akin in nature to that of discourse connectives than it is to that of conceptual lexical items.

(Hedley 2007: 42)

Hedley goes on to demonstrate that personal pronouns may, like 'coffee' and 'nevertheless', be used as fragmentary utterances and that, furthermore, their interpretation is more similar to that described for cases like 'nevertheless' above than for cases like 'coffee'. He asks us to imagine (2007: 48-49) a situation where the kitchen of a shared house has been left in a mess, and one housemate (A) comes home, followed by another a few minutes later (B). As B enters, A exclaims:

(27a) HOUSEMATE A: You!

Here, as in the case of 'nevertheless', the hearer is expected to develop this fragmentary 'you' via pragmatically constrained inference into one of a range of conceptual representations, Hedley's suggestions for which are given below:

(27b) The speaker blames the hearer for the mess.

(27c) The speaker holds the hearer responsible for the mess.

(27d) The speaker expects the hearer to do something about the mess.

(27e) The speaker has the right to threaten some consequences if such action is not taken.

Notice that, as in the case of the procedural 'nevertheless', '[...] none of these assumptions could be regarded as a development of a concept encoded by *you*' (2007: 49). Instead, for Hedley they should be seen as developments of the referent of *you* – the individual appearing in the proposition expressed' (2007: 49). He remarks further that:

[...] what matters are the eventual cognitive effects resulting from the computations and inferences, though here these are primarily related to the identification of the intended referent. In such cases, optimal relevance will only be reached if the correct referent is picked out and instantiated, with the development of the 'individual' in the context giving rise to significant contextual effects. Crucially, the representation that is developed is not an encoded concept, but a concept to which the hearer is pointed by the linguistic representation.

(Hedley 2007: 49)

Personal pronouns may thus be said to have more in common with lexical items that encode procedural than lexical meaning.

The essential difference between conceptual and procedural lexical items may be summarized as follows. Items associated with conceptual meaning encode constituents of conceptual representations. Those which encode procedural meaning constrain the inferential computations which are performed over these conceptual representations, but, importantly, do not themselves encode constituents of the conceptual representations whose recovery they constrain.

We end this section by providing a concrete example of how a lexical item which encodes procedural meaning constrains in practice the inferential computations as a result of which a hearer recovers the speaker's intended

interpretation. The linguistic expression we use is ‘nevertheless’, and we shall end our analysis by considering how it explains the fragmentary occurrence of ‘nevertheless’ in example (26a) above.

Blakemore (2002: 126-127) claims that an utterance prefaced by ‘nevertheless’ will be understood as one of two assumptions which are relevant as answers to a question which has been raised (either explicitly or implicitly) by the preceding discourse, ‘[...] or which has been made relevant through the interpretation of the preceding discourse’ (2002: 126). She suggests that the other assumption which is relevant in the context as an answer to the same question will *contradict* the assumption which is introduced by ‘nevertheless’ (2002: 127).

But what does it mean for an assumption to be relevant as an answer to a question? Blakemore’s response, which we shall quote below, appeals to the relevance-theoretic concept of *interpretive use*. We shall explore this concept in detail a little later. But for now it will suffice to mention that relevance theory claims that every utterance is an interpretation in the sense that its propositional form to a greater or lesser extent *resembles* the thought it represents. A question is understood to be ‘[...] an interpretation of a thought which is a representation of a thought which the speaker believes to be *desirable* – that is, relevant – to someone (not necessarily herself)’ (Blakemore 2002: 126). This puts us in a position where we can state what it means for an utterance to be relevant as an answer to a question. According to Blakemore:

[a]n utterance *U* is relevant as an answer to a question if there is a mutually manifest assumption in the context which is an interpretation of some desirable proposition *p* and *p* is communicated (explicated or implicated) by *U*.

(Blakemore 2002: 126)

Let us now apply this analysis of the procedural semantics of ‘nevertheless’ to a concrete example (from Blakemore 2002: 124):

(28a) I am sure she is honest. Nevertheless, the papers are missing.

Here, the question which appears to have been raised by the preceding discourse is ‘Is she honest?’ The function of ‘nevertheless’ is to ensure that the hearer understands the following proposition, ‘The papers are missing’, to be relevant as an answer to this question. This proposition achieves relevance as an answer to the question ‘Is she honest?’ via implicature; in order to derive the implicated conclusion

in (28d), 'The papers are missing' needs to be processed in a context which includes implicated premises such as those in (28b) and (28c):

(28b) → If the papers are missing, then someone must have taken them.

(28c) → People who take things they are not entitled to without saying they have done so are dishonest.

(28d) ⇒ She is dishonest.

Additionally, 'nevertheless' instructs the hearer to recover from the context another assumption which is relevant as an answer to the question 'Is she honest?' The preceding proposition 'I'm sure she is honest' achieves relevance in this way. Thus, all the types of assumption which 'nevertheless' instructs the hearer to recover from the context are accessible, with the result that 'nevertheless' in example (28a) is felicitous.

How is the use of 'nevertheless' in (26a) above consistent with the procedural semantics that we suggested for it? We repeat our example:

(26a) SECRETARY: She's had a very difficult time this semester.

PROFESSOR: Nevertheless.

Here, the question, 'Does she have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work?' appears to have been raised implicitly by the preceding discourse. The secretary's utterance achieves relevance as an answer to this question by requiring the hearer to derive an implicature. The proposition is processed in a context which includes the easily accessible implicated premise in (26f), and this results in the hearer recovering the implicated conclusion in (26g):

(26f) → Students who have had a difficult time have a good reason for not handing in their assessed work.

(26g) ⇒ She has a good reason for not handing in her assessed work.

The procedural import of 'nevertheless' instructs the hearer to recover an alternative answer to the question 'Does she have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work?' which contradicts that in (26g), i.e., 'She does not have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work'. 'Nevertheless' does this by instructing the hearer to access (an indeterminate number of) assumptions such as those in (26b)-(26e). In each case the assumption 'She does not have a good reason for not

handing in her assessed work' is derivable as an implicated conclusion from the accompanying implicated premise (marked →):

- (26b) The student could have handed in some of the work.  
→ If a student could have handed in some of the work then the student does not have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work.
- (26c) The student's circumstances do not justify bending the rules.  
→ If a student's circumstances do not justify bending the rules then the student does not have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work.
- (26d) There are other students whose circumstances have been difficult.  
→ If there are other students whose circumstances have been difficult then a student does not have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work.
- (26e) The student has not tried hard enough.  
→ If a student has not tried hard enough then the student does not have a good reason for not handing in her assessed work.

This brings us to the end of our consideration of the relevance-theoretic notion of procedural meaning. In the next section we consider another aspect of relevance theory which will prove to be crucial to our analysis of the German reportative subjunctive: interpretive use.

### **3.4 Interpretive use**

#### *3.4.1 Introductory remarks*

Representation plays an essential role in communication. The most relevant ostensive stimulus for communicating a speaker's thought will not always be linguistic; it may, for example, be more appropriate to describe a state of affairs using physical objects which resemble their referents. For instance, a pea may be used at the dinner table to represent a football, and an up-turned cup may represent a goal. The extent to which an object resembles another item will vary, with the level of resemblance depending on the number of properties the two items share. It is the task of the audience, guided by their expectation that the communicator is aiming at optimal relevance, to work out what the relevant shared properties are.

The use of language involves representation in the sense that an utterance has a propositional form '[...]' which is true of some actual or conceivable state of

affairs' (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 227). But language involves the use of representation in another sense: an utterance, like an object, may be used to represent not what it describes, but what it resembles (1986/95: 228).

Relevance theory has posited a concept of *metarepresentational use*, which is defined by Noh (2000: 5) as '[...] the use of one representation to represent another in virtue of some resemblance between them, whether in content or form'. There are two chief subtypes of metarepresentational use. One of these, interpretive use, involves resemblance in propositional form, or content, and this is our primary concern in this section. First, however, we shall briefly consider the other subtype, which involves resemblance in form: metalinguistic use.

### 3.4.2 *Metalinguistic use*

Like metarepresentational use itself, there are essentially two subtypes of metalinguistic use. One is pure quotation, and this involves the metarepresentation of abstract linguistic expressions and propositions. Noh (2000: 81) provides the following examples:

- (29a) "Life" is monosyllabic.
- (29b) "Life" has four letters.
- (29c) "Life" is a noun.

In these examples, the abstract linguistic expression 'life' is metarepresented. Thus, so claims Noh, they are to be understood as communicating the propositions in (30), where the metarepresentational use of 'life' is made explicit:

- (30a) The word "life" is monosyllabic.
- (30b) The word "life" has four letters.
- (30c) The word "life" is a noun.

If the use of the word 'life' were not understood as a metarepresentation in each case, it would be understood to refer to the concept of life, which would result in absurdity. It is the hearer's expectation that the speaker is aiming at optimal relevance which will instruct him to understand (29a)-(29c) metalinguistically.

The other subtype of metalinguistic use is direct speech, which '[...] metarepresent[s] an utterance or thought in virtue of shared formal properties' (Noh

2000: 82). More specifically, an instance of direct speech will have the same *semantic structure* as the utterance it represents. This is the case, for instance, in example (31), slightly adapted from Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 228). Here, Jennifer employs the first-person singular pronoun. However, in spite of this, Andrew's assumption that Jennifer is aiming at optimal relevance will instruct him to understand her utterance to be attributed to the innkeeper. Andrew will understand Jennifer's utterance as direct speech because her use of 'I' constitutes evidence for him that her utterance resembles the innkeeper's utterance in terms of its semantic structure:

- (31) ANDREW: And what did the innkeeper say?  
JENNIFER: I looked for it everywhere.

Since the focus of this study, the German reportative subjunctive, is associated with indirect speech (a variety of interpretive rather than metalinguistic use), this is all we shall say about metalinguistic use. We now turn to a detailed consideration of interpretive use, a term which covers cases of quotation which resemble what they represent in terms of their content.

### 3.4.3 *Interpretive use and interpretive resemblance*

In section 3.3 we made a brief reference to interpretive use, and we observed that every utterance is an interpretation in the sense that its propositional form resembles the thought it represents. In other words, any utterance is said to *interpretively resemble* the thought it represents.

Interpretive resemblance applies to *any* instance of resemblance in content between two representations which have a propositional form. A propositional form *P* will have both analytical and contextual implications. The analytical implications of *P* are those non-trivial implications which are derived when inference rules are applied to *P* using only *P* as an input. The contextual implications are those implications which result from the interaction of *P* with the context. A propositional form is a *literal* interpretation of another propositional form to the extent that it shares the same analytical and contextual implications. If the two propositional forms share some, but not all of the implications, then the one propositional form will be said to interpret the other *loosely*.

Sperber and Wilson have shown that metaphor can be explained as a case of loose resemblance between the propositional form of an utterance and that of the thought it represents. The following example is from Noh (2000: 74):

(32) This computer is my wife.

According to Noh, this will be understood as a metaphor since a hearer will recognize that it shares analytical and contextual implications with the corresponding thought, such as 'I spend much time with it', 'I like this computer' or 'This computer helps me with my work' (2000: 74). We should add to Noh's claims that it is the hearer's expectations that the utterance in (32) is optimally relevant that will prompt him to identify the intended shared logical and contextual implications, and thus to identify how (32) is relevant as a metaphor.

However, it is not interpretive use in the sense that every utterance interpretively resembles a thought of the speaker's which is of primary interest to us. Sperber and Wilson raise the question as to what the thought of the speaker's *itself* represents (1986/95: 231). Their claim is that, on the one hand, the speaker's thought can be used descriptively, and in this case '[...] it can be a description of a state of affairs in the actual world, or it can be a description of a desirable state of affairs' (1986/95: 231). On the other hand, this thought can itself be used interpretively. Sperber and Wilson continue:

When [the thought of the speaker's] is used interpretively, it can be an interpretation of some attributed thought or utterance, or it can be an interpretation of some thought which it is or would be desirable to entertain in a certain way: as knowledge, for instance.

(Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 231)

In other words, in such cases the interpretive resemblance which characterizes all utterances will hold not only between the propositional form of the utterance and that of the thought it represents, but also between the propositional form of this thought and that either of an *attributed* thought or utterance, or of a *desirable* thought. Such second-order interpretive use covers the various types of reported speech such as indirect speech and free indirect speech, as well as echoic utterances (e.g. irony) and interrogative utterances. It is interpretive use in this sense to which the term 'interpretive use' in the literature conventionally applies, and which will be our focus for the remainder of this section.

#### 3.4.4 *Indirect speech, irony and interrogative utterances*

Above we described Jennifer's utterance in example (31) as an instance of direct speech; it serves to make the semantic structure of the innkeeper's original utterance manifest:

- (31) ANDREW: And what did the innkeeper say?  
JENNIFER: I looked for it everywhere.

Alternatively, Jennifer could have responded to Andrew's question as in (33) (adapted from Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 228)):

- (33) ANDREW: And what did the innkeeper say?  
JENNIFER: He said he looked for your wallet everywhere.

Here, the embedded proposition does not have the same semantic structure as the innkeeper's original utterance because the first-person singular pronoun used by the innkeeper has been changed to a third-person singular pronoun, and the innkeeper's pronoun 'it' has been replaced by a definite description ('your wallet'). But the two utterances do have their propositional form in common (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 228). This identity in terms of propositional form, or content, but not in terms of semantic structure, is what makes example (33) an instance of interpretive use, or more specifically, indirect speech. That the propositional form of Jennifer's utterance and the original is identical need not trouble us. Sperber and Wilson point out that:

[...] while there may be a minimal degree of resemblance below which no interpretive use is possible, there need not be a maximal degree above which resemblance is replaced by identity and interpretation by reproduction. Identity is a limiting case of resemblance; reproduction is a limiting case of interpretation. When one representation is used to represent another which has exactly the same propositional form [33], this is merely a limiting case of interpretation.

(Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 229)

Alternatively, the innkeeper may have produced a long and rambling answer in response to Jennifer's query regarding whether he had found Andrew's wallet, and none of the innkeeper's sentences may have had the same propositional form as the embedded proposition in (33). However, Sperber and Wilson's claim is that even

though the propositional forms are different, if Jennifer's summary is faithful then the propositional forms [...] must resemble one another: they must share some logical properties, have partly identical contextual implications in some contexts, for instance' (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 228).

In employing indirect speech, a speaker will require the hearer to infer contextually her attitude towards the attributed utterance or thought. This attitude may fall anywhere on the spectrum of possible attitudes. Thus in the example below, Andrew not only informs Jennifer of what Dean has told him; he also expresses his attitude towards Dean's utterance. This attitude is not explicitly linguistically encoded; Jennifer will infer this attitude contextually as a result of her expectation that Andrew's utterance is optimally relevant.

(34) JENNIFER: Has Dean paid back the money he owes you?

ANDREW (frustrated and unconvinced): He said he forgot to go to the bank.

According to relevance theory, indirect speech and irony are closely allied, since irony also involves an interpretive relation between the speaker's thought and attributed thoughts or utterances. Irony involves a particular type of interpretive use which Sperber and Wilson term *echoic use*, whereby a speaker 'echoes' the words of someone else. Importantly, Sperber and Wilson remark that echoic use [...] need not interpret a precisely attributable thought: it may echo the thought of a certain kind of person, or of people in general' (1986/95: 238), and they show how a speaker may echo a traditional piece of wisdom such as 'More haste, less speed' (1986/95: 239). The prime purpose of indirect (and direct) speech is to inform the hearer that so-and-so has said such-and-such, but, as we saw above, a speaker may express her attitude to the attributed proposition. However, the relevance of an echoed utterance lies solely in the attitude that the speaker expresses towards the proposition expressed. On this account, irony results when the speaker expresses an attitude of rejection or dissociation to the attributed proposition. The examples below, taken from Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 239) illustrate how a speaker in echoing an utterance can endorse it (35a) or express a dissociative attitude towards it, resulting in irony (35b):

(35a) ANDREW: It's a lovely day for a picnic.

[They go for a picnic and the sun shines.]

JENNIFER (happily): It's a lovely day for a picnic, indeed.

- (35b) ANDREW: It's a lovely day for a picnic.  
[They go for a picnic and it rains.]  
JENNIFER (sarcastically): It's a lovely day for a picnic, indeed.

We complete this discussion of interpretive use by returning to the notion, which we touched upon in 2.3, that in relevance theory questions have the status of instances of interpretive use. There we saw that a question is understood to be '[...] an interpretation of a thought which is a representation of a thought which the speaker believes to be *desirable* – that is, relevant – to someone (not necessarily herself)' (Blakemore 2002: 126).

Sperber and Wilson (1986/95: 252) distinguish '[...] between yes-no questions, which have not only a logical but also a fully propositional form, and Wh-questions, which have a logical form but no propositional form'. They claim that cases of *asking Wh-P* where *Wh-P* is a yes-no question and *P* is the propositional form communicate that the thought interpreted by *P* would be relevant if true. Cases of *asking Wh-P* '[...] where *Wh-P* is a Wh-question and *P* is the less-than-propositional logical form of the utterance' communicate that '[...] there is some completion of the thought interpreted by *P* into a fully propositional thought which would be relevant if true' (1986/95: 252). Sperber and Wilson go on to consider to whom the fully propositional thought would be relevant if true, and they suggest that regular requests for information '[...] are analyzable as questions whose answers the speaker regards as relevant to her [...]' (1986/95: 252-253). Rhetorical questions, on the other hand, '[...] are often reminders, designed to prompt the retrieval of information the speaker regards as relevant to the hearer' (1986/95: 252). To whom the fully propositional thought would be relevant if true is viewed as a semantic indeterminacy which is resolved pragmatically and is thus guided by the hearer's expectation that the speaker is aiming at optimal relevance.

This brings us to the end of our overview of interpretive use. The next section will consider some devices which some languages employ to mark instances of specifically interpretive use.

#### 3.4.5 Means of marking interpretive use

Some languages possess hearsay particles which indicate that an utterance is attributed to someone other than the speaker herself. Palmer (1986: 51-57, 66-74) suggests that these particles will generally indicate that the speaker has a

diminished level of commitment to the truth of the attributed proposition. Two particles which are possible candidates for analysis as hearsay particles are the Sissala particle *rɛ* (or its variant *rɿ*),<sup>75</sup> which is analyzed by Blass (1989, 1990), and the Japanese utterance-final particle *tte*, analyzed by Itani (1991, 1998).

First we shall consider *rɛ* and shall suggest that ultimately it is best analyzed as a *marker of interpretive use*. We shall then look at *tte*, and shall show that its distribution is more restricted than that of *rɛ*, before looking at another Japanese particle, *ka*, which marks some types of interpretive use covered by *rɛ* in Sissala but not by *tte*.

Blass (1989, 1990) begins both her texts by proposing a minimal hypothesis that one could make about hearsay particles. She suggests that:

[...] they should be used only for reporting actual speech. Reported thought would be excluded, and the status of paraphrase, or speech which is attributed to inference, without actually being heard, would be unclear.

(Blass 1990: 93)

Whilst this hypothesis may be applicable to hearsay particles as Palmer understands the term, Blass observes that an analysis of *rɛ* as a hearsay particle will not account for all its uses. It is true that it does occur in what might be termed hearsay contexts, such as reported speech, but it also occurs in environments which are apparently unexpected for hearsay particles. For example, *rɛ* may accompany irony, interrogatives and exclamatives. These are types of language which relevance theory has identified as interpretive, and this prompts Blass to suggest that *rɛ* is more appropriately analyzed as a marker of interpretive use.

According to Blass, *rɛ* is an '[...] indeterminacy-reducing device, which operates to reduce an indeterminacy at the level of explicit truth-conditional content, or the proposition expressed' (1990: 123). More specifically, the indeterminacy she has in mind concerns whether an utterance is to be understood as an instance of descriptive or interpretive use. Blass seems to be suggesting that *rɛ* encodes procedural meaning in that it constrains the inferential computations by which a hearer comes to understand an utterance as an instance of interpretive use.

Above we saw how in the case of reported speech and echoic use a speaker will require the hearer to infer contextually her attitude to the attributed utterance or thought. Accordingly, the notion that *rɛ* makes explicit that an utterance constitutes

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<sup>75</sup> Sissala is a Niger-Congo, Gur (Voltaic) language of the subgroup Gurunsi, which is spoken in Burkina Faso (Blass 1989: 299).

an instance of interpretive use entails that the hearer is required to infer the optimally relevant attitude to the attributed proposition on the basis of context.

We shall now review some of the ways in which *ré* marks those types of utterance which relevance theory has identified as interpretive. Firstly, *ré* may be the only non-contextual indication that an utterance is to be understood as reported speech. This is the case in example (36), where the effect of the procedural import of *ré* is to instruct the hearer to recover a higher-level explicature which resembles ‘it is said that’ or ‘they say that’:

- (36) *Náḡá susé. Ba kaa konni yo ta ré.*  
some died they took cut throw leave *ré*

{It is said that} some died and were untied and left there.’

In (37) and (38) *ré* appears in complementizer position and marks an indirect-speech-type construction and direct speech (an instance of metalinguistic use) respectively:

- (37) *Ba se rí ba yálá há kúé make don pinε weri*  
they said *ré* their aunt who has-come show sleep lying well  
  
*pa wɔ.*  
give them

‘They say that their aunt who has come will show them how to sleep properly.’

- (38) *U háálb´ ná líɔ´ bul rí ɱ-ḡ mú η bozóη dihī ní.*  
his wife DEF left said *ré* I/IPF go my lover place SDM

‘While leaving his wife said: “I am going to my lover.”’

However, in these examples *ré*, which introduces an embedded clause, does not have the effect of constraining the recovery of a higher-level explicature like in (37). Itani (1998) provides an explanation for a similar phenomenon in Japanese, an explanation which seems equally applicable to (37) and (38):

Why this is so follows from the definition of higher-level explicature. Higher-level explicatures are recovered by embedding the whole proposition expressed, not a part of the proposition e.g. complement clauses to which *tte* [or *ré*] is attached.

(Itani 1998: 59)

Thus, because the subordinate proposition *rí ba yálá há kúé make don pinε weri pa wɔ* in (37) is only part of the full proposition expressed, it cannot be embedded under a higher-level explicature. The entire utterance, including matrix clause, however, can be so embedded.

The next two examples demonstrate the use of *ré* in echoic utterances. In (39) an attitude of endorsement is expressed, and in (40) an attitude of dissociation:

(39) A: *Ba dula á wéí.*

they this year done well

‘They have done well this year.’

B: *Ba bíená á wéí é rí.*

they really done well F *ré*

‘They have done really well.’

(40) A: *I bino´ ná síé keη susi fé.*

your thing DEF so catch pity much

‘Your thing (tape recorder) arouses pity.’

B: *Susi rí. U má niso né.*

pity *ré* its also make SDM

‘Pity. It is just its make.’ (Things of that make are always small.)

But *ré* does not have to accompany the echo of an utterance which has actually been articulated; *ré* may be used to make explicit that an utterance constitutes an instance of echoic use whereby what is echoed is an *implicature* of the original. This is the case in (41a):

(41a) A: Ants gather grains and take them out and leave them there. They enter the house again, break the grains again and take them out.

B: *E! cuŋkumó tuŋ ré.*  
eh ants work *ré*

‘Eh! Ants work!’

B has derived the implicature, which she then echoes, through processing A’s utterance in a context which includes the assumption in (41b):

(41b) If ants break grains and carry them out of the house all at the same time then they work hard.

Blass (1990: 117) additionally provides evidence that in Sissala another variety of interpretive use may be marked by *ré*: interrogatives. However, she points out that this is not obligatory and that in one dialect interrogatives are not marked at all by *ré*. But she also points out that ‘[...] whenever the question is echoed in the answer, the answer is obligatorily marked by *ré*’ (1990: 117). For example:

(42) A: *I hé pilwa - a?*  
you put batteries Q  
‘Did you put batteries in?’

B: *ŋ he pilwa ré.*  
I put batteries *ré*

‘I did put batteries in.’

(43) illustrates the use of *ré* with Wh-words, such as *βεημε ré* (‘how much/many’):

(43) *Nie βεημε ré?*  
people how many *ré*

‘How many people (are there)?’

Blass shows that *ré* occurs with a number of other types of utterance, such as beliefs, desires, and echoic questions, and suggests that the use of *ré* with such linguistic expressions is to be expected if it is analyzed not as a hearsay particle, but as a marker of interpretive use. The distribution of *ré* in Sissala thus constitutes evidence that Sperber and Wilson's distinction between descriptive and interpretive use is, as they intend it to be, a reflection of genuine cognitive processes that a hearer deploys in utterance interpretation.

The question arises as to whether particles which have been analyzed in other languages as hearsay markers can be reanalyzed from a relevance-theoretic viewpoint as markers of interpretive use. Itani (1991, 1998) considers a different hearsay particle, the Japanese utterance-final particle *tte*, and suggests that it does not mark general interpretive use in the same way as *ré*. Rather its use is restricted to the report and echo of utterances. In the 1991 text, Itani suggested that *tte* marked *attributive* use. Subsequently, Itani (1998) suggested, rather, that it is specialized for a subtype of attributive use: *quotative attributive* use. This is because a reported or echoed utterance which is accompanied by *tte* must have been articulated by somebody other than the hearer herself. It cannot report or echo thoughts which others (are imagined to) entertain.

Itani proposes that '[...] utterance-final *tte* linguistically encodes procedural information' and suggests that it provides '[...] clues for constructing a conceptual representation, i.e. a higher-level explicature' (1998: 65). In example (44a) the function of *tte* is comparable to that of *ré* in (36) above; it ensures that the hearer understands the speaker to have communicated a higher-level explicature such as 'it is said that' or 'they say that' in (44b). (All examples are from Itani (1998)):

(44a) *Mary ga kashikoi tte.*<sup>76</sup>

(44b) {They say that} Mary is smart.

However, in (45a) the effect of *tte* is to instruct the hearer to construct a more specific higher-level explicature such as 'Mary's teacher says that' (45b):

(45a) A: What did Mary's teacher say?

B: *Mary ga kashikoi tte.*

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<sup>76</sup> Itani (1998) does not supply Japanese examples with gloss translations, and as I am not familiar with Japanese I am not in a position to supply my own.

(45b) {**She says that**} Mary is smart.

Itani (1998: 59) suggests that in such cases *tte* functions as a '[...] a predicate complementizer which contributes to the proposition expressed'.<sup>77</sup> In other words, examples such as (45a) are elliptical. This suggests that the type of contribution which *tte* makes to explicature is determined pragmatically; it is the hearer's assumption that the speaker's utterance conforms to the communicative principle of relevance that is responsible for resolving this indeterminacy.

Example (46) demonstrates that, as in Sissala, any higher-level explicatures are not felt to be present when *tte* functions as a predicate complementizer which accompanies an embedded clause:

(46) Mary is smart ***tte utagawashii***.

'It is doubtful that Mary is smart.'

'Mary is smart *tte*' is merely part of the proposition expressed so, like the Sissala clause introduced *ré* in example (37), it cannot be embedded under a higher-level explicature.

In (47) and (48) utterances are echoed which are understood to have been articulated by someone, and at the same time an attitude is expressed towards them. In (47) the attitude is one of surprise, whilst in (48) the effect is ironical:

(47) *Mary ga kashikoi tte!*

'Mary is smart, did she say that? Goodness!'

(48) Oh, so it can remove any stain ***tte***.

(expressing the speaker's disgust at the overstated claims made for a new product)

That *tte* is incompatible with utterances which echo, and thereby express an attitude towards, a thought which has not previously been articulated is demonstrated by the

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<sup>77</sup> For this reason, following a convention introduced in 3.2.5, 'she says that' above is in bold.

unacceptability of the ironically intended (49). However, in Japanese, according to Itani (1998: 52), it is acceptable as irony without *tte*:

(49) ? *li ten o torimashita tte.*

[as a teacher hands a badly scored exam to her pupil]

‘So you’ve scored a good mark.’

Additionally, the status of *tte* as a marker of quotative attributive use entails that, unlike Sissala *ré* it cannot be used to echo an implicature of an utterance.

However, *tte* can be used to report or echo the speaker’s own thoughts, which Itani explains as follows:

We all have a kind of direct access to our own thoughts which we do not have to other people’s thoughts, so we may consider or think about our own (unuttered) thoughts in much the same way as we may think about other people’s utterances.

(Itani 1998: 63)

Hence the possibility of (50):

(50) *Mary ga kashikoi tte!*

‘Mary is smart! What am I thinking?’

*Tte* is not compatible with interrogatives. However, Japanese has an alternative means of marking these, the particle *ka*, and this is the subject of Itani (1993). Itani claims that the fact that *ka* marks an utterance as an interrogative is due to the circumstance that *ka* indicates that ‘[...] the proposition expressed is an interpretation of a desirable thought’ (1993: 146). In (51) *ka* marks a yes-no question and in (52) a Wh-question. (All examples are from Itani (1993)):

(51) *Yamada-san wa gakusei desu-o ka?*

Mr Yamada topic student is ka

‘Is Mr Yamada a student?’

- (52) *Yamada-san wa doko ni iki-mashita ka?*  
Mr Yamada topic where to go-past ka

'Where did Mr Yamada go?'

Like *tte*, *ka* can be used to mark irony, but unlike *tte*, what is echoed does not need to have been articulated by someone: *ka* may be used to echo '[...]' an opinion generally held by people, e.g. an old saying' (1993: 140):

- (53) [CONTEXT] The speaker who thought of the proverb 'More haste, less speed' decided to rush to the station and eventually she missed the train. Now she ridicules the proverb.

More haste, less speed *ka*.

However, according to Itani, *ka* here does not seem to be responsible for the echoic feel. So what is the function of *ka*? Itani suggests that, as in the case of interrogatives, *ka* ensures that the proposition expressed is understood as an interpretation of a desirable thought:

[Utterances such as (53)] have two possible analyses: on one, [...] *ka* remains outside the scope of the proposition echoed, and functions to indicate that the speaker is questioning the truth of that proposition; on the second [...] *ka* is itself echoed, and the speaker is ironically requesting confirmation of a proposition which is manifestly false. In either case [...] *ka* has its regular interrogative function, encoding the information that the utterance is being put forward as an interpretation of a desirable thought.

(Itani 1993: 141)

Itani (1993: 141-143) goes on to show that *ka* also occurs with exclamatives, and suggests that this is to be expected, considering that exclamatives are also associated within the relevance-theoretic framework with the interpretation of desirable thoughts.

Ultimately, this brief survey suggests that not all hearsay particles are analyzable within relevance theory as markers of (general) interpretive use. At least one hearsay particle (Japanese *tte*) conforms largely to Blass's minimal hypothesis for hearsay particles: *tte* can be used for reporting and echoing actual speech, but not thoughts and implicatures. As such it is more appropriately analyzed from a

relevance-theoretic point of view as a marker of quotative attributive use, i.e., a subtype of interpretive use. Itani shows that the particle *ka* is also specialized for a subtype of interpretive use: it indicates that the proposition expressed is understood as an interpretation of a desirable thought. Both *ré* and *tte* instruct the hearer to construct a higher-level explicature, but this explicature is not felt to be present when the particle functions as a predicate complementizer and accompanies an embedded clause. Additionally, contextual considerations may prompt the hearer to understand the explicature associated with Japanese *tte* as part of the proposition expressed.

#### 3.4.6 *The marking of interpretive use in German*

German also has a range of linguistic devices at its disposal to mark different varieties of interpretive use. Here we shall consider three. Firstly we shall look at subject-verb inversion. Then we shall move on to a consideration of verbal means of indicating interpretive use; we shall investigate the modal verbs *sollen* ('should') and *wollen* ('want').

Above we saw that Sissala can employ *ré* in order to make explicit the element of interpretive use in interrogatives, and we observed that Japanese possesses a particle *ka* to indicate the precise type of interpretive use which interrogatives involve: the proposition expressed is understood to be an interpretation of a desirable thought. In both cases the interpretive use marker is apparently indifferent to whether the thought which is interpreted by the interrogative is entertained as a complete propositional form (as in the case of yes-no questions), or whether the thought has a logical form but a less-than-complete propositional form (Wh-questions). German also has a means of marking interrogatives: subject-verb inversion. (54a) exemplifies subject-verb inversion in a yes-no question:

(54a) *Hast du das Brot gekauft?*  
have you the bread bought?

'Did you buy the bread?'

The subject-verb inversion here can be said to have procedural import; it ensures that the hearer recovers the higher-level explicature *der Sprecher fragt, ob* ('the speaker is asking whether') in (54b):

(54b) {**Der Sprecher fragt, ob**} *ich das Brot gekauft habe.*  
the speaker asks whether I the bread bought have

It could be claimed that, as can be the case in Sissala and Japanese, this interrogative marking also occurs in German Wh-questions:

(55a) *Was hast du gekauft?*  
what have you bought?

‘What did you buy?’

Here the hearer will recover the higher-level explicature (55b):

(55b) {**Der Sprecher fragt**}, *was ich gekauft habe.*  
the speaker asks what I bought have

However, the subject-verb inversion in (55a) is arguably syntactically rather than pragmatically motivated. The Wh-word *was* (‘what’) appears in sentence-initial position as a result of syntactic Wh-fronting rules. A principle of German word order then comes into play: the finite verb is always the second constituent of a German main clause. Thus Wh-fronting necessitates subject-verb inversion. We therefore claim that subject-verb inversion is a procedural device which is specialized for a very specific subtype of interpretive use: yes-no questions.

Blass (1990: 96) suggests that the German modal verbs *sollen* (‘should’) and *wollen* (‘want’) may be analyzed as hearsay devices since the speaker may use them to indicate ‘[...] that she is reporting what somebody else said’ (1990: 96). As such, we propose that they are candidates for analysis as markers of specific subtypes of interpretive use.

It could be claimed that *sollen* requires the hearer to supply a higher-level explicature such as ‘it is said/reported/believed that’ or ‘they say that’ etc. If this is right then the hearer of (56a) will derive a higher-level explicature similar to that in (56b) (example from Durrell (2011: 349)):

(56a) *Bei den Unruhen soll es bisher vier Tote gegeben haben.*  
in the riots should it so far four dead given have

(56b) *{Es wird berichtet, dass} es bei den Unruhen bisher vier*  
it becomes reported that it in the riots so far four  
*Tote gegeben hat.*  
dead given has

‘It is reported that so far four people have been killed in the riots.’

However, there is evidence that the explicature which *sollen* supplies is not of the higher-level variety. Schenner (2008a, 2008b) suggests that *sollen* in its reportative function carries a reportative presupposition: *sollen*<sub>REP</sub>(*p*) i.e. ‘it is said that *p*’. He observes that reportative *sollen* may be embedded under a verbum dicendi such that the reportative presupposition receives an assertive reading; this is the reading which the semantics suggested for *sollen* (*sollen*<sub>REP</sub>(*p*)) predicts. The presupposition receives such an assertive reading in (57) (taken from Schenner (2008a: 559)):

(57) *90 mal 190 Zentimeter: Das waren die Abmessungen von*  
90 times 190 centimetres that were the measurements of

*Goethes bescheidenem Bett. Auf den Betrachter wirkt es heute*  
Goethes modest bed on the beholder seems it today

*ziemlich kurz, vor allem wenn er weiß, dass Goethe*  
fairly short before everything if he knows that Goethe

*groß von Statur gewesen sein soll.*  
big of stature been be should

‘90 x 19cm: That was the size of Goethe’s modest bed. To the beholder it seems quite short today, especially if he knows that it is said that Goethe was tall.’

We do not subscribe to Schenner's proposal that *sollen* introduces a reportative presupposition; if we are right that *sollen* possesses a procedural semantics which constrains the recovery of an explicature such as 'it is said that', then the notion of a reportative presupposition is not necessary. However, the observation that Schenner's presupposition  $sollen_{REP}(p)$  receives an assertive reading in (57) enables us to make an important claim about the contribution made by *sollen*. Schenner's observation gives us reason to claim that this explicature ('it is said that', etc.), unlike that supplied by *r , tte* which is similar in its conceptual content, *can* be embedded, in this case under *wissen* ('know'). This suggests that this explicature is not of the higher-level variety: instead it contributes to the proposition expressed by the utterance.

According to Schenner,  $sollen_{REP}(p)$  does not always receive an assertive reading when embedded. *Sollen* may be embedded under a matrix predicate such that the reportative presupposition is accommodated *globally* (2008a: 560). In our relevance-theoretic terms, the hearer's expectation that the utterance is optimally relevant will prompt him to infer contextually that the explicature associated with *sollen* is to be understood parenthetically and thus does not contribute to the main relevance of the utterance. An example from Schenner (2008a: 560):

(58) *Es ist schwer zu glauben, dass ich der Vater Deines Kindes sein*  
 it is hard to believe that I the father of your child be

soll.

should

'It is hard to believe that I am the father of your child, as is alleged.'

Additionally, the reportative presupposition of *sollen* may receive a *concord* reading when embedded (Schenner 2008a: 559-560). In such cases, our claim is that the explicature is pragmatically cancelled in accordance with relevance-theoretic principles. Again, we use one of Schenner's examples (2008a: 560):

(59a) *Die Zeitschrift hatte f lschlicherweise behauptet, dass sich die*  
 the magazine had wrongly claimed that herself the

*Prinzessin ihren Adelstitel unredlich erworben haben soll.*

Princess her title dishonestly acquired have should

‘The magazine had wrongly claimed that the princess gained her title dishonestly.’

This is essentially indirect speech, and *sollen* marks the attributed, interpretively used proposition in a manner similar to the reportative subjunctive, which may be substituted:

(59b) *Die Zeitschrift hatte fälschlicherweise behauptet, dass sich die Prinzessin ihren Adelstitel unredlich erworben **habe**.*

Kaufmann (1976), Letnes (1997), Fabricius-Hansen (2006) and Schenner (2007, 2008b) mention the use of *sollen* with discourse representative adverbials, such as *nach Angaben der Polizei* (‘according to the police’) and *dem Präsidenten zufolge* (‘according to the president’). Kaufmann and Fabricius-Hansen provide only examples where *sollen* does not itself add an additional layer of report to a reported utterance, or, in our terms, examples where the explicature ‘it is said that’ etc. is not felt to be present. Kaufmann (1976: 141) gives this example:

(60) *Der Aussage des Polizisten zufolge soll Hoppe auf seine*  
the statement of the policeman according to should Hoppe at his  
*Verfolger geschossen haben.*  
pursuer shot have

‘According to the policeman’s statement Hoppe shot at his pursuer.’

A hearer’s expectation that an utterance is optimally relevant may, however, prompt him to recover the explicature associated with *sollen* as part of what is communicated. Schenner (2007, 2008b) calls such readings whereby multiple evidentials are present *cumulative*, although he claims that ‘[i]n most contexts the concord reading is strongly preferred’ (2008b: 195). However, in a survey of native German speakers conducted by Letnes, half the respondents (24 out of 48) felt that in example (61) (which admittedly lacks context) *sollen* contributes to what is reported (Letnes 1997: 129), in other words for these respondents the effect of the multiple evidentials is cumulative:

(61) *Nach Aussagen Peters soll Paul der Mörder sein.*  
according to statements of Peter should Paul the murder be

‘According to statements made by Peter, Paul is said to be the murderer.’

In conclusion, the modal verb *sollen* in its hearsay function has procedural import which ensures that the hearer recovers an explicature such as ‘it is said/reported/believed that’ or ‘they say that’ etc. This explicature constitutes part of the proposition expressed, evidence for which is supplied by the circumstance that the explicature can itself be embedded under a higher matrix predicate. However, when the explicature is thus embedded, the hearer’s expectations of optimal relevance may prompt him to understand it parenthetically, or the explicature may even not be felt to be present at all. In this latter case, *sollen* marks indirect speech in a fashion rather similar to the reportative subjunctive.

*Wollen* (‘want’) in its hearsay function also requires the hearer to supply an explicature which functions on the level of the proposition expressed. In this case it will be something like ‘the speaker is saying/claiming that’, and as such this explicature will always be understood to be attributed to the subject of *wollen*. Unlike other interpretive use markers, the attitude which a hearer is expected to recover towards a proposition accompanied by *wollen* is essentially fixed: in using *wollen* a speaker will imply that she holds the interpretively used proposition to be untrue (example from Durrell (2011: 352)):

(62a) *Er will eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft haben.*  
he wants a villa on Majorca bought have

‘He claims to have bought a villa on Mallorca.’

The explicature that the hearer must derive will resemble (62b). *Er behauptet, dass* corresponds roughly to ‘he claims that’:

(62b) {***Er behauptet, dass***} *er eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft hat.*  
he claims that he a villa on Majorca bought has

Evidence that this explicature contributes to the proposition expressed is that, like the explicature supplied by *sollen*, it can be embedded under a verbum dicendi, as in (63):

(63) *Jochen sagte, dass sein Vater eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft haben will.*  
Jochen said that his father a villa on Majorca bought have wants

‘Jochen said that his father claims to have bought a villa on Majorca.’

Unlike the explicature associated with *sollen*, the explicature whose recovery *wollen* constrains cannot be cancelled pragmatically. Thus (63) cannot be faithfully translated as ‘Jochen said that his father had bought a villa on Mallorca’. This explicature also cannot be understood parenthetically:

(64) *Es ist schwer zu glauben, dass er eine Villa auf Mallorca gekauft*  
It is hard to believe that he a Villa on Majorca bought  
  
*haben will.*  
have wants

‘It is hard to believe that he claims to have bought a villa on Majorca.’

Thus this example cannot be faithfully rendered in English as ‘It is hard to believe that he has bought a villa on Mallorca, as he claims’.

So *wollen* in its hearsay function, like *sollen*, contributes an explicature which contributes to the proposition expressed by an utterance. This explicature can therefore be embedded under a higher matrix predicate. However, unlike the explicature supplied by *sollen*, that of *wollen* can be neither cancelled nor understood as a parenthetical. Unusually for interpretive use markers, the semantics of *wollen* is such that it prompts the hearer to derive a specific interpretation of the attributed utterance: the speaker is understood to believe it to be untrue.

### 3.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter we have provided an overview of Sperber and Wilson’s relevance theory, the theory which provides the framework for our research. In the first half we looked at some of the shortcomings of the Gricean model for utterance comprehension, and saw how the cognitive and communicative principles of relevance are to be preferred to Grice’s Co-operative Principle and attendant maxims. We paid special attention to the distinction between conceptual and

procedural meaning, which will prove to be important concepts in the final two chapters. In the second half of the chapter we examined in some detail the relevance-theoretic concept of interpretive use, and examined some German linguistic expressions as markers of specific varieties of interpretive use.

Our task in the remainder of this study will be to investigate the role of the German reportative subjunctive as marker of interpretive use.

# The German reportative subjunctive as a relevance constraint

## 4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 3 we considered the relevance-theoretic concepts of procedural meaning and interpretive use in some detail. We looked at some of the devices that speakers of some languages may employ in order to ensure that the hearer recovers explicatures associated with interpretive use. We examined the Sissala particle *ré* and the Japanese particles *tte* and *ka* as well as some German linguistic devices associated with interpretive use, including the modal verbs *sollen* and *wollen*. In the remainder of this study we shall suggest that the German reportative subjunctive may also be analyzed as an interpretive use marker, albeit it one associated with a specific subtype of interpretive use: indirect speech. We shall show that such an analysis allows us to explain the various phenomena, described in section 2.2.11, for which we would expect an adequate analysis of the reportative subjunctive to account.

We shall suggest that, apart from its association with indirect speech, the German reportative subjunctive has two properties in common with the particles *ré*, *tte* and *ka*. Firstly it encodes procedural meaning and thus *ensures* that an utterance is understood as indirect speech. Secondly, as we suggested in section 2.2.10, it is compatible with any attitude which a reporter may wish the hearer to recover inferentially. The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the procedural meaning that the reportative subjunctive encodes, i.e. the relevance constraint that it imposes. The recovery of reporter attitudes will form the focus of Chapter 5.

In this chapter, we shall firstly describe the nature of the constraint which the reportative subjunctive imposes on the comprehension of an utterance. We shall suggest that owing to this constraint the German reportative subjunctive supplies an explicature which functions on the level of the proposition expressed, i.e. a basic explicature. The remainder of the chapter will be devoted to a consideration of how

relevance theory is able to explain how a hearer of reported speech constructs the ellipsed matrix clause.

## 4.2 The role of the German reportative subjunctive in constraining the interpretation of indirect speech

### 4.2.1 *The German reportative subjunctive and prototypical indirect speech*

In Chapter 2 we provided a comprehensive survey of how the reportative subjunctive is employed in indirect speech. The examples we provided all conformed to the preliminary description of indirect speech which was provided in the Introduction, repeated below:

- (i) Indirect speech consists of a matrix verbum-dicendi clause and a subordinate proposition which latter in German may or may not be introduced by *dass*.
- (ii) Pronominal deixis must be selected from the point of view of the reporter. Other deixis may be selected from the point of view of the original speaker.
- (iii) Indirect speech may exhibit the property indirectness. In such cases the reported proposition will not be understood to be presupposed.

Importantly, in accordance with point (ii), all pronominal deixis in the examples of indirect speech in Chapter 2 reflected the point of view of the reporter: this must be understood as an essential characteristic of indirect speech in German. Point (ii) also states that other deixis *may* be chosen from the point of view of the original speaker. We showed in Chapter 2 that the tense of a reportative-subjunctive form in indirect speech will *always* be understood to reflect this point of view, in other words it is always understood in relation to  $t^1$ . Furthermore, we showed that reportative-subjunctive indirect speech always exhibits the property indirectness, and its effect when embedded under factive verbs such as *kritisieren* ('criticize') and *bedauern* ('regret') is to create indirect speech which displays indirectness: the matrix verb is understood non-factively. Our claim is therefore that the German reportative subjunctive is associated with a (German-specific) 'prototype' of indirect speech, and that this prototype prescribes that the tense of the embedded verb *must* reflect the point of view of the original speaker and that an instance of indirect speech *must* exhibit the property indirectness. Thus, we propose the following description of the

prototype of indirect speech with which the German reportative subjunctive is associated:

- (i) Prototypical indirect speech consists of a matrix clause and a subordinate proposition which latter in German may or may not be introduced by *dass*.
- (ii) Pronominal deixis must be selected from the point of view of the reporter. The tense of the embedded verb must be chosen from the point of view of t<sup>1</sup>. Other deixis may be selected from the point of view of the original speaker.
- (iii) Prototypical indirect speech must exhibit the property indirectness. Therefore the reported proposition will not be understood to be presupposed.

Although the reportative subjunctive ensures that indirect speech is understood in rather a specific way, it does nevertheless allow the speaker some freedom: the prototypical indirect speech with which it is associated is, for example, indifferent to the *de dicto* versus *de re* distinction, discussed in the Introduction. (1a), which differs from the purported original utterance (1b) only in terms of its pronominal deixis (and, of course the use of S1 forms), is a repeat of the example of *de dicto* indirect speech (example (5)) provided in the Introduction.<sup>78</sup>

(1a) *Australiens Aussenminister Smith sagte jedoch dem*  
Australia's foreign minister Smith said however to the

*Fernsehsender Sky News, er gehe davon aus, dass der*  
television broadcaster Sky News he assumes.S1 from it SP that the

*27-Jährige in Australien ebenso warmherzig empfangen werde*  
27-year-old in Australia just as warmly received becomes.S1

*wie in Neuseeland.*  
as in New Zealand

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<sup>78</sup> It will be remembered that *de dicto* indirect speech is characterized by the absence of the conjunction *dass* ('that'), whilst in *de re* indirect speech *dass* is used and the verbal cluster appears at the end of the clause.

‘However, Australia’s foreign minister Smith told the television broadcaster Sky News he assumed that the 27-year-old would be just as warmly received in Australia as he was in New Zealand.’

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 20.01.2010)

(1b) *Ich gehe davon aus, dass der 27-Jährige in Australien ebenso warmherzig empfangen wird wie in Neuseeland.*

(2a), which needs to *resemble* (2b) in terms of its propositional form (but the propositional forms need not be identical), is a repeat of our earlier example of *de re* indirect speech:

(2a) *Ein CNN-Korrespondent berichtet aus Port-au-Prince, dass Präsident*  
a CNN correspondent reports from Port-au-Prince that president

*René Prével zwar persönlich am Flughafen die ersten Hilfsflüge*  
René Prével indeed personally at the airport the first relief flights

*empfangen **habe**, es aber keine organisierte Verteilung der*  
received has.S1 it but no organized distribution of the

*Hilfsgüter **gebe**.*  
relief supplies gives.S1

‘A CNN correspondent reports from Port-au-Prince that President René Prével met the first relief flights personally, but there was no organized distribution of the relief supplies.’

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 15.01.2010)

(2b) *Präsident René Prével empfang zwar persönlich am Flughafen die ersten Hilfsflüge, es gibt aber keine organisierte Verteilung der Hilfsgüter.*

What is the nature of the import of the reportative subjunctive? We hypothesize that its import is *procedural*, its precise function being to ensure that an utterance is understood as an instance of indirect speech which conforms to the

prototype of indirect speech described above.<sup>79</sup> In the next section we shall provide some preliminary evidence for this proposal; a much more detailed examination will be found in sections 4.2.3 and 4.2.6.

#### 4.2.2 *The procedural import of the German reportative subjunctive: Preliminary observations*

We begin by revisiting an example which we looked at previously in Chapter 2 in our discussion of Eisenberg (1986/2004) and Thieroff (1992). On this occasion, the insight is our own:

- (3a) *Bild hat geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden ist.*  
Bild has written that the count arrested become is.IND

‘Bild has written that the count has been arrested.’

This example is potentially ambiguous. On the one (more likely) interpretation, it is to be understood as (prototypical) indirect speech: the hearer will infer that the embedded proposition is attributed to *Bild*.<sup>80</sup> On the other interpretation, the hearer is assumed already to know that the count has been arrested, i.e. this fact is presupposed. If the latter interpretation is the intended one, i.e. the focus is on the circumstance that the (known) fact that the count has been arrested has now been reported in *Bild*, then (3a) cannot be considered an instance of indirect speech with the feature indirectness. Note, however, that both interpretations we have suggested must be inferred by the hearer on the basis of context since there is no linguistic device which ensures that the hearer understands the utterance in one particular way. However, a hearer is much more likely to infer that the embedded proposition is presupposed if *jetzt endlich* (‘at last’ or ‘finally’) is added:

- (3b) *Bild hat jetzt endlich geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden ist.*

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<sup>79</sup> From now on we shall refer to indirect speech which conforms to this description as ‘prototypical indirect speech’. This is simply for convenience; we do not wish to imply that indirect speech *has* to conform to this model in order to be considered indirect speech ‘proper’.

<sup>80</sup> Our claim is that any German indirect speech which conforms to the prototype is prototypical indirect speech, even if an indicative form is used. The subjunctive *ensures* that the indirect speech is understood to be prototypical.

But it is still ultimately the context that ensures that the hearer understands this utterance as such. If, however, a subjunctive is substituted for the indicative in example (3a), then the hearer's understanding of it is constrained such that the utterance is understood as an instance of prototypical indirect speech:

(3c) *Bild hat geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden sei.*

The subjunctive appears to have two functions here in ensuring that this is understood as prototypical indirect speech. On the one hand, it blocks interpretations which are inconsistent with such a reading: in this particular example it means that the interpretation according to which the embedded proposition is presupposed is ruled out. On the other hand, this is understood as prototypical indirect speech because the tense of the subjunctive has not only been selected from the point of view of the original speaker (*Bild*), the fact that it is a subjunctive form means that it is also *understood* as such, i.e. in relation to  $t^1$ .

The German reportative subjunctive also has the effect of distinguishing between direct discourse and indirect speech in the following examples. The examples themselves are taken from Hammer (1983: 268), but again the analysis is our own:

(4a) *Er sagte, er **bewerbe** sich um diese Stelle, für die er gar  
he said he applies.S1 himself for this position for which he really  
  
nicht geeignet ist.  
not suited is.IND*

'He said he was applying for this position, which (in my opinion) he is totally unsuited to.'

The first subordinate clause *er bewerbe sich um diese Stelle*, can be understood only to be reported. This is to a large extent because it is immediately subordinate to the verbum dicendi *sagte*, but the subjunctive form *bewerbe* also plays a crucial role: it ensures that the embedded proposition is understood as prototypical indirect speech, and the hearer has no choice but to understand its tense in relation to  $t^1$ . However, the second subordinate clause *für die er gar nicht geeignet ist* is ambiguous. There is nothing in theory that prevents it from being understood as a continuation of the preceding indirect speech. But the most likely interpretation is

one according to which it is understood as the reporter's own comment/opinion. If the second clause does not constitute part of what is understood to be reported, then the original utterance can be assumed to resemble (4b):

(4b) *Ich bewerbe mich um diese Stelle.*

However, in (5a) the use of the subjunctive in the clauses following *da* ('as') ensures that they are understood as a continuation of the indirect speech introduced by *er sagte*:

(5a) *Er sagte, er werde das Buch kaufen, da sein Onkel, dessen*  
he said he will.S1 the book buy as his uncle whose

*Urteil er hoch achte, es ihm empfohlen hätte.*  
judgement he highly respects.S1 it him recommended has.S2

'He said he would buy the book as his uncle, whose judgement (he said) he held in high regard, had recommended it to him.'

The reportative subjunctives in the subordinate clauses make sure that they are understood as indirect speech. But they also ensure that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed relative to  $t^0$  by the matrix *verbum dicendi* under which the subjunctive forms are ultimately embedded. Thus the original utterance must be understood to resemble (5b):

(5b) *Ich werde das Buch kaufen, da mein Onkel, dessen Urteil ich hoch achte, es mir empfohlen hat.*

Such considerations provide evidence for our hypothesis that the German reportative subjunctive has procedural import: it imposes a semantic constraint on the relevance of an utterance and constrains the inferential computations that a hearer performs over its conceptual content such that it is understood as an instance of indirect speech which conforms to the prototype described above. The notion that the subjunctive is procedural can be further corroborated. In Chapter 3, section 3.3, we saw how the semantic import of linguistic expressions which encode procedural meaning is difficult to conceptualize mentally. This is because, as pointed out by Wilson and Sperber (1993: 16), we do not have direct access either

to the grammatical or to the inferential computations used in utterance comprehension. Whilst it can be *demonstrated* that the subjunctive ensures that an utterance is understood as indirect speech and that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$ , we are not able to visualize its import in the same way that we can visualize, for example, a teapot or the colour blue.

On the basis of our observations regarding examples (3), (4) and (5) and of our proposal for the prototype of indirect speech with which the reportative subjunctive is associated, we suggest that the reportative subjunctive has two chief tasks. Firstly, it guarantees that the utterance is understood as prototypical indirect speech by blocking certain interpretations which are inconsistent with prototypical indirect speech. In the case of example (3c) this results in the interpretation on which the subordinate proposition is presupposed being blocked. The other task of the subjunctive is to ensure that the tenses of indirect speech conform to point (iia) above, i.e. are understood in relation to  $t^1$ . Importantly, the two aspects of the procedural import of the German reportative subjunctive should not be seen as separate constraints that it imposes. Instead, they should ultimately be seen as different components of one single relevance constraint, a constraint which, in minimizing the hearer's processing effort, ensures that an utterance is understood as prototypical indirect speech.

We shall now examine these two facets of the procedural constraint imposed by the reportative subjunctive in some detail, considering first the role of the subjunctive in blocking interpretations which conflict with a proto-typical-indirect-speech reading.

#### 4.2.3 *The role of the German reportative subjunctive in blocking interpretations which are inconsistent with prototypical indirect speech*

The effect of the German reportative subjunctive in ensuring that an utterance is understood as prototypical indirect speech can be felt particularly strongly when it is embedded under verbs such as *kritisieren*, *loben* ('praise'), *bedauern* and *sich freuen* ('be glad'). This is because these verbs are usually factive, but the reportative subjunctive constrains their interpretation such that they are understood as *verba dicendi* which introduce indirect speech with the property indirectness. Furthermore, as we shall suggest below, when they introduce prototypical indirect speech such verbs need to be understood to be embedded under an additional matrix clause,

such as ‘*X sagt, dass P*’, which is constructed by the hearer on the level of basic explication.

The focus of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø’s 2011 paper ‘Behabitive reports’ is the report of speech acts such as *kritisieren* and *loben*. Apparently building on the insights of Fabricius-Hansen (2006), they distinguish cases where the embedded clause is the *object* of judgement and those where the embedded clause is analyzable as the *content* of judgement. They claim that ‘[...] in the O[bject] case, to criticize *a* for doing *P* is to say something conveying disapproval of *P(a)* [...]’ (2011: 86), and provide (6) as an example:

- (6) *Einstein kritisierte, dass Bohr die Kausalität aufgegeben hatte.*  
Einstein criticized that Bohr the causality abandoned had

‘Einstein criticized Bohr for having abandoned causality.’

Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø are essentially saying that in (6) the notion that Bohr has abandoned causality is presented as a known fact which Einstein has criticized. In other words, the subordinate proposition will be presupposed by the matrix verb. Crucially, the finite verb in the content case *must* be an indicative form. They subsequently observe that instances of the object case are compatible with *es*-expletive insertion (example from Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2011:86)):<sup>81</sup>

- (7) *Platon hat es kritisiert, dass die Sophisten Rhetorik lehrten.*  
Plato has it criticized that the sophists rhetoric taught.IND

‘Plato criticized the fact that the sophists taught rhetoric’ or ‘Plato criticized the sophists for teaching rhetoric.’

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<sup>81</sup> Precisely what motivates *es*-expletive insertion is far from clear, and Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø quote Sudhof (2004) who remarks that ‘[s]everal proposals have been made [...], none of which seem to be entirely conclusive’ (2004: 23). Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø themselves propose that ‘[...] *es* signals that the complement clause it correlates with is not quite discourse-new. It agrees with factives like *bedauern* ‘regret’ [...] but it disagrees with verbs of saying like *behaupten* ‘claim’ [...]; between these two extremes there are many verbs, including verbs of saying, where *es* seems to imply that the proposition expressed by the correlative clause is already under discussion in the discourse’ (2011: 90).

A further point regarding the object case is that the subordinate clause *must* be introduced by the conjunction *dass*; this may be linked to Truckenbrodt's insight that '[f]active predicates do not allow embedded V-to-C [...]' (2006: 299).<sup>82, 83</sup>

Regarding the content case, Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2011: 86) remark that: '[...] to criticize  $\alpha$  for doing  $P$  is [...] to say  $P(\alpha)$ , thereby conveying disapproval of something  $\alpha$  has done or is doing'. They point out that the content case *does* allow V-to-C, in other words the conjunction *dass* may be omitted, and follow Truckenbrodt in pointing out that '[...] V2 clauses [...] cannot be factive [...]' (2011:89). Importantly, the content case does not permit *es*-expletive insertion. Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø provide the following example:

(8a) *Einstein kritisierte, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgegeben*  
Einstein criticized that Bohr prematurely the causality abandoned

***habe.***

has.S1

'Einstein criticized Bohr for having abandoned causality prematurely' or  
'Einstein voiced the criticism that Bohr abandoned causality prematurely.'

The content case is compatible with an embedded reportative subjunctive. Significantly, example (8a) contains a 'negative moral judgement predicate' (*voreilig*), to which Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø refer formally as an *evaluative element*, '[...] the presence of which in the complement clause is, as it appears, necessary (maybe even sufficient), for the C[ontent] case' (2011: 86). Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø thus imply that there is a distinction between the sort of embedded clause that may occur in the object case and the sort that may occur in the content case. We infer from their further considerations that it is not possible to convert (9a) below, an example of the content case with the evaluative element *unmoralisch* ('immoral'), into an instance of the object case simply by substituting an indicative for the subjunctive (example (9b)): due to the presence of *unmoralisch* it will still be understood as an instance of the content case (examples from Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2011: 89):

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<sup>82</sup> We understand a factive predicate to be the complement clause of a factive verb, as defined above. Thus a factive predicate will be presupposed.

<sup>83</sup> V-to-C, i.e. the occurrence of the verb in second position, is possible only in clauses not introduced by a subordinating conjunction, e.g. *dass*.

- (9a) *Platon kritisierte, dass die Rhetorik unmoralisch **sei**.*  
 Plato criticized that the rhetoric immoral is.S1

‘Plato voiced the criticism that rhetoric is immoral.’

- (9b) *Platon kritisierte, dass die Rhetorik unmoralisch **ist**.*

Conversely, according to Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø, the object case is incompatible with the reportative subjunctive (2011: 89). In other words, attempting to convert an instance of the object case (which will lack an evaluative element) into the content case by substituting a subjunctive form results in infelicity. (10a) is satisfactory, (10b) is not:

- (10a) *Platon kritisierte, dass die Sophisten Rhetorik **lehrten**.*  
 Plato criticized that the Sophists rhetoric taught.IND

‘Plato criticized the fact that the Sophists taught rhetoric.’

- (10b) ? *Platon kritisierte, dass die Sophisten Rhetorik **lehren würden**.*<sup>84</sup>

Whilst there is therefore clear evidence that there are some types of subordinate proposition that can be understood only as the object of criticism and others which can be associated only with the content case, we believe that there are also some propositions which may be understood as either the object or the content of criticism. In such cases, if the verb embedded under *kritisieren* is an indicative form, then, provided that there is no expletive *es*, it will in our view be possible to understand it as an example of either the content or the object case. Consider, for instance, example (11a), which has an embedded subjunctive:

- (11a) *Schließlich kritisiert Erol auch, daß von den 900 Millionen Schilling,*  
 ultimately criticizes Erol also that of the 900 million Schillings

*die insgesamt seit 1990 an Altlastensanierungsbeiträgen*  
 which altogether since 1990 on clean-up operation contributions

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<sup>84</sup> To make explicit that the embedded verb is to be understood as a(n) (infelicitous) subjunctive, we have substituted the *würde* form: *lehren würden*. This is because the form which the standard rules prescribe, the S2 form *lehrten*, is indistinguishable from the (acceptable) imperfect indicative *lehrten* in (10a).

*gezahlt worden sind, bloß elf Prozent für Sanierungen*  
paid become are.IND merely eleven per cent for decontamination

*ausgegeben worden seien [...].*  
spent become are.S1

‘Finally, Erol also makes the criticism that of the total of 900 million Schillings that have been paid in clean-up operation contributions since 1990, a mere eleven per cent has been spent on decontamination.’

(*Die Presse*: 04.08.1995)

Because of the S1 form (*sein*), this can only be understood as an example of the content case; it is therefore not possible to insert an expletive *es*. This could also be understood as an instance of the content clause, depending on contextual considerations, with an indicative form (*sind*). But it is possible to conceive of a situation where it is a known fact that only eleven per cent of the 900 million schillings have been spent on decontamination. In such a case, a speaker may utter something in criticism of this fact. The result will be an instance of the object case where the fact under discussion is presupposed and the indicative is obligatory whilst *es*-expletive insertion optional. An *es*-expletive would rule out the possibility of a content-case reading, which latter would otherwise be possible, as we have suggested:

(11b) *Schließlich kritisiert es Erol auch, dass von den 900 Millionen Schilling, die insgesamt seit 1990 an Altlastensanierungsbeiträgen gezahlt worden sind, bloß elf Prozent für Sanierungen ausgegeben worden sind.*

‘Finally, Erol also criticizes the fact that of the total of 900 million Schillings that have been paid in clean-up operation contributions since 1990, a mere eleven per cent has been spent on decontamination.’

In essence, instances of the content case constitute indirect speech. From our own point of view, the effect of the subjunctive is to guarantee that an utterance is understood as an example of the content case, i.e. prototypical indirect speech. In doing so the subjunctive prevents interpretations which conflict with an indirect-speech reading, for example interpretations on which the embedded proposition is presupposed will be blocked.

Two more points regarding indirect speech which is introduced by a matrix verb such as *kritisieren* deserve mention. Firstly, Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø remark that in the content case the matrix verb reports both a locution and an illocution (2011: 86). In other words, it is not only the embedded proposition which is reported and attributed to the matrix subject: the performance of the original behabitive speech act is as well. This means that the purported original utterance which (8a) is understood to report is likely to resemble either (8b) in terms of its propositional form or, alternatively, (8c) if an explicit performative is not included but must be recovered inferentially by the hearer on the level of higher-level explicature:

(8b) *Ich kritisiere, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgab.*

(8c) *Bohr gab voreilig die Kausalität auf.*

Secondly, if the matrix verb itself reports part of the original utterance which is attributed to the matrix subject, then it follows that in cases such as (8a) the optimally relevant interpretation will be on which the matrix verbum dicendi is itself understood to be embedded under a (still) higher verbum-dicendi matrix clause which contributes to basic explicature, as in (8d) below. The tense of the verbum-dicendi clause that the hearer supplies will be the same as the tense of the explicit verbum dicendi. In (8d) we have transposed *kritisierte* into the S1 form *kritisiere*: this reflects the fact that the indirect-speech construction that the hearer constructs mentally will in our view itself display indirectness:

(8a) *Einstein kritisierte, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgegeben **habe**.*

(8b) *Ich kritisiere, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgab.*

(8d) *{**Einstein sagte**}, er **kritisiere**, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgegeben **habe**.*

An analysis which bears similarities with that suggested for the report of behabitives may be provided for the use of the reportative subjunctive when embedded under essentially factive verbs of emotional attitude such as *bedauern* and *sich freuen*. We may distinguish an object case and a content case, in both of which  $\alpha$  (the original speaker) is reported as regretting or being glad that  $P$ . In the object case,  $P$  is understood to be presupposed by the matrix verb and the indicative is obligatory:

(12a) *Er bedauerte, dass in diesem Jahr der traditionelle*  
he regretted that in this year the traditional

*Weihnachtsbaum des Gesangvereins fehlte.*  
Christmas tree of the choral society was missing.IND

‘He regretted the fact that this year the choral society did not have their traditional Christmas tree.’

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 15.12.2006)

An expletive *es* may be added to the object case without causing grammatical difficulty:

(12b) *Er bedauerte es, dass in diesem Jahr der traditionelle Weihnachtsbaum des Gesangvereins fehlte.*

In the object case, *a* is likely to have said something which indicates that she regrets that *P*, and so (12a) plausibly reports an utterance which resembles (12c) or (12d). In (12c), the original speaker says explicitly that she regrets that *P*:

(12c) *Ich bedaure, dass in diesem Jahr der traditionelle Weihnachtsbaum des Gesangvereins fehlte.*

In (12d), that the original speaker regrets that *P* is implied:

(12d) *Schade, dass in diesem Jahr der traditionelle Weihnachtsbaum*  
shame that in this year the traditional Christmas tree  
  
*des Gesangvereins fehlte!*  
of the choral society was missing

‘It is a shame that this year the choral society do not have their traditional Christmas tree.’

On the other hand, if the speaker wishes an utterance which consists of verb of emotional attitude plus subordinate proposition to be understood as an instance

of (prototypical) indirect speech, then the reportative subjunctive will guarantee that it is understood as such. *Es*-expletive insertion is not possible:

(13a) *Die CDU - Abgeordnete bedauerte, dass von den osteuropäischen Staaten nur Ungarn zu einem Engagement bereit sei.*  
the CDU member regretted that of the East European states only Hungary to a commitment prepared is.S1

'The CDU member said with regret that of the East European states only Hungary was prepared to commit itself.'

(*Hannoversche Allgemeine*: 20.10.2007)

In this, the content, case  $\alpha$  is likely either to have said  $P$  and thereby indicated that  $\alpha$  regrets that  $P$ , or to have said that  $\alpha$  regrets that  $P$ . Therefore, the utterance which (13a) purports to report is likely to have resembled either an utterance such as (13b), where (according to imagined contextual features)  $\alpha$  says  $P$  and thereby indicates that she regrets that  $P$ :

(13b) *Von den osteuropäischen Staaten ist nur Ungarn zu einem Engagement bereit.*

or (13c), where  $\alpha$  says that  $\alpha$  regrets that  $P$ :

(13c) *Ich bedaure, dass von den osteuropäischen Staaten nur Ungarn zu einem Engagement bereit ist.*

In ensuring that (13a) is understood as indirect speech with the property indirectness, one of the effects of the subjunctive is to block interpretations on which the embedded proposition is presupposed, a presupposition which is plausibly present in (12a):

(12a) *Er bedauerte, dass in diesem Jahr der traditionelle Weihnachtsbaum des Gesangsvereins fehlte.*

Additionally, because in (13a) it is reported that the matrix subject regretted that *P*, i.e. the matrix clause itself represents part of the purported original utterance, (13a) needs to be explicated as (13d):

(13d) {**Die CDU-Abgeordnete sagte**}, sie **bedaure**, dass von den osteuropäischen Staaten nur Ungarn zu einem Engagement bereit **sei**.

In Chapter 1 we remarked that in English and German a proposition embedded under a factive verb such as ‘regret’ will still be understood to be presupposed even if ‘regret’ is itself embedded under a non-factive verb, such as ‘say’. Thus (14a) *does* seem to presuppose (14b):

(14a) My brother said he regretted that he did not accept the job offer.

(14b) My brother did not accept the job offer.

If (14a) is translated into German and we embed an indicative under *bedauern* then, as in English, the presupposition in (14b) appears to survive even though it is itself immediately subordinate to the subjunctive form *bedaure*:

(14c) *Mein Bruder sagte, er bedaure, dass er das Jobangebot nicht*  
my brother said he regrets.S1 that he the job offer not

*angenommen hat.*

accepted has.IND

However, if we substitute a subjunctive for the indicative in (14c), then the interpretation on which (14b) is logically presupposed is blocked:

(14d) *Mein Bruder sagte, er bedaure, dass er das Jobangebot nicht angenommen*  
**habe.**

Because the reported emotional attitude in (14d) is itself embedded under a *verbum dicendi*, the distinction between the object case, where the proposition which is subordinate to *bedauern* is presupposed, and the content case, where it is not, is obscured. On the one hand, contextual considerations may prompt a hearer to understand it as an instance of the content case. On the other hand the reported emotional attitude is understood as an instance of the object case. This might be the

case, for example, if the hearer of (14d) knows as fact that the original speaker's brother declined the job offer concerned. Here we run into a slight problem, for if the latter is the case, then there plausibly is a sense in which the proposition embedded under *bedauern* is presupposed after all. On a weaker interpretation, whether or not this presupposition is present is left open. However, either way we propose that the interpretation on which the (14b) *must* be understood to be presupposed is not available. This, however, does not preclude the hearer from recovering an interpretation *pragmatically* on which the presupposition is understood to survive.

Consequently, our claim is that a *consistent* feature of the prototypical indirect speech with which the procedural import of the German reportative subjunctive is associated is that interpretations on which the embedded proposition *must* be understood to be presupposed by a superordinate factive predicate are blocked. If the subjunctive is employed, then interpretations on which the embedded proposition is presupposed may still arise, but as a pragmatic effect.

#### 4.2.4 *Not all factive verbs accept an embedded reportative subjunctive*

We have argued that there are a number of factive verbs which are capable of being understood as *verba dicendi* which introduce prototypical indirect speech when the German reportative subjunctive is embedded under them. However, it is not the case that the German reportative subjunctive is capable of constraining the interpretation of *any* factive verb such that it is understood as a *verbum dicendi* which introduces prototypical indirect speech. For, as Eisenberg (2006: 117) points out, the reportative subjunctive is ungrammatical when embedded under verbs such as *entschuldigen* ('excuse'), *vergessen* ('forget'), *verstehen* ('understand') and *wissen* ('know'):

- (15) *Er wusste, dass sein Sohn in der Prüfung durchgefallen war (\*sei).*  
 he knew that his son in the exam failed was (is.S1)

'He knew that his son had failed the exam.'

- (16) *Er vergaß, dass sein Sohn in der Prüfung durchgefallen war (\*sei).*  
 (17) *Er verstand, dass sein Sohn in der Prüfung durchgefallen war (\*sei).*

We propose that the subjunctive cannot be subordinate to these verbs because in their case the interpretation on which the embedded proposition is presupposed cannot be blocked. If we are right, then why should this be the case? What is the essential semantic distinction between these verbs and those whereby the interpretation according to which the embedded clause is presupposed *can* be blocked?

Huddleston and Pullum (2002) provide an insight which suggests a possible solution to this problem. They distinguish between two broad classes of factive verbs. On the one hand there are those factives which normally presuppose but do not entail their complement clause. They define 'entail' as follow (2002: 35):

**X entails Y**  $\equiv$  **If X is true then it follows necessarily that Y is true too.**

Examples of 'presupposing' factives which Huddleston and Pullum give include 'admit', 'confess', 'resent' and, significantly, the verb of emotional attitude 'regret' (2002: 1008). As an example of 'confess', they provide (16) (2002: 1007):

(18) Ed confessed that he murdered her husband.

Of this they remark that:

[t]he default assumption is that confessions are true, so that what is foregrounded is the act of confession, not the issue of whether the content is true. But it is perfectly possible to make a false confession, so it cannot be an entailment of [18] that he murdered her husband.

(Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 1007-1008)

Significantly, the German equivalents of all these verbs accept a subjunctive and thus can be understood as *verba dicendi*. Furthermore, behaviorives can also be placed in this broad category of verbs whose complement clause is in the normal case presupposed but not entailed. We repeat example (11b):

(11b) *Schließlich kritisiert Erol auch, dass von den 900 Millionen Schilling, die insgesamt seit 1990 an Altlastensanierungsbeiträgen gezahlt worden sind, bloß elf Prozent für Sanierungen ausgegeben worden **sind**.*

In this example, it is highly probable but not *necessarily* true that only eleven per cent of the 900 million schillings have been spent on decontamination: Erol might be mistaken.

On the other hand, Huddleston and Pullum propose that there is a class of factive verbs which not only presuppose their embedded proposition; they also entail it (2002: 1008). Examples include ‘find out’, ‘forget’, ‘know’, ‘point out’, ‘realize’ and ‘remember’, i.e. generally those verbs mentioned by Eisenberg (2006: 117). Our suggestion is therefore that the subjunctive cannot block an interpretation according to which an embedded proposition is understood to be presupposed by a(n) (otherwise) factive matrix if that proposition is also entailed by this verb. This would explain why the subjunctive cannot normally be embedded felicitously under verbs of this type.<sup>85</sup>

Nevertheless, there is arguably an exception to this. Eisenberg’s verbs can be superordinate to a reportative subjunctive if they are themselves reportative-subjunctive forms and as such form part of an indirect-speech report. In such cases, the effect of the procedural import of the reportative subjunctive is to block interpretations on which the embedded proposition concerned is entailed, in addition to being logically presupposed. For example:

(19) *So kritisiert Dirk Schaper, dass die Stadt sehr genau **wisse**,*  
so criticized Dirk Schaper that the town very exact knows.S1

*dass dies vorerst nicht möglich **sei** und auch nicht geschehen*  
that this at present not possible is.S1 and also not happen

**werde.**

will.S1

‘So Dirk Schaper criticized the town for knowing only too well that this is not possible at present and also will not happen.’

(*Braunschweiger Zeitung*: 07.01.2010)

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<sup>85</sup> The verb *sich erinnern* (‘remember’) can occur with a subjunctive and thus introduce indirect speech, for example *Ein junges Mädchen erinnerte sich, dass sie in Panik geraten sei, als [...]* (‘A young girl (said that she) remembered that she panicked when [...].’) (*Hamburger Morgenpost*: 03.02.2006). However, we suggest that Huddleston and Pullum are incorrect in placing this verb amongst those which both presuppose and entail their complement clause. The fact that it is quite possible for a person to remember a state of affairs incorrectly is evidence enough that *sich erinnern* does not entail its subordinate proposition. Thus the fact that the subjunctive is capable of constraining *sich erinnern*, as a factive verb, such that it is understood as a *verbum dicendi* which introduces prototypical indirect speech is not remarkable.

In (19) the entailment and presupposition that ‘this is not possible at present and also will not happen’ is blocked because this is embedded under the reportative-subjunctive form *wisse*. It thus constitutes part of what is reported and so is ultimately attributed to Schaper. However, the default assumption is that a proposition embedded under *wissen* is presupposed, and, furthermore, there is no contextual reason for the hearer to suppose that the proposition embedded under *wisse* is untrue. Therefore the hearer is likely to sense intuitively that this proposition is presupposed. However, evidence that this is but a pragmatic effect is provided by the following example:

(20) *Das Kind sagte, es wisse, dass die Erde platt sei.*  
 the child said it knows.S1 that the earth flat is.S1

‘The child said that he knew that the Earth is flat.’

Because the proposition that is subordinate to *wisse* is patently false, the hearer has no reason to understand it to be presupposed. The presupposition (and entailment) is blocked by the subjunctive, whilst the possibility of this presupposition being recovered pragmatically is blocked by the context.

In (21) an indicative is embedded under the subjunctive form. The most likely interpretation, however, is one on which the presupposition and entailment that ‘there is always an interesting selection of cultural activities on offer’ survives:

(21) *Die Stadträtin Helen Heberer sagte uns, sie sei hier, weil*  
 the town councillor Helen Heberer said to us she is.S1 here because

*sie wisse, dass es in der Tulla immer ein interessantes*  
 she know.S1 that it in the Tulla always an interesting

*Kulturangebot gibt.*  
 culture offer gives.IND

‘The town councillor Helen Heberer told us that she was here because she knew that there is always an interesting selection of cultural activities on offer in the Tulla.’

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 10.04.01)

The presupposition and entailment of the matrix verb are not blocked by the indicative form *gibt*, even though the factive and entailing verb *wisse* is itself a reportative-subjunctive form.

#### 4.2.5 *Intermediary summary*

The aspect of the constraint imposed by the German reportative subjunctive that we have discussed so far may be summarized as follows. The subjunctive ensures that an utterance with the syntactic form matrix verb plus subordinate clause is understood as indirect speech which conforms to a specific prototype by blocking any interpretation which is incompatible with a prototypical-indirect-speech reading, and in practice this appears to mean interpretations according to which the reported proposition is understood to be presupposed by a matrix factive verb. Nevertheless, the fact that the subjunctive blocks interpretations on which the embedded proposition is presupposed does not preclude the possibility of the hearer recovering an interpretation *pragmatically* on which this proposition *is* presupposed. This seems to be the case if the context of the host discourse indicates that in the purported original utterance the corresponding proposition was presupposed. On the other hand, the reportative subjunctive is not capable of blocking interpretations according to which the embedded proposition is understood to be presupposed if the matrix verb not only presupposes but also *entails* its subordinate proposition. Therefore it cannot be embedded felicitously under such verbs as *vergessen*, *verstehen* and *wissen*. If, however, a presupposing and entailing verb is itself in the reportative subjunctive and as such constitutes part of what is reported, then the subjunctive may be embedded under it: in this case the subjunctive will additionally have the effect of blocking entailments.

#### 4.2.6 *The role of the German reportative subjunctive in ensuring that its tenses are understood in relation to t<sup>1</sup>.*

We now come to a discussion of the other facet of the procedural import of the German reportative subjunctive: the notion that it ensures that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$ . Importantly, this aspect of the constraint works in tandem with that described above in ensuring that an instance of indirect speech is understood to be prototypical. However, the fact that it is possible for the tense of

indirect speech, like pronominal deixis, to be understood from the point of view of the reporter, i.e.  $t^0$  rather than  $t^1$ , suggests that there is some justification in our investigating the two aspects separately. In other words, the fact that the reportative subjunctive ensures that the matrix subject is understood to be responsible for the reported proposition does not of necessity entail that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$ . Conversely, the fact that the tenses of the reportative subjunctive are always understood to be relative to  $t^1$  does not limit its distribution to indirect speech and thus of necessity entail that it attributes the reported proposition to the matrix subject. There is evidence for this: German and Russian indicative tenses may be understood from the point of view of the matrix subject, i.e. may be understood in relation to  $t^1$ , when embedded under factive verbs which both presuppose and entail their complement clause. Thus the tense of the clause embedded under such a verb reflects the viewpoint of the matrix subject at the time denoted by the matrix tense. A Russian example:

- (22) *Kogda ponjal, čto ne vystuplju na Ol,*  
 when I understood that not I will perform at O(lympic) G(ames)  
  
*slezy ne sxodili tri dnja.*  
 tears not went down three days

‘When I understood that I would not perform (lit. ‘will not perform’) at the Olympics the tears didn’t stop for three days.’

([http://london2012.rsport.ru/london2012\\_weightlifting/20120827/613042167.html](http://london2012.rsport.ru/london2012_weightlifting/20120827/613042167.html),  
 accessed 07.11.2012)

The interview from which example (22) is taken was published on 27.08.2012, significantly *after* the London 2012 Olympics, which is the Olympiad referred to. Thus the embedded verb *vystuplju* cannot be understood from the point of view of the weightlifter at the time of the report, but must be understood from his point of view at the time when he realized he would not be able to take part. Thus *vystuplju* *must* be understood in relation to  $t^1$ . The tenses of the German indicative may also be understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed in relation to  $t^0$  by the tense of a factive matrix verb which entails its subordinate proposition. For example:

- (23) «*Ich wusste, dass es nicht leicht sein wird*», sagte Hansruedi  
 I knew that it not easy be will.IND said Hansruedi

«Fidé» der Trainer von Chur 97, nach dem Match.

«Fidé» the coach of Chur 97 after the match

“I knew that it would (lit. ‘will’) not be easy,” said Hansruedi «Fidé», Chur 97’s coach, after the match.’

(*Die Südostschweiz*: 10.10.2005)

In (23) the proposition *Es wird nicht leicht sein* is presupposed. The adverbial *nach dem Match* is significant: at the time of utterance the ‘state of not being easy’ is already in the past, thus Hansruedi’s future form *sein wird* can be understood only in relation to  $t^1$ . These considerations constitute evidence that we are justified in examining both facets of the *single* constraint imposed by the German reportative subjunctive separately.

The fact that it is impossible for the tenses of the German reportative subjunctive in indirect speech to be understood in any way other than in relation to  $t^1$  is implied by Kaufmann (1976: 36) who remarks that ‘[...] the reference point for subjunctive forms in indirect speech is *always* the speaking time of the original speaker’.<sup>86</sup> However, it does not necessarily have to be the case that, in a given language, tensed forms which as a rule take  $t^1$  as their temporal deictic centre in indirect speech can *never* be understood in relation to  $t^0$ . In Russian, for example, the indicative mood is always employed in indirect speech, and the tense of the finite verb:

[...] remains in the same tense as in the corresponding direct speech, i.e. there is no shift whatsoever. This means that tenses in indirect speech in Russian are interpreted not from the viewpoint of the deictic centre of the here-and-now, but rather with the deictic centre of the original speaker.

(Comrie 1985: 109)

Other deictic expressions, on the other hand, must be shifted such they are understood from the deictic point of view of the reporter. However, Comrie (1985: 110) goes on to point out that this can result in a clash between temporal deixis and tense, which he illustrates with the following example. Imagine that it is 8<sup>th</sup> May and Kolya says:

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<sup>86</sup> [...] der Bezugspunkt für Konjunktiv-Formen in der indirekten Rede [ist] immer der Sprechzeitpunkt des Sprechers S1.

(24a) *Ja pridu četyrnadcatogo maja.*  
I will arrive of the fourteenth of May

'I will arrive on 14<sup>th</sup> May.'

Subsequently, on 15<sup>th</sup> May this may be reported as follows:

(24b) *Kolya skazal, čto on pridet četyrnadcatogo maja.*  
Kolya said that he will arrive of the fourteenth of May

'Kolya said that he would arrive on 14<sup>th</sup> May.'

However, this cannot be reported on 15<sup>th</sup> May thus:

(24c) ? *Kolya skazal, čto on pridet včera.*  
Kolya said that he will arrive yesterday

'Kolya said that he would (lit. 'will') arrive yesterday.'

In (24c) the verb *pridet* is a future tense form and, in our own terms, is understood as such in relation to  $t^1$  whose location in time relative to  $t^0$  is indicated by the past-tense form *skazal*. However, the rule which states that temporal and spatial deixis must be selected from the point of view of the reporter has been applied such that the temporal deictic adverbial *včera* is used to refer to 14<sup>th</sup> May. The result is that although *pridet* in this context has past-time reference, as an otherwise future-tense form it clashes with *včera*. Comrie (1985: 110) suggests that '[...] Russian [...] has a constraint preventing collocation of a given tense with an adverbial whose meaning is incompatible with the meaning of that tense'. Essentially, a Russian tense will, when collocated with one of a subset of temporal deictic adverbials, strive to be understood in relation to the same temporal deictic centre from the point of view of which the temporal deictic adverbial is selected, i.e.  $t^0$ . The adverbials we have in mind are those which refer to a time which is explicitly anterior or posterior to  $t^0$ , e.g. 'yesterday' or 'tomorrow'. This causes no problem when the time reference of the adverbial and the time referred to by the tense of the embedded verb are both either in the past or in the future relative to  $t^0$ . In (24d), for example, *pridet* is to be understood in relation to  $t^1$ , but the event referred to is in the future from the point of view not only of  $t^1$  but also of  $t^0$ . Therefore the future-tense form *pridet* collocates

feliculously with *zavtra* ('tomorrow'), which has been selected from the point of view of  $t^0$ :

(24d) *Kolya skazal, čto on pridet zavtra.*  
Kolya said that he will arrive tomorrow

'Kolya said that he would (lit. 'will') arrive tomorrow.'

However, if the tense of the embedded verb, from the point of view of  $t^0$ , refers to a time which is incompatible with the time referred to by any temporal deictic adverbial with which it is collocated, as in example (24c), then the result is a clash which results in an unacceptable formulation. The problem appears to be quite general across languages and has been noted also by Huddleston (1969: 787) and Declerck (1989: 61).

In German we can end up in similar deictic difficulties if in indirect speech we use an indicative form which is intended to be understood to be relative to  $t^1$ . Consider the following example (from Dieling and Kempter 1989: 63):

(25a) ? *Hans hat vorgestern gesagt, dass er gestern*  
Hans has the day before yesterday said that he yesterday  
  
*nach Hamburg fahren wird.*  
to Hamburg go will.IND

'The day before yesterday Hans said that he would go to Hamburg yesterday.'

The tense of the embedded proposition is the same as it was in the original utterance. However, the temporal deictic adverbial *gestern* has been selected from the temporal point of view of the reporter. As a result, the indicative form *wird*, in spite of its contextual past-time reference, is understood, like *gestern*, to be relative to  $t^0$ . However, as such a form (which it is not intended to be!) it clashes with *gestern*, resulting in infelicity. If we substitute a reportative subjunctive then the utterance is deictically more satisfactory. This is because, unlike the Russian indicative in example (24c) above, the subjunctive blocks the possibility of its own tense being understood in relation to  $t^0$ , even though this is the temporal deictic centre in relation to which *gestern* is understood:

(25b) *Hans hat vorgestern gesagt, dass er gestern nach Hamburg fahren werde/würde.*

We say that this is deictically *more* satisfactory because there appears to be some contention in the literature regarding the extent to which examples such as (25b) are acceptable in standard German. Planck (1986: 293-294) discusses a similar example:

(26a) *Vico telegraphierte mir am vorgestrigen Montag, daß er*  
Vico sent a telegram to me on the before yesterday Monday that he  
*gestern singen werde.*  
yesterday sing will.S1

‘Vico sent me a telegram on Monday, the day before yesterday, saying that he was going to sing yesterday.’

He agrees with Wunderlich that such sentences are grammatically unacceptable, but ‘pragmatically possibly correct’ (Wunderlich 1970: 207).<sup>87</sup> However, Planck (1986: 294) suggests that in a context such as the following his example – with an S2 form *würde* instead of the S1 *werde* – ‘[...] is however from a grammatical point of view obviously not so incompatible with the time adverbial *gestern* [‘yesterday’] as the original future-tense form itself’.<sup>88</sup>

(26b) *Vico telegraphierte mir am vorgestrigen Montag, daß er*  
Vico sent a telegram to me on the before yesterday Monday that he  
*gestern singen würde, und wie ich gerade im ,Thurgauer*  
yesterday sing will.S2 and as I just in the Thurgau  
*Volksfreund‘ lese, hat er auch gesungen.*  
*Volksfreund* read has he also sung

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<sup>87</sup> *pragmatisch vielleicht korrekt*

<sup>88</sup> [...] *ist jedoch grammatisch augenscheinlich nicht so inkompatibel mit dem Zeitadverb gestern wie das originale Futur selbst.*

‘Vico sent me a telegram on Monday, the day before yesterday, saying that he was going to sing yesterday, and as I am just reading in *Thurgaur Volksfreund*, he did sing.’

In an endnote Jäger (1971: 289) claims that his example (1971: 111) was not ‘[...] accepted as correct by all informants’, but ‘[t]he majority [...] considered it to be correct’.<sup>89</sup>

(27) *Er sagte mir vorgestern, dass er gestern kommen*  
he said to me the day before yesterday that he yesterday come

**werde.**

will.S1

‘He told me the day before yesterday that he would come yesterday.’

In his discussion of Planck’s and Jäger’s examples, Thieroff (1992: 238-239) also agrees that example (27) is grammatically satisfactory: ‘[h]ere we agree with the majority of Jäger’s informants and consider [27] to be completely acceptable [...]’.<sup>90</sup>

Ultimately, it appears that such examples are not universally considered to be unacceptable, unlike similar examples in Russian. At least for some native German speakers, the fact that the German reportative subjunctive always takes  $t^1$  as its temporal deictic centre allows tensed forms to collocate with adverbials with which they would clash if they were both understood in relation to  $t^0$ . We therefore claim that this constitutes compelling evidence that it is not simply the case that the reportative subjunctive ensures that its tense is understood in relation to  $t^1$ ; rather, *any* interpretation according to which it is understood to be relative to  $t^0$  is blocked.

The tense of a subjunctive form can be understood to be relative only to  $t^1$  even in cases where the reported state of affairs is plausibly still valid at the time of the report and thus could be understood from the point of view of  $t^0$ . Example (28a), from Fabricius-Hansen (1989: 165), whose subordinate clause contains an indicative form, can theoretically be understood in at least two ways:

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<sup>89</sup> [...] nicht von allen Informanten als korrekt akzeptiert. Die Mehrheit aber hielt ihn für richtig.

<sup>90</sup> Wir schließen uns hier der Mehrheit von Jägers Informanten an und halten [27] für durchaus akzeptabel [...].

(28a) *Anna teilte mir heute morgen mit, dass Hans diese Woche*  
Anna informed me today morning SP that Hans this week

*verreist ist.*  
travelled away is.IND

‘Anna informed me this morning that Hans had gone away this week.’

On the one hand, the tense of *ist* may be understood in relation to  $t^0$  (the more likely interpretation); according to this interpretation Hans is understood to be still away at  $t^0$  (the time of report). On the other hand, it may be understood as prototypical indirect speech, i.e. the tense of *ist* may be understood in relation to  $t^1$ ; on this interpretation whether Hans is still away at  $t^0$  is not clear.<sup>91</sup> If we substitute a subjunctive form, as in (28b), then the tense of the corresponding subjunctive form (*sei*) can be understood to be relative only to  $t^1$ : the second interpretation which we gave for (28a) is the only one available:

(28b) *Anna teilte mir heute morgen mit, dass Hans diese Woche verreist sei.*

Our final piece of evidence that the German reportative subjunctive ensures that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$  is provided by the case of temporal deictic projection in indirect speech: the notion that the German reportative subjunctive forbids such projection was mentioned in Chapter 2. Example (29) is made deictically infelicitous by the fact that the present-tense subjunctive form *überschreite* (‘crosses’) can be understood in relation only to  $t^1$ , i.e. the time denoted by the tense of the matrix verb. Thus the tense of the finite verb (present) clashes with the adverbial *im Jahre 49 v. Chr.* (‘in 49 B.C.’):

(29) ? *In diesem Werk wird berichtet, dass Caesar im Jahre 49*  
in this work becomes reported that Caesar in the year 49

*v. Chr. den Rubikon überschreite.*  
B.C. the Rubicon crosses.S1

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<sup>91</sup> For Jäger (1971: 113), this second interpretation of a present-tense indicative is not available. He gives the example *Mein Freund teilte mir mit, daß er krank ist* (‘My friend informed me that he was ill’) and claims that in this example it is clear that at the time of the report he is still ill. But Thieroff (1992: 234) claims that an interpretation according to which it is not clear whether my friend is still ill at the time of the report is available and that *Mein Freund teilte mir mit, daß er krank ist* is therefore ambiguous.

‘In this work it is reported that Caesar crosses the Rubicon in 49 B.C.’

Thus we conclude this section by claiming that the German reportative subjunctive not only blocks any interpretation which is inconsistent with an indirect speech reading, e.g. interpretations on which the reported proposition is presupposed, it also ensures that its tenses can be understood in no way other than in relation to  $t^1$ . We hope that we have provided persuasive evidence that the chief function of the procedural import of the reportative subjunctive is to ensure that an instance of indirect speech is understood to be *prototypical* indirect speech.

#### 4.2.7 *The German reportative subjunctive and explicature*

There is one particular important phenomenon for which our discussion of the procedural import of the reportative subjunctive above did not account: the existence of so-called reported speech, i.e. cases where a proposition is understood to be reported but is not immediately subordinate to a *verbum-dicendi* matrix clause. Essentially, in the case of reported speech the reportative subjunctive has the function of ensuring that the hearer constructs a *verbum-dicendi* matrix clause on the level of mental representation. This is, in our view, a natural consequence of the circumstance that the tenses of the subjunctive can be understood only in relation to  $t^1$ . A matrix tense, i.e. one which is understood in relation to  $t^0$ , is essential, and this tense locates  $t^1$  in time in relation to  $t^0$ . Without this matrix tense it is impossible to interpret the tense of the subjunctive. Of course, what we have suggested does not preclude the possibility of the matrix verb supplied on the level of mental representation being a factive verb which also entails its subordinate proposition, such as *vergessen*, *verstehen* or *wissen*. However, the first facet of the procedural import of the subjunctive which we discussed above blocks the possibility of the matrix verb which is supplied on the level of mental representation being one which both presupposes and entails its complement clause.

The matrix clause which contains this tense marking is best described in relevance-theoretic terms as contributing to explicature (see section 3.2.5): it constitutes part of what is explicitly communicated by an utterance. But what is the nature of this explicature? Is it a higher-level or basic explicature? The hearer of the second sentence in example (30a) needs to recover a proposition which resembles that in (30b) if his expectations of optimal relevance are to be satisfied; the tense of the matrix verb in (30b) locates  $t^1$  in time relative to  $t^0$ . In other words, he must

understand the second sentence to be embedded under a matrix clause that resembles that which ends the first sentence. ([Ø] in a translation indicates that the hearer of the original is required to supply a matrix clause inferentially in this position):

(30a) *Einen Tag später sei sie ins Koma gefallen, sagte der*  
one day later is.S1 she into the coma fallen said the  
*Staatsanwalt. Daraus sei sie im Januar erwacht.*  
public prosecutor out of that is.S1 she in the January awoken

'The next day she fell into a coma, said the public prosecutor. [Ø] She awoke from it in January.'

(*Mannheimer Morgenpost*: 28.09.2004)

(30b) {*Der Staatsanwalt sagte*}, *sie sei daraus im Januar erwacht.*<sup>92</sup>

On the level of mental representation, the matrix clause *der Staatsanwalt sagte*, which is recovered contextually by the hearer, has exactly the same relationship to the accompanying embedded proposition as does *sagte der Staatsanwalt* (at the end of the first sentence) to *its* associated embedded proposition. This provides evidence that the explicature which the German reportative subjunctive instructs the hearer to supply, like that associated with *sollen* and *wollen*, is a basic explicature: the reportative subjunctive functions on the level of the proposition expressed.

Sometimes, the explicature whose recovery the reportative subjunctive constrains must from a syntactic point of view be treated parenthetically, although from a pragmatic perspective the explicature still contributes to the proposition expressed. We illustrate this using an example from Zifonun et. al. (1997: 1766). A suggestion for the parenthetical explicature which the hearer must understand to contribute to the proposition expressed if his expectation of optimal relevance is to be satisfied is in square brackets in the English translation:

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<sup>92</sup> *Der Staatsanwalt sagte* is merely a suggestion for the nature of the matrix clause which is constructed by the hearer on the level of mental representation. The actual clause constructed does not have a specific propositional form (unless, as we have done, the hearer stops and thinks about this clause). Similarly, if a hearer hears the elliptical 'Coffee?' he will not give it a specific propositional form such as 'The speaker is asking me if I would like some coffee' in order to understand it. Admittedly, the suggestion *Der Staatsanwalt sagte* is not very idiomatic: a more elegant rendering might be *Der Staatsanwalt fügte hinzu* ('the public prosecutor added').

- (31) *Der Mann wurde zu fünf Monaten Gefängnis verurteilt, weil er*  
 the man became to five months prison sentenced because he  
  
*die Jugend verderbe.*  
 the youth corrupts.S1

‘The man was sentenced to five months in prison because [as the judge said] he corrupts young people.’

The utterance spoken by the original speaker is likely to have resembled *Ich verurteile Sie zu fünf Monaten Gefängnis, weil Sie die Jugend verderben* (‘I sentence you to five months in prison because you corrupt young people’). Since for the reporter there is no doubt that the sentencing took place, she has reported the corresponding illocution using a straightforward indicative past-tense form. However, the reporter has chosen to present the judge’s reasoning using an indirect-speech construction with a reportative subjunctive: this clause is to be understood not specifically as the reason why the man was sentenced to five months in prison (this would, however be the case had an indicative been used), but as a *report* of the judge’s reasoning for sentencing the man. The tense of this clause is to be understood in relation not to  $t^0$ , like that of the main clause, but to  $t^1$ . Therefore the hearer is required to supply inferentially a syntactically parenthetical *verbum-dicendi* clause, a clause which is demanded by the subjunctive so that  $t^1$  can be located in relation to  $t^0$ .

Example (32), also from Zifonun et al. (1997: 1766), is another instance where the matrix clause that is constructed must be considered parenthetical from a syntactic point of view.

- (32) *Denn er war ja ein Vertreter der ersten Klasse nach dem*  
 for he was yes a representative of the first class after the  
  
*damaligen Drei-Klassen-Wahlssystem und trat für die allgemeine*  
 of that time three-tier voting system and stood up for the general  
  
*Demokratie mit ein, die er wesentlich als Erziehungsaufgabe mit*  
 democracy with SP which he essentially as educational task with

*angesehen habe.*

looked at has.S1

‘For he belonged of course to the first tier of the three-tier-voting system of that time and supported general democracy, which [as he said] he and others essentially saw as an educational task.’

Through using the indicative and thereby indicating direct speech, the reporter assumes responsibility for most of what is said here, including the fact that ‘he’ supported democracy. However, the use of the reportative subjunctive indicates that the final clause is to be understood to be attributed to ‘him’; the reporter says that ‘he’ says that ‘he’ saw supporting democracy as essentially an educational task. ‘As he said’ or *wie er sagt* must be supplied on the level of basic explicature, but is to be treated parenthetically from a syntactic point of view.

As a procedural device associated with interpretive use which instructs the hearer to construct an explicature which contributes to the proposition expressed, the German reportative subjunctive differs fundamentally from the sort of explicature whose recovery the interpretive use markers *ré* (Sissala) and *tte* (Japanese) constrain: these latter ensure that a higher-level explicature is recovered.

#### 4.2.8 *What feature of the German reportative subjunctive makes it procedural?*

In this section we shall argue that the chief distinction between the German indicative and reportative subjunctive resides in the fact that the subjunctive possesses a specific feature vis-à-vis the indicative. The notion that the German reportative subjunctive possesses a feature which distinguishes it from the indicative and accounts for its behaviour is not new.

For Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004) the subjunctive carries a reportative presupposition: this idea was discussed – and rejected – in Chapter 2. Schlenker (2000) suggests an alternative crucial difference between the German reportative subjunctive and the indicative. For him, the reportative subjunctive ‘[...] is defined as a logophoric tense [...], and is thus lexically specified as having a feature  $\uparrow$  which it can only inherit from an embedded context’ (2000: 206). Thus the subjunctive must ‘[...] appear in the scope of an attitude operator because only attitude operators introduce embedded contexts whose time [...] coordinates bear the feature  $\uparrow$  [...]’

(2000: 199). Von Stechow (2003) also makes reference to the logophoric nature of the reportative subjunctive. For him '[s]ubjunctive morphology is checked by a world variable with the feature **log**. World variables with that feature must be bound by a verbum dicendi vel sentiendi' (2003: 22). Schlenker (2003) modifies his original analysis of the reportative subjunctive in order to account for the insight that it does not occur embedded under many verbs including certain factives such as 'know'. He suggests that whenever it is presupposed that a proposition is in the *common ground* the use of subjunctive 1 should be precluded (2003: 86). Schlenker understands the term 'common ground' to refer to 'the set of worlds compatible with the speaker's beliefs'.

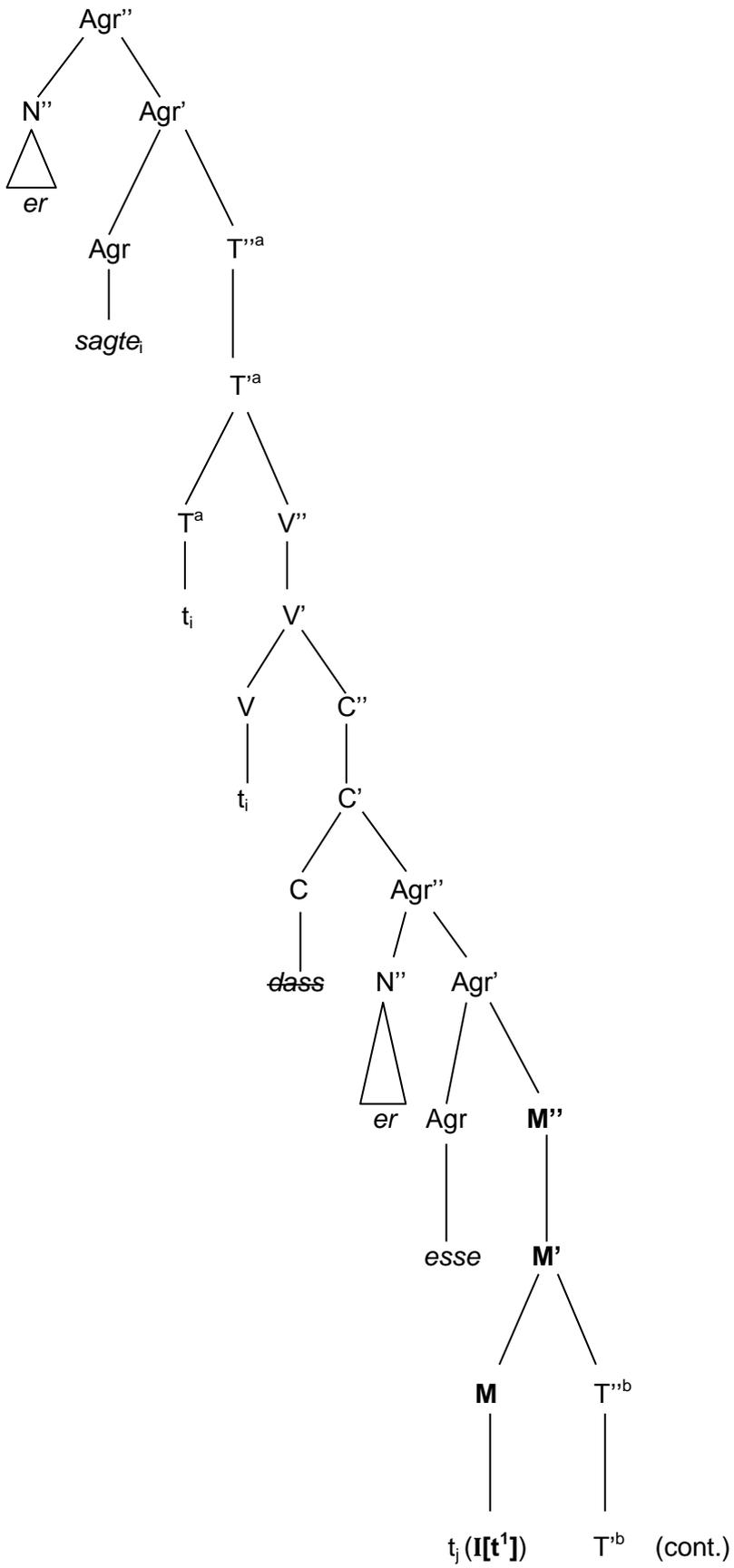
We wish to argue that the German reportative subjunctive possesses a feature vis-à-vis the indicative to which we shall refer  $I[t^1]$ .  $I$  stands for 'indirectness' and this refers to the fact that the subjunctive ensures that the matrix verb is understood as a verbum dicendi which introduces indirect speech that displays the crucial property indirectness, whilst  $[t^1]$  ensures its tense is understood in relation to  $t^1$ : the square brackets indicate that the tense must be understood to be embedded under a matrix predicate. It is thus this feature which is procedural and constrains comprehension such that an instance of indirect speech is understood to conform to the prototype.

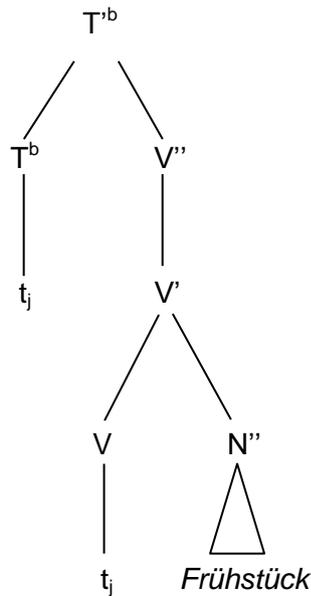
From a syntactic point of view, we assume that  $I[t^1]$  is the spelling out of a functional head for mood, and this mood phrase dominates the tense phrase. Here, a significant role is played by c-command. Borsley (1999: 47) quotes Reinhart (1976) in defining the term 'c-command': 'A node X c-commands a node Y iff neither dominates the other and the first branching node (i.e. node with more than one daughter) above X dominates Y'. The mood phrase will be c-commanded by the tense of the matrix verbum dicendi; this tense establishes the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$ . The mood phrase will then, in turn, c-command the embedded tense and supply this latter with a temporal deictic centre. The relationships of c-command described in this paragraph are illustrated in the tree diagram below (33b), which employs a version of Government and Binding based on that expounded by Napoli (1995):

(33a) *Er sagte, er esse Frühstück.*  
 he said he eats.S1 breakfast

'He said (that) he was eating breakfast.'

(33b)





The tense of the matrix verb *sagte* receives its value from the matrix context. The tense  $T^a$  then c-commands  $M$  and assigns a value to it.  $M$  now functions as the temporal deictic centre, to which the tense  $T^b$  will be understood to be relative: the relationship between  $M$  and  $T^b$  is also one of c-command.

The tense of any reportative-subjunctive forms whose mood phrase is c-commanded by the tense of the matrix verb will be understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed in time by this tense: the finite verb of the immediately preceding clause does not have to be the relevant matrix *verbum dicendi*. Thus, in example (5a) (repeated below), not only is the feature  $I[t^1]$  of the subjunctive form *werde* c-commanded by the tense of the matrix verb *sagte*, that of *achte* and *hätte* in the subordinate clauses is as well:

- (5a) *Er sagte, er **werde** das Buch kaufen, da sein Onkel, dessen Urteil er hoch **achte**, es ihm empfohlen **hätte**.*

‘He said he would buy the book as his uncle, whose judgement (he said) he held in high regard, had recommended it to him.’

The past-tense form *sagte* thus locates the temporal deictic centre relative to which these three subjunctive forms are understood at a time anterior to  $t^0$ . Therefore the reportative subjunctive has the effect of ensuring the utterance is optimally relevant. The comprehension process is constrained such that an interpretation according to which the tenses of all the subordinate clauses are understood in relation to  $t^1$ , and according to which the embedded propositions are understood to be attributed to the

matrix subject (such that interpretations which are inconsistent with a prototypical-indirect-speech reading are blocked), is the only one available.

In (4a), however, the fact that the form *ist* is in the indicative does not necessarily block an interpretation according to which the tense of *ist* is understood in relation to  $t^1$ . After all, it is ultimately c-commanded by the matrix *sagte*. Nevertheless, in view of the speaker's use of the reportative subjunctive in the previous clause, this interpretation seems unlikely. The optimally relevant interpretation is thus likely to be one according to which the clause beginning *für die* ('for which') is understood as the reporter's opinion:

(4a) *Er sagte, er bewerbe sich um diese Stelle, für die er gar nicht geeignet ist.*

'He said he was applying for this position, which (in my opinion) he is totally unsuited to.'

#### 4.3 Intermediary conclusion

We finish this part of the chapter by considering the extent to which the above relevance-theoretic considerations explain those phenomena for which, as we suggested in section 2.2.11, a comprehensive analysis of the German reportative subjunctive should adequately account.

Our identification of a particular feature, to which we refer as  $I[t^1]$ , provides an answer to our first two questions.

Firstly, what is the precise nature of the German reportative subjunctive? In spite of its ability to form all tenses, why is it restricted to prototypical indirect speech, i.e. indirect speech that exhibits indirectness, where its tenses can be understood only in relation to  $t^1$ ? Secondly, how does the subjunctive allow certain factive verbs to be understood as *verba dicendi* which introduce prototypical indirect speech?

We have suggested that in ensuring that a clause is understood as indirect speech which conforms to a specific prototype,  $I[t^1]$  has the function of blocking any interpretation which is inconsistent with such a reading. This includes (at least) any interpretation on which the reported proposition, whether this be represented by the embedded clause alone or a combination of the matrix and embedded clauses, is understood to be presupposed. The exception to this is cases where the embedded proposition is both not only presupposed but also entailed by the matrix verb. The

subjunctive is not capable of blocking such entailments and is thus infelicitous. Thus the existence of this feature explains both why the reportative subjunctive is restricted to indirect speech and why it has the effect of ensuring that certain factive verbs are understood to introduce prototypical indirect speech.

A fundamental property of the prototype of indirect speech with which the German reportative subjunctive is associated is that its tenses are understood in relation to  $t^1$  (the temporal deictic centre of the embedded context). Thus the tense of the matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause under which it is embedded will clarify the relationship between  $t^1$  and  $t^0$ : we have suggested that the precise relationship between the matrix tense and  $I[t^1]$  is one of c-command. In fact, our analysis has gone further than originally deemed necessary: we have also been able to explain the occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in examples such as *Er wurde zu fünf Jahren verurteilt, weil er die Jugend verderbe* ('He was sentenced to five years in prison because he corrupts young people'). We suggested that the reportative subjunctive form *verderbe* ('corrupts') instructs the hearer to construct inferentially a clause, such as 'as the judge said', which has to be treated *parenthetically* from a syntactic point of view.

Explanations for the third, fourth and fifth phenomena have not yet exercised us. We shall look at the third and fifth – how we are to account for the occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial, as well as how the reportative subjunctive enables a speaker to imply contextually any attitude to the reported proposition – in the next chapter. A consideration of the fourth phenomenon, which concerns how a hearer in the case of reported speech constructs the ellipsed matrix clause inferentially, will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

## **4.4 Reported speech: The construction of the ellipsed matrix clause**

### *4.4.1 Introduction*

In order to illustrate from a relevance-theoretic point of view how the hearer identifies the relevant contextual element(s) and thus constructs the ellipsed matrix clause in reported speech, in section 4.4.3 we shall revisit examples provided by Pütz (1989, 1994). Before that, however, we need to make some preliminary remarks.

As we have seen, the German reportative subjunctive has a feature  $I[t^1]$  which we treat as the spelling out of a functional head for mood and must be c-commanded by a matrix tense: this tense assigns a value to  $I[t^1]$  so that the tense of the subjunctive has a temporal deictic centre to which it can be relative. We have suggested that the import of  $I[t^1]$  is procedural: it constrains the inferential computations that a hearer must perform over an utterance such that it is understood as indirect speech. We propose that  $I[t^1]$  is not unlike personal pronouns, which are also held within relevance theory to encode procedural meaning, in terms of its behaviour. On the subject of personal pronouns, Hedley remarks that '[t]he computations we perform in interpreting a pronoun relate to the identification of a referent, and the insertion of that referent into the proposition expressed' (2007: 42). The same can be said of  $I[t^1]$ : subjunctive morphology indicates that a referent, i.e. a specific point in time relative to  $t^0$ , must be identified, and this referent contributes to the construction of a fully determinate proposition expressed, whereby the hearer understands *when* in relation to  $t^0$  the original utterance was produced. Furthermore, as in the case of personal pronouns, the identification of the referent and assigning a value to  $I[t^1]$  involves in our view a process of saturation, i.e. a given slot, position or variable in the semantic representation of the utterance must be filled.

In the case of personal pronouns, saturation is always a pragmatic process, and the role of personal pronouns in deriving the proposition expressed usually extends no further than furnishing the proposition with referents for them. However, in the case of *indirect* speech, saturation is a syntactic process:  $I[t^1]$  receives a value from the matrix tense that c-commands it. In the case of *reported* speech the process is pragmatic because there is no explicit matrix *verbum dicendi* to assign the value to  $I[t^1]$  syntactically. But unlike the (normal) case of personal pronouns, saturating the gap in the semantic representation which  $I[t^1]$  represents involves much more than simply identifying a referent for it: in addition to this an entire propositional matrix clause must be constructed inferentially. In fact, it seems that  $I[t^1]$  behaves somewhat like a personal pronoun when used as a fragmentary utterance, discussed in Chapter 3 (section 3.3). The reader will recall Hedley's example, whereby the kitchen of a shared house has been left in a mess (2007: 48-49). Housemate A comes home, followed by housemate B shortly after. As B enters, A exclaims:

(34a) HOUSEMATE A: You!

The hearer is expected to do much more than simply assign a referent to 'you'. Once a referent has been assigned (i.e. 'the hearer'), it must be further developed via pragmatic inference into one of an indeterminate range of conceptual representations, such as:

(34b) The speaker blames the hearer for the mess.

Likewise, the hearer of reported speech must, on the basis of pragmatically constrained inference and contextual considerations, develop the referent identified for  $I[t^1]$  into a complete and fully propositional assumption that contributes to basic explicature. This is to be viewed as a symbiotic process: the construction of the explicature aids the identification of a value for  $I[t^1]$ , and the identification of a value for  $I[t^1]$  aids the construction of the explicature.

Owing to the similarities in the process of identifying the referent for personal pronouns and for  $I[t^1]$  in the case of reported speech, it would be beneficial for us to continue by investigating the process of saturation which personal pronouns instruct the hearer to deploy.

#### 4.4.2 Saturation and personal pronouns

In section 3.2.4 we discussed Carston's statement that a personal pronoun '[...]' indicates that an appropriate contextual value is to be found, that is, that a given position in the logical form is to be saturated [...]' (Carston 2004: 637). Thus the question arises as to what guides the hearer's search for the referent. It is true that in English and many other European languages personal pronouns have certain lexical properties which to an extent constrain the hearer's search for a referent. 'She', for example, instructs us to search for a female referent:

(35a) Jennifer and Andrew arrived at the party. He brought a box of chocolates and she brought a bottle of wine.

But the following translation of (35a) would leave the Finnish reader, for whom personal pronouns do not display a gender distinction, baffled as to the referent of each occurrence of *hän* ('he' or 'she'):

(35b) *Jennifer ja Andrew saapuivat juhliin. Hän toi laatikon*  
Jennifer and Andrew arrived to party (s)he brought box

*suklaata, hän taas pullon viiniä.*  
of chocolate (s)he on the other hand bottle of wine

Used more carefully, however, the pronoun *hän* is just as effective as the English gender-specific pronouns 'he' and 'she' in constraining how the hearer saturates a slot in the logical form of an utterance. Whilst the fact that English third-person singular pronouns specify the gender of their referent clearly does play a role in hearer's recovery of the intended referent, it is not just this gender distinction that aids the hearer in his quest.

Brown and Yule (1983: 58-67) suggest that a hearer deploys two principles when dealing with pragmatic problems such as reference assignment. These are the *principle of local interpretation* and the *principle of analogy*. The former principle '[...] instructs a hearer not to construct a context any larger than he needs to arrive at an interpretation' (1983: 59), whilst, according to the principle of analogy, a hearer '[...] is constrained in his interpretation by past similar experience [...]' (1983: 64). Brown and Yule go on to suggest how these principles account for our understanding of (36):

(36) The baby cried.  
The mommy picked it up.

According to them:

[...] it is the reader, driven by the principles of analogy and local interpretation, who assumes that [this] sequence describes a series of connected events and interprets linguistic cues (like *baby – it*) under that assumption. The principles of analogy (things will tend to be as they were before) and local interpretation (if there is a change, assume it is minimal) form the basis of the assumption of coherence in our experience of life in general, hence in our experience of discourse as well.

(Brown and Yule 1983: 67)

It could be said that these principles explain our understanding of (37a) and (37b). In (37a), the principle of local interpretation instructs us to understand the referent of 'it' to be the table. This is then corroborated by the principle of analogy: according to our life experience it is plausible that a (relatively flimsy) table should

collapse under the weight of a heavy book. In (37b) the principle of local interpretation might instruct us to understand 'it' as referring to 'the table'. But this principle is then overridden by that of analogy which reminds us that tables do not normally collapse under the weight of delicate ornaments, but it is plausible that we might break a delicate ornament when placing it on a table. We thus understand 'it' in (37b) to refer to 'the delicate ornament':

(37a) I put the heavy book on the table. It broke.

(37b) I put the delicate ornament on the table. It broke.

However, Brown and Yule's two principles are less helpful if we wish to recover the referent of 'it' in (38):

(38) I slammed the television down on the table. It broke.

The principle of local interpretation suggests that 'it' refers to 'the table'. However, this interpretation could plausibly be overridden by the principle of analogy. But because of certain assumptions about televisions and tables and their capacity to break which the hearer can be expected to entertain, this principle predicts that either the television or the table could have broken as a result of my temper tantrum, and it is therefore of no help. Clearly, we require more contextual information in order to identify the intended referent of 'it'.

Carston (2004: 638) provides the following example in order to illustrate the chief problem with theories of reference assignment like that of Brown and Yule, that is, those which proceed from the premise that '[...] there is a set of objective contextual parameters that accompanies an utterance and each indexical element encodes a rule which ensures that it maps onto one of these':

(39) A: Have you heard Alfred Brendel's version of *The Moonlight Sonata*?

B: Yes. It made me realize I should never try to play it.

She concedes that we *could* claim that:

[...] *it* [or *this* or *that*] encodes a rule to the effect that it refers to what the speaker intends it to refer to, and we can add to the set of contextual parameters a sequence of “speaker’s intended referents”, arranged in such a way that each demonstrative maps on to a referent as required.

(Carston 2004: 638)

However, she agrees with Récanati (2002: 111) that ‘philosophically it is clear that one is cheating’ (Carston 2004: 638). Carston continues:

To proceed in this formal way is to avoid dealing with an undeniable cognitive reality, which is that the assignment of referents to the vast range of linguistic referring expressions relies on a wide notion of context and requires the intervention of pragmatic principles or strategies that are geared to the recovery of the speaker’s intended meaning.

(Carston 2004: 638)

The ‘pragmatic principles or strategies’ that Carston has in mind are those of relevance theory: referents are assigned in accordance with the communicative principle of relevance; interpretive hypotheses are considered by the hearer in order of accessibility, and the hearer stops when his expectations of optimal relevance are satisfied. Hence, returning to (37a), that a table should collapse under the weight of a heavy book can be considered a mutually manifest assumption, that the book was damaged in the process is less likely, but in any case we do not normally speak in English of books breaking. In (37b), it is not entirely impossible that ‘it’ refers to the table. However, the assumption that tables are generally strong enough to support delicate ornaments can be expected to be highly accessible to the hearer. Furthermore we are told that the ornament was delicate. The optimally relevant interpretation which will put the hearer to no gratuitous processing effort, given the manner in which the speaker has chosen to phrase her utterances, is therefore one according to which ‘it’ refers to the delicate ornament. In (39), the first ‘it’ refers to the whole NP ‘Alfred Brendel’s version of *The Moonlight Sonata*’, whereas our expectations of optimal relevance instruct us to understand the second ‘it’ as referring to *The Moonlight Sonata*. It can be assumed that it is mutually manifest that people sit down at the piano to play *The Moonlight Sonata*, not normally to play other pianists’ versions of it. With regard to example (38), a hearer who recovers the intended referent of ‘it’ would have processed certain non-linguistic contextual factors which are mutually manifest (such as the sight of a broken table).

In the next session we consider the corresponding process of saturation which the hearer of reported speech deploys in order to recover the intended value for I[t<sup>1</sup>].

#### 4.4.3 *The German reportative subjunctive and saturation*

Our claim is that in the case of reported speech the pragmatic mechanism by which a hearer identifies a value for I[t<sup>1</sup>] involves saturation, not unlike that associated with personal pronouns, and that relevance theory is able to explain this process. Furthermore, relevance theory is able to account for how the hearer develops I[t<sup>1</sup>], once saturated, into a fully determinate assumption which functions on the level of basic explicature. These pragmatic processes will form the focus of this section.

Whilst it is ultimately the hearer's assumption that the speaker's utterance is optimally relevant that guides him towards the intended interpretation, personal pronouns, at least in European-type languages, constrain to some extent the hearer's search for the intended referent. English, German and Russian personal pronouns, for example, specify the gender of the referent, and this plays a significant role in guiding the hearer of (35a), repeated below, towards the referent intended by the speaker:

(35a) Jennifer and Andrew arrived at the party. He brought a box of chocolates and she brought a bottle of wine.

In (35b), whilst the Finnish personal pronoun *hän* does not specify the gender of the referent, it does nevertheless instruct the hearer to identify a human referent; the corresponding pronoun which refers to other objects is *se* ('it'):<sup>93</sup>

(35b) *Jennifer ja Andrew saapuivat juhliin. Hän toi laatikon*  
Jennifer and Andrew arrived to party (s)he brought box  
  
*suklaata, hän taas pullon viiniä.*  
of chocolate (s)he on the other hand bottle of wine

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<sup>93</sup> In colloquial Finnish, even this animate-vs.-non-animate distinction breaks down: *se* is used as a general third-person singular personal pronoun (Karlsson 2008: 353).

In the case of the German reportative subjunctive, however, no information about the clause which needs to be constructed is explicitly encoded. Thus the process is one which is guided by the hearer's expectations of optimal relevance alone. Importantly, the essential property which the matrix clause that the hearer constructs mentally must possess is that it indicates the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$ .

In the remainder of this section we shall take a fresh look at some examples of reported speech provided in Pütz's 1994 paper 'Berichtete Rede und ihre Grenzen' ('Reported speech and its boundaries'). Pütz attempts to answer such questions as:

In what way is the use of reported speech dependent on an inquit and an original speaker (in the broadest sense)? Is it dependent on such factors at all? Maybe there are conditions which limit the occurrence of reported speech, at least in relation to the factors given above. But which ones?<sup>94</sup>

(Pütz 1994: 24)

We, however, shall attempt to supplement Pütz's explanations by using relevance theory in order to show how the hearer identifies those factors on which reported speech may be said to depend.

Pütz divides the types of preceding context that will make an instance of reported speech pragmatically acceptable into four categories. These are (i) 'preceding context with original speaker plus inquit' (1994: 28-30),<sup>95</sup> (ii) 'preceding context with original speaker that must be inferred, with or without an inquit' (1994: 30-33),<sup>96</sup> (iii) 'original speaker cannot be inferred, inquit present' (1994: 33-34)<sup>97</sup> and (iv) 'original speaker cannot be recovered, inquit not present' (1994: 34).<sup>98</sup> At the end of his paper, Pütz poses the question 'Under what systematic conditions can reported speech perhaps not occur?' (1994: 34),<sup>99</sup> and, on the basis of the existence of the final category, he concludes that '[m]aybe from the point of view of text linguistics the contexts in which reported speech may occur are not limited at all' (1994: 34).<sup>100</sup> In the following discussion we suggest that the contexts in which reported speech does not occur *are* limited: we shall show how we are able to

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<sup>94</sup> *In welcher Art ist die Verwendung der BR [berichtete Rede] abhängig von einer Redeeinleitung und von einer redееinleitenden Person (im weitesten Sinne)? Ist sie überhaupt abhängig von solchen Faktoren? Vielleicht gibt es Bedingungen, die die Möglichkeiten des referierenden Berichtens – jedenfalls in bezug auf die genannten Faktoren – einschränken. Aber welche?*

<sup>95</sup> *Vorkontext mit Modell-Sprecher und Redeeinleitung.*

<sup>96</sup> *Vorkontext mit erschliessbarem Modell-Sprecher, mit oder ohne Redeeinleitung*

<sup>97</sup> *Modell-Sprecher nicht erschliessbar, Redeeinleitung vorhanden*

<sup>98</sup> *Modell-Sprecher nicht erschliessbar, keine Redeeinleitung*

<sup>99</sup> *Unter welchen systematischen Bedingungen kann BR [berichtete Rede] eventuell nicht auftreten?*

<sup>100</sup> *Vielleicht gibt es unter textlinguistischen Aspekten überhaupt keine Begrenzung für die Vorkommensmöglichkeiten der BR.*

identify those linguistic environments in which reported speech does not occur using relevance theory.

Explaining Pütz's (1994: 28) first example of the first type of reported speech ('preceding context with original speaker plus inquit') from a relevance-theoretic point of view is straightforward. The optimally relevant interpretation of (40a) is one whereby the instance of reported speech (the second sentence) is understood to be subordinate to the same matrix *verbum dicendi* which introduces the first sentence. Looking around for an alternative *verbum dicendi* would entail unnecessary processing effort and would thus result in the hearer recovering the wrong interpretation. (Throughout this section, instances of reported speech in original utterances will be underlined, whilst [Ø] in a translation indicates that the hearer of the original is expected to supply a matrix clause inferentially):

(40a) *Peter sagt, er **sei** krank. Er **müsse** im Bett bleiben.*  
 Peter said he is.S1 ill he must.S1 in the bed stay

'Peter said that he is ill. [Ø] He must stay in bed.'

Therefore, the basic explicature (proposition expressed) of the second sentence is:

(40b) {**Peter sagt**}, *er **müsse** im Bett bleiben.*

I[t<sup>1</sup>] is saturated by the tense of *sagt* ('says'): t<sup>0</sup> and t<sup>1</sup> are thus understood to coincide.

Pütz (1994: 29) points out that in the case of (41a) the element in the preceding discourse which aids the hearer in his construction of a matrix clause is *für die Soziologin Arlie Russell Hochschild* ('for the sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild'):

(41a) *Diese Szene, die stets aufs neue kolportiert wird und sich*  
 this scene which always on the new spread becomes and itself

*wechselweise auf einer Pam-Am, einer TWA- oder United-Airlines-*  
 alternately on a Pam-Am, a TWA or United Airlines-

*Maschine ereignet haben soll, hat für die Soziologin Arlie Russell*  
 aeroplane happened have should has for the sociologist Arlie Russell

*Hochschild Schlüsselcharakter: Sie mache [...] deutlich [...].*

Hochschild key character it makes.S1 clear

‘This incident, which keeps on being retold and the location of which allegedly keeps changing between a Pam-Am, a TWA and a United Airlines aeroplane, is key for the sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild. [Ø] It makes [...] clear [...].’

(Spiegel 1984(6))

The text tells the reader that the incident described is key for Hochschild, i.e. in the opinion of Hochschild. The interpretation which puts the hearer to no gratuitous processing effort is one according to which the reported speech is understood to be a continuation of Hochschild’s opinion.

Whilst the prepositional phrase *für die Soziologin Arlie Russell Hochschild* makes clear who holds the opinion, it is not, of course, a finite verb form and thus does not itself give an indication of the tense of the matrix verb that the hearer must supply. However, the finite verb *hat*, with which the prepositional phrase under discussion is immediately collocated, is a present-tense form. This implies that the incident in question is key for Hochschild at  $t^0$ . From this it follows that one aspect of the optimally relevant interpretation is that Hochschild is understood to hold the opinion conveyed by the reported speech at  $t^0$ . Thus, in comprehending the reported speech, a present-tense matrix verbum dicendi which indicates that  $t^0$  and  $t^1$  coincide should be supplied inferentially. The basic explicature that the hearer constructs is therefore likely to resemble (41b); *Hochschild meint* (‘Hochschild’) is added on the level of mental representation:

(41b) {**Hochschild meint**}, *diese Szene mache [...] deutlich [...].*

Example (42a) (Pütz 1994: 29) is similar to (41a). Here Pütz identifies the verb *halten für* (‘consider to be’) as the inquit. The clause *Branchenkenner halten deshalb die Preiserhöhungs-Argumente für vorgeschoben* (‘Therefore, industry insiders consider the arguments in favour of putting the prices up to be bogus’) conveys a general opinion held collectively by industry insiders. The optimally relevant interpretation of the reported speech is therefore one whereby the reported speech constitutes an example of the sort of opinion held:

(42a) *Branchenkenner halten deshalb die Preiserhöhungs-Argumente*  
industry connoisseurs hold therefore the price-raising arguments

*des Unternehmens für vorgeschoben. Da werde bloss die*  
of the company for construed there becomes.S1 simply the

*Gelegenheit genutzt, mitzunehmen, was mitzunehmen sei.*  
opportunity used to take with what to take with is.S1

‘Therefore, industry insiders consider the arguments in favour of putting the prices up to be construed. [Ø] On this occasion the opportunity is simply being used to make a quick and easy profit.’

(Spiegel 1988(16))

A suggestion for the basic explicature that the hearer will construct is given in (42b). The tense of *halten für* is present: this indicates that industry insiders hold their opinion at  $t^0$ . Therefore, the interpretation which will put the hearer to no gratuitous processing effort is one whereby the ‘remainder’ of this opinion, represented by the reported speech, is also entertained at  $t^0$ . Consequently, as in the previous two examples, a present-tense matrix verbum dicendi (our suggestion here is *Die Branchenkenner glauben* (‘industry insiders believe’)) will be supplied:

(42b) {**Die Branchenkenner glauben**}, *die Gelegenheit **werde** bloss genutzt, mitzunehmen, was mitzunehmen sei.*

Pütz’s first example of the second type of context which makes reported speech pragmatically satisfactory and ensures that the feature  $I[t^1]$  receives a value from the matrix tense (‘preceding context with original speaker that must be inferred, with or without an inquit’) is the following:

(43a) *US-Juristen begrüßten den Freispruch. Er habe den Unterschied*  
US jurists welcomed the acquittal he has.S1 the difference

*zwischen einer Seifenoper und einem fair trial deutlich gemacht.*  
between a soap opera and a fair trial clear made

‘US jurists welcomed the acquittal. [Ø] It has/had<sup>101</sup> made the difference between a soap opera and a fair trial clear.’

(Spiegel 1985(25))

All that Pütz himself says of this example is the following:

In this example there is no inquit, and also no explicitly named original speaker [...]. But it is to be inferred that the NP “US jurists” can be considered to be the original speaker who is responsible for the ensuing sentence of reported speech.<sup>102</sup>

(Pütz 1994: 30)

Our own relevance-theoretic account is as follows. In the first sentence the reporter summarizes using the verb *begrüssten* (‘welcomed’) instances of speaking which are attributed to US jurists; they are presented as having produced (indeterminate) utterances which indicate that they welcome the acquittal in question. The reportative subjunctive in the next clause ensures that it is understood as reported speech. The interpretation which will not put the hearer to gratuitous processing effort in deriving adequate positive cognitive effects will be one whereby the reported speech is understood as a continuation of the summary begun in the previous sentence: the reported speech is thus also attributed to the US jurists.

The past-tense form *begrüssten* indicates that the ‘acts of welcoming’ took place in the past. It therefore follows that the utterances on which the reported speech is based were also originally produced in the past. Thus the tense of the matrix verbum dicendi supplied by the hearer will be past and will locate  $t^1$  at a time anterior to  $t^0$ . This means that the proposition expressed by the second sentence is likely to resemble (43b):

(43b) {**Die US-Juristen sagten**}, *der Freispruch habe den Unterschied zwischen einer Seifenoper und einem fair trial deutlich gemacht.*

In the following example (44a), it is, according to Pütz, (1994: 31) the ‘[...] pragmatic [i.e. world] knowledge [...] that *Pravda* is a newspaper [...]’ which makes the instance of reported speech acceptable. In our relevance-theoretic terms, the

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<sup>101</sup> The tense in the German is present, but in an English translation which explicates the ellipsed matrix clause a past-tense form would be required in accordance with sequence-of-tense conventions. Hence the alternatives ‘has/had’.

<sup>102</sup> *In diesem Beispiel steht keine Redeeinleitung, ebenfalls kein explizit genannter Modell-Sprecher [...]. Aber es ist zu erschliessen, dass die NP “US Juristen” als Modell-Sprecher in Frage kommt für den nachfolgenden Satz mit BR.*

notion that *Pravda* is a newspaper is assumed by the reporter to be mutually manifest:

(44a) *Der Druck auf Kursänderung beim Militär hält an: Schon*  
the pressure on change of course at the army continues SP already

*im März hatte die "Pravda" am immer noch von der Glorie*  
in the March had the *Pravda* at the always still of the glory

*des Großen Vaterländischen Krieges getragenen Selbstbewusstsein*  
of the great fatherland war supported self-assuredness

*der Sowjetsoldaten gekratzt – sie seien mitnichten die Elite*  
of the Soviet soldiers scratched they are.S1 in no way the elite

*der Republik.*  
of the republic

'The pressure for a change of course in the army goes on: as early as March *Pravda* had clawed away at the self-assuredness of Soviet soldiers, which is still grounded in the glory of the Great Patriotic War – [Ø] they are/were in no way the elite of the republic.

(Spiegel 1987(49))

A newspaper cannot literally 'claw away' at something; the hearer will understand that certain things were *written* in *Pravda* which have been interpreted by the writer of this text as acts of 'clawing away'. The optimally relevant interpretation is therefore one whereby the reported speech is understood to be part of what was written in *Pravda*. The tense of the verb which in the previous clause hints at what was written in *Pravda* is pluperfect. This will prompt the hearer to understand the reported speech to be subordinate to a pluperfect matrix *verbum dicendi* such as *in der Pravda war geschrieben worden* ('*Pravda* had written'). The tense of this will locate  $t^1$  at a time previous to  $t^0$ :

(44b) {*In der Pravda war geschrieben worden*}, *sie seien mitnichten die Elite der Republik.*

Mutually manifest world knowledge also plays a role in instructing the hearer of (45a) to construct the ellipsed matrix clause (from Pütz 1994: 31):

(45a) *Der bullige Mann auf dem Zeugenstuhl gab sich auch nach*  
the burly man on the witness chair gave himself even after

*fünfstündiger Vernehmung noch gelassen – obwohl die auf ihn*  
five-hour questioning still relaxed although the on to him

*niederprasselnden Fragen immer neue Ungereimtheiten in seinen*  
beating down questions always new inconsistencies in his

*Aussagen zutage brachten. Er habe sich gar nichts*  
statements to day brought he has.S1 himself at all nothing

*vorzuwerfen, ja vorbildlich gehandelt.*  
to reproach yes exemplary acted

‘Even after being questioned for five hours, the burly man in the witness chair still seemed relaxed – even though the questions which had rained down on him had revealed more and more inconsistencies in his statements. [Ø] His conscience is/was completely clear, indeed his behaviour has/had been exemplary.’

(Spiegel 1989(3))

Since the ‘burly man’ is sitting in a witness chair and he is answering questions, it is mutually manifest that he is speaking. The hearer is thus put to no unjustifiable processing effort in recovering an interpretation according to which the reported speech is understood to be attributed to him. The tense of the text is past relative to  $t^0$ : if the events described took place in the past, then an interpretation according to which the man’s statements were also made in the past will achieve optimal relevance. Consequently, the hearer will construct the following explicature on the level of mental representation, the tense of whose matrix verb locates  $t^1$  in the past in relation to  $t^0$ :

(45b) {**Der bullige Mann sagte**}, *er habe sich gar nichts vorzuwerfen, ja vorbildlich gehandelt.*

Our final example of Pütz's second type of reported speech (1994: 32) is relatively simple. As Pütz himself remarks, '[i]f somebody rings the bell, he generally says something. This knowledge helps [...] in the comprehension of the following example'.<sup>103</sup> In other words, if somebody is standing at a door or gate having just rung the bell, then it can be assumed to be mutually manifest that that person has something to say:

(46a) *Kurz bevor der Firmenchef, wie jeden Morgen, zu seiner Zentrale*  
 short before the manager as every morning to his head office

*in München-Allach aufbrechen wollte, klingelte es. Am*  
 in Munich-Allach set off wanted rang it at the

*schmiedereisernen Gartentor stand eine junge Frau, blass und*  
 wrought-iron garden gate stood a young woman pale and

*von schwächtiger Statur: Sie habe einen persönlichen Brief zu*  
 of slight stature she has.S1 a personal letter to

*überbringen.*

deliver

'Just as the manager was about to set off for his headquarters in Munich-Allach, as he did every morning, somebody rang the bell. At the wrought-iron garden gate there stood a young woman, pale and of slight build: [Ø] She has/had a personal letter to deliver.'

(Spiegel 1985(6))

The tense of the verbs which describe the actions that form the context of the reported speech is past relative to  $t^0$ . It is thus implied that the young woman uttered something resembling *Ich habe einen persönlichen Brief zu überbringen* ('I have a personal letter to deliver') in the past, so the tense of the matrix clause that the hearer supplies inferentially will also be past:

(46b) {**Die junge Frau sagte**}, *sie habe einen persönlichen Brief zu überbringen.*

<sup>103</sup> *Wer klingelt, sagt meist was. Dieses Wissen hilft [...] weiter beim Verständnis des folgenden Beispiels.*

Pütz's first example of his third type of reported speech, 'original speaker cannot be inferred, inquit present', involves the epistemic use of the modal verb *sollen* ('should') (1994: 33):

- (47a) *Im Kunartal östlich von Kabul sollen sie die Felder mit*  
 the Kunar Valley east of Kabul should they the fields with  
  
*ätzenden Chemikalien unfruchtbar gemacht, Bewässerungsgräben*  
 corrosive chemicals infertile made, irrigation canals  
  
*planiert und Schafherden mit Maschinengewehren niedergemäht*  
 levelled and herds of sheep with machine guns mown down  
  
*haben. 20 Jahre werde es dauern bis im Kunartal wieder*  
 have 20 years will.S1 it last until in the Kunartal again  
  
*Menschen leben könnten.*  
 people live can.S2

'In the Kunar Valley to the east of Kabul the fields are said to have been made infertile by corrosive chemicals, irrigation canals have been levelled and herds of sheep are said to have been mown down by machine guns. [Ø] It will be twenty years before people can live in the Kunar Valley again.'

(Spiegel 1981(10))

For Pütz, reported speech which is made pragmatically satisfactory by the occurrence of *sollen* in the preceding discourse is an example of the third type of reported speech because '[...] the standard opinion of the literature is that in sentences with this verb [*sollen*] the original speaker is not named' (1994: 33-34).<sup>104</sup> However, as elsewhere, whilst he explains *that* epistemic *sollen* may make reported speech pragmatically satisfactory, he does not suggest *how* it is recognized as an inquit.

In section 3.4.6 we saw how *sollen* in its epistemic function is analyzable as a marker of interpretive use that instructs the hearer to construct a basic explicature such as *man sagt, dass* ('it is said that'). In example (47a), having been instructed

<sup>104</sup> [...] [D]ie Standardmeinung der Literatur geht dahin, dass der Modell-Sprecher in Sätzen mit diesem Verb eine nicht genannte Quelle ist.

by the reportative subjunctive to construct the ellipsed matrix clause, the hearer will test in order of accessibility interpretive hypotheses regarding the nature of this matrix clause. Since the preceding sentence constitutes indirect discourse, albeit attributed to unknown, or at least unmentioned, persons, the most accessible (and thus optimally relevant) interpretation is one whereby the reported speech is understood to be a continuation of this indirect discourse. It is therefore understood to be subordinate to the same basic *verbum-dicendi* explicature as that associated with *sollen*. (47b) exemplifies the (basic) explicature which *sollen* in the first sentence instructs the hearer to recover, and in (47c) the reported speech is embedded under this same explicature:

(47b) {**Man sagt**}, sie **hätten** die Felder im Kunartal östlich von Kabul mit ätzenden Chemikalien unfruchtbar gemacht, Bewässerungsgräben plant und Schafherden mit Maschinengewehren niedergemäht.

(47c) {**Man sagt**}, es **werde** 20 Jahre dauern, bis im Kunartal wieder Menschen leben **könnten**.

The present-tense verb *sollen* ensures that the hearer supplies a present-tense *verbum dicendi*. The matrix clause in (47b) is therefore also present tense and thus indicates that  $t^0$  and  $t^1$  are understood to coincide.

The hearer's quest for optimal relevance may result in him identifying an occurrence of *wollen* ('want') in the preceding discourse as the element which makes an instance of reported speech pragmatically acceptable. We have in mind the reportative use of *wollen* which we considered in section 3.4.6. In such cases, *wollen* functions as a marker of interpretive use which indicates that the subject of *wollen* claims the embedded proposition; the implication is that the reporter believes this proposition to be false. The following example is from Pütz (1989: 198):<sup>105</sup>

(48a) *Entgegen den Aussagen der Pflegekräfte, die ihr das  
contrary to the statements of the care staff who to her the  
  
Medikament verabreicht haben, will Berzewski nun Lydia  
medication administered have wants Berzewski now Lydia*

<sup>105</sup> Strictly speaking, (48a) is an example of Pütz's first type of inquit: 'preceding context with original speaker plus inquit'. However, we discuss instances with *wollen* here because of the similarities in terms of explicature with examples with *sollen*.

*Hagemann nur "in die Voruntersuchung" miteinbezogen haben.*  
Hagemann only into the preliminary investigation included have

*Und sie sei nicht genehmigungspflichtig.*  
and she is.S1 not requiring official approval

'Contrary to statements made by the care staff who administered the medication to her, Berzewski claims to have involved Lydia Hagemann only "in the preliminary investigations". And [Ø] it does not require official approval.'

(Stern 1986: (4))

In this case, the third-person singular present-tense form *will* ('wants') instructs the hearer to construct a present-tense basic explicature such as:

(48b) {***Berzewski behauptet***}, *er habe nun Lydia Hagemann nur "in die Voruntersuchung" miteinbezogen.*

Looking around for a contextual feature which will enable him to construct the ellipsed matrix clause inferentially, the hearer finds that the optimally relevant interpretation is one whereby the reported speech is a continuation of the claim made by Berzewski. The reported speech is thus understood on the level of mental representation to be subordinate to the same basic explicature which *wollen* instructs the hearer to recover: *Berzewski behauptet*. Since *behauptet* is present tense,  $t^0$  and  $t^1$  are understood to coincide:

(48c) {***Berzewski behauptet***}, *sie sei nicht genehmigungspflichtig.*

The next example of Pütz's third type of reported speech includes the passive form *angezweifelt werden* ('be doubted') (Pütz 1994: 33):

(49a) *Angezweifelt werden plötzlich Piechs Führungsqualitäten. Mit seinem*  
doubted become suddenly Piech's leadership qualities with his

*ruppigen Führungsstil habe der Audi-Entwicklungschef*  
rough leadership style has.S1 the Audi head of development

*scharenweise wertvolle Mitarbeiter vergrault.*  
 in droves valued colleagues scared off

‘Piech’s leadership qualities are suddenly being doubted. With his rough leadership style, [Ø] the head of development for Audi has scared off droves of valued colleagues.’

(Spiegel 1986(2))

Here, the first clause *Angezweifelt werden plötzlich Piechs Führungsqualitäten* (‘Piech’s leaderships qualities are suddenly being doubted’) essentially summarizes the propositional content of indeterminate comments made by people who doubt Piech’s leadership qualities. In other words it refers to an indeterminate number of speech acts. On encountering the reported speech, the hearer will attempt to construct on the basis of context a matrix clause which satisfies his expectations of optimal relevance. The optimally relevant interpretation will be one whereby the reported speech is understood to report an example of the sort of proposition which *Angezweifelt werden plötzlich Piechs Führungsqualitäten* subsumes. Thus it is understood to be attributed to those unnamed people who doubt the leadership qualities of Piech. This means that the hearer will construct a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause with an indeterminate subject, such as *man sagt* (‘one says’), and, since the ‘doubting’ is reported as taking place in the present, the tense of the matrix clause will be present and thus indicate that  $t^0$  and  $t^1$  coincide:

(49b) {**Man sagt**}, *der Audi-Entwicklungschef habe mit seinem ruppigen Führungsstil scharenweise wertvolle Mitarbeiter vergrault.*

We give just one example of Pütz’s fourth and final type of reported speech ‘original speaker cannot be recovered, inquit not present’:

(50a) *Gänzlich unhygienisch geht es bei einer Unterbrechung in der*  
 totally unhygienic happens it in a break in the

*engen Teeküche zu, wo einen “überall der feuchtwarme*  
 narrow tea kitchen SP where one everywhere the humid

*Atem der Kollegen” anwabere.*

breath of the colleagues wafts.S1

‘Things are totally unhygienic during a break in the narrow tea kitchen, where [Ø] “the humid breath of the colleagues wafts around everyone from all directions”.’

(Spiegel 1988(22))

The use of the speech marks and the reportative subjunctive indicates that this is mixed reported discourse: partly direct and partly indirect speech. But there is neither any indication regarding to whom the proposition *Überall wabert einen der feuchtwarme Atem der Kollegen an* is attributed, nor any indication of when this was uttered in relation to  $t^0$ . The optimally relevant interpretation seems to be one whereby the reported proposition is attributed to a non-specified person or group of people, and the use of the present-tense form *zugeht* (‘happens’) in the previous clause indicates that this proposition has validity at  $t^0$ ;  $t^1$  thus coincides with  $t^0$ . In addition, it seems that the ellipsed clause that the hearer must construct on the level of mental representation must from a syntactic point of view be treated parenthetically; in (50b) we suggest that this parenthetical *verbum-dicendi* clause, the tense of which locates  $t^1$  in relation to  $t^0$ , could be *wie gesagt wird* (‘as is said’):

(50b) [...] wo, {**wie gesagt wird**}, einen “überall der feuchtwarme Atem der Kollegen” **anwabere**.

Thus, although for Pütz the text contains nothing which may be described as an inquit, it is still possible to construct a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause, the tense of which satisfies the demands of  $I[t^1]$  to be saturated, on the basis of context.

We conclude this section by providing an answer to Pütz’s question: ‘under what systematic conditions can reported speech perhaps not occur?’ (1994: 34). It seems that these linguistic environments should be defined in relevance-theoretic terms by exclusion: the reported speech does not occur in those cases where constructing the ellipsed matrix clause on the basis of context (having been instructed to do so by the reportative subjunctive) does not justify the amount of processing effort required. In other words, whenever reported speech does occur, recovering the ellipsed matrix clause will justify the processing effort required in order to so.

#### 4.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter we have attempted to show that using the relevance-theoretic framework we are able to advance substantially in explaining three of the various phenomena, listed in section 2.2.11, for which we expect an adequate analysis of the German reportative subjunctive to account. Our chief claim has been that the German reportative subjunctive possesses a specific feature,  $I[t^1]$ , which has procedural import which ensures that an utterance is understood to conform to a specific prototype of indirect speech. This prototype is characterized in part by tenses which are always understood in relation to  $t^1$  as fixed relative to  $t^0$  by the tense of the matrix *verbum dicendi* (indirect speech) or by the tense of a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause that must be supplied via pragmatically constrained inference on the level of mental representation (reported speech). Furthermore, in ensuring that an utterance is understood as prototypical indirect speech, the German reportative subjunctive has the effect of blocking interpretations which are inconsistent with prototypical indirect speech, e.g. ones on which the reported proposition is presupposed.

In the second half of the chapter, we considered the pragmatic process of saturation which a hearer must deploy in furnishing an instance of reported speech with its ellipsed matrix clause. We suggested that this process is similar to that which personal pronouns instruct the hearer to deploy. There is, however, an important difference. In the case of personal pronouns, the hearer usually need do no more than supply them with a referent. In the case of reported speech, on the other hand, the hearer must (as in the case of the fragmentary use of personal pronouns) pragmatically develop the value supplied for  $I[t^1]$  into a fully determinate assumption that functions on the level of basic explicature.

## German indirect speech and the expression of reporter attitudes

### 5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2 we considered the concept of indirect and reported speech in German from an essentially descriptive grammatical point of view. In Chapter 4, having in Chapter 3 considered in some detail the salient claims of relevance theory, we considered, using relevance theory, the role played by semantics when a hearer understands an utterance as an instance of indirect speech. More specifically, we investigated the constraint that the German reportative subjunctive places on how an utterance is understood. We identified a specific feature to which we referred as  $I[t^1]$  which has procedural import that operates on the level of basic explicature. This feature ensures that the utterance is understood to be an instance of prototypical indirect speech: the reported proposition is understood not to be presupposed and its tenses can be understood only in relation to  $t^1$ .

In this chapter we shall continue to consider indirect speech in German from the point of view of relevance theory. Our primary purpose is to investigate from a relevance-theoretic point of view another essential aspect of the German reportative subjunctive as a marker of interpretive use, in addition to those discussed in the last chapter. This concerns the compatibility of the subjunctive with the contextual recovery of any attitude, or interpretive stance, of the reporter towards the reported proposition. Importantly, in referring to the *compatibility* of the subjunctive with any reporter attitude, we imply that the subjunctive does not itself *control* the attitude recovered: this is the task of contextual considerations.

In particular, we shall investigate how the hearer recovers this attitude. The fact that the reportative subjunctive is compatible with any interpretive stance of the reporter, may be linked directly to the fact that it ensures that an utterance is understood to represent prototypical indirect speech. The chief type of interpretation that the subjunctive blocks in doing so, i.e. those on which a reported proposition is

presupposed, is characterized by the fact that the speaker is of necessity committed to the truth of the proposition. But if this type of interpretation is blocked, then the reporter cannot be understood to be committed to the truth of the reported proposition. Thus she is free to hold her own attitude towards it, an attitude which she will expect her hearer to infer on the basis of context.

In order to investigate the attitude which is implied towards a reported proposition, it is necessary to have a clear conception of which component(s) of an indirect-speech construction report(s) the purported original utterance. The fact that indirect speech consists of two components, a matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause and a subordinate clause, is important here. In many cases the embedded proposition *alone* will be understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. We refer to this as type A indirect speech. Intuitively this is the case, for example, with those verbs which Caldas-Coulthard (1994) describes as ‘neutral’ *verba dicendi* such as *berichten* (‘report’) and *sagen* (‘say’), those which she terms ‘paralinguistic’ verbs such as *flüstern* (‘whisper’) and *schreien* (‘scream’), and finally ‘transcript’ verbs, i.e. those which indicate the relationship of a quotation to the surrounding discourse. Examples are *fortsetzen* (‘continue’) and *hinzufügen* (‘add’).

In Chapter 4 we investigated how the reportative subjunctive is capable of constraining verbs which report behabitives and emotional attitudes – which have in common the notion that their complement clause is normally understood to be factive – such that they are understood to introduce prototypical indirect speech which bears the feature indirectness. We pointed out that when these verbs introduce prototypical indirect speech they themselves report part of the original utterance, e.g. the purported original illocution. In our view, these verbs belong to a much wider group of *verba dicendi* which themselves report part of the purported original utterance, and this group includes all verbs that report speech acts as well as those that report propositional attitudes, such as ‘think’ and ‘believe’. Importantly, since these verbs report the purported original illocution, they will purport to have been selected from the point of view of the original speaker rather than the reporter. As such, they should not normally be understood to reflect the attitude towards the original utterance that the reporter intends the hearer to recover. This, however, is not to say that cases where they have been supplied by the reporter, and they thus reflect the latter’s interpretive stance, do not exist.

This group of verbs may itself be divided into two broad subgroups. On the one hand, the *main* relevance of the original utterance will often be understood to have consisted in what is presented as the embedded proposition (type B indirect speech). This is always the case when propositional attitudes are reported,

examples being *denken* ('think') and *meinen* ('think' or believe'). It is also the case when speech acts such as *prophezeien* ('predict' or 'prophesy'), *vermuten* ('guess' or 'suppose') and *warnen* ('warn') are reported. In section 5.4.2.2 we shall consider the report of two such speech acts: *schließen* ('conclude') and the behabitive *kritisieren* ('criticize').

But there is another possibility when a speech act is reported: the verbum dicendi itself may be understood to report (part of) the main relevance of the original utterance. This is type C indirect speech. In section 5.4.3.2 we shall examine two examples of this: the report of the speech acts *garantieren* ('guarantee') and *zustimmen* ('agree').

Whether an instance of indirect speech is of type A, B or C depends on the nature of the verbum dicendi, i.e. semantics, or on pragmatic considerations. For example, in the case of 'neutral' verba dicendi such as *berichten* and *sagen*, the embedded proposition alone will always be understood to be attributed to the matrix subject; this circumstance arises from the semantics of the verb. The same is true of paralinguistic verbs, such as *flüstern* and *schreien*. But when the speech act of admitting is reported, the main relevance of the original utterance may be understood to have consisted in either the original speech act or in what is presented as the embedded proposition of the reported version. This indeterminacy is resolved along pragmatic lines which relevance theory is able to explain.

This chapter is structured as follows. We begin with a consideration of an example of type A indirect speech, and we shall pay attention to how the hearer recovers contextually the attitude implied to the reported proposition by the reporter. Before we look at some examples of type B and type C indirect speech it will be necessary for us to investigate in some detail Sperber and Wilson's distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts. This investigation will take up the majority of the first half of this chapter. The second half of the chapter will constitute a relevance-theoretic consideration of some German examples of type B indirect speech, i.e. the report of non-communicated speech acts, and of type C indirect speech, i.e. the report of communicated speech acts. We finish by considering the report of speech acts of denial, and shall suggest that such reports are essentially instances of type C indirect speech.

In each case of type B and type C indirect speech we shall investigate in some detail the role of the reportative subjunctive as a marker of interpretive use in prompting the hearer to recover the attitude which the reporter contextually implies to the reported proposition.

## 5.2 Type A indirect speech: The embedded proposition alone is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject

In many cases, a hearer who understands an utterance as prototypical indirect speech, constrained as such by the reportative subjunctive, may understand the embedded proposition alone to represent that which is attributed to the matrix subject. If this is the case, then the matrix *verbum dicendi* will have been selected by the reporter from her own point of view. For example, those verbs which Caldas-Coulthard (1994) considers to be neutral, such as *berichten*, and *sagen*, inform the hearer merely that the matrix subject uttered the embedded proposition. They do not indicate whether the reporter considers it to be true, how it was uttered, or how the reported utterance relates to the accompanying discourse. Paralinguistic verbs, such as *flüstern* and *schreien* indicate *how* the proposition was uttered, but this detail does not have any bearing on how the embedded proposition itself is to be understood. For example, an utterance might be whispered in order not to wake somebody, but this extra-linguistic circumstance will not have any effect on the proposition communicated itself. Transcript verbs, such as *fortsetzen* and *hinzufügen*, indicate how the reported proposition relates to the surrounding discourse. However, like neutral and paralinguistic verbs, they do not influence how the reported proposition itself is understood.

Since it is the embedded proposition alone for which the original speaker, i.e. the matrix subject, is understood to be responsible, the interpretive stance of the reporter will concern only the embedded proposition. More precisely, this stance will concern the extent to which the reporter considers the embedded proposition to be true, or plausible in the case of an opinion. As an example of indirect speech whereby it is the embedded proposition alone that is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject we give (1a) (repeated from Chapter 2, section 2.2.10):

- (1a) [CONTEXT] Mainz police are warning people of tricksters who pretend to be police officers in order to gain access to other people's homes. The most recent victim was an 86-year-old woman who was spoken to by two men in Parcus Street, just before 17:50 on Tuesday.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Die Mainzer Polizei warnt vor Trickdieben, die sich als Polizeibeamte ausgeben und sich so Eintritt in fremde Wohnungen verschaffen. Jüngstes Opfer war eine 86-jährige Frau, die am Dienstag gegen 17.50 Uhr in der Parcusstraße von zwei Männern angesprochen wurde.

*Die falschen Polizisten gaben an, in ihre Wohnung sei*  
the false police officers stated in her flat is.S1

*eingebrochen worden und sie müssten feststellen, was gestohlen*  
broken in become and they must.S2 establish what stolen

*worden sei.*  
become is.S1

‘The bogus police officers stated that her flat had been broken into and that they must establish what had been stolen.’

[FURTHER CONTEXT] The old lady checked her cash. Then she was lured into the bedroom. The second man took advantage of this and stole 1300 Marks as well as three savings books. [...] Police are warning people urgently not to let anyone into their homes and to call 110 if they have any suspicions.<sup>107</sup>

(*Rhein-Zeitung*: 06.05.1999)

The purported original utterance, which the embedded proposition in (1a) must be understood to resemble in terms of its propositional form, is given in (1b):

(1b) *In Ihre Wohnung ist eingebrochen worden, und wir müssen feststellen, was gestohlen worden ist.*

The original speakers themselves intended the victim of the crime reported to understand (1b) to be true. Significantly, the matrix *verbum dicendi* itself does not suggest any reporter attitude towards the reported proposition. However, it is clear from the context that the reporter believes the embedded proposition to be untrue, and the reportative subjunctive, as a marker of interpretive use, is compatible with this attitude. The perpetrators are described as ‘tricksters’ (*Trickdiebe*), and since it can be assumed to be mutually manifest that tricksters are criminals who use deceit in order to take advantage of vulnerable people, this label alone is sufficient for the hearer to infer contextually that the relevant embedded proposition is considered to

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<sup>107</sup> *Die alte Dame kontrollierte ihr Bargeld. Dann wurde sie ins Schlafzimmer gelockt. Dies nutzte der zweite Mann aus und stahl 1300 Mark sowie drei Sparbücher. [...] Die Polizei warnt eindringlich: Lassen Sie niemanden in die Wohnung, und wählen Sie im Verdachtsfall die Nummer 110.*

be false. The notion that the men are tricksters who were lying when (1b) was uttered is reinforced by further contextual details. The woman is described as a ‘victim’ (*Opfer*): she was taken in by the deceit of the bogus police officers. The actions of the men once they had gained access to the woman’s house are then described (they stole money and savings books) using indicative finite verbs: the effect of this is that the circumstances described are put forward as (probably) true. Finally, a warning is issued by the police; this warning is felicitous because the notion that people must be suspicious of people who wish to gain access to people’s houses is assumed to be mutually manifest.<sup>108</sup>

Since it is the embedded proposition alone for which the original speaker is understood to be responsible, it is possible to employ an *Übergangsform* (Chapter 2, section 2.2.7) and postpose the matrix clause such that it appears in a marked position after the embedded clause:

(1c) *In ihre Wohnung **sei** eingebrochen worden und sie **müssten** feststellen, was gestohlen worden **sei**, gaben die falschen Polizisten an.*

(1c), which topicalizes the embedded clause rather than the matrix subject, is arguably a little odd from the point of view of information structure. Nevertheless, a reporter who orders the clauses like this could not face accusations of unfaithful reporting. As a genuine example where the reported proposition is postposed we give (2); here the proposition is embedded under the neutral verbum dicendi *berichtet*:

(2) [CONTEXT] Augsburg baby Emil Mukarim, who has cancer, has supposedly been abducted and taken abroad by his parents again. Augsburg prosecutors yesterday applied for a warrant to arrest the parents of the eight-month-old.<sup>109</sup>

*Sven Maerzke **sei** das letzte Mal am Montagmittag gesehen*  
Sven Maerzke is.S1 the last time on Monday midday seen

*worden, die Mutter Lamia am Samstag, berichtete die*  
become the mother Lamia on Saturday reported the

<sup>108</sup> We do not intend ‘felicitous’ here to be understood in an Austinian/Searlean sense.

<sup>109</sup> *Das krebserkrankte Baby Mukarim Emil aus Augsburg ist von seinen Eltern vermutlich erneut ins Ausland entführt worden. Die Staatsanwaltschaft Augsburg hat gegen die Eltern des acht Monate alten Kindes gestern Haftbefehl beantragt.*

Polizeidirektion Augsburg.

police headquarters Augsburg

‘Augsburg police headquarters reported that Sven Maerzke was last seen at midday on Monday, the mother Lamia on Saturday.’

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 29.04.1999)

Again, this positioning of the matrix clause is felicitous because it is the embedded clause alone which is understood to report the original utterance.

In this section we have suggested that when some *verba dicendi* are employed, only the embedded proposition is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. The *verbum dicendi* itself does not report any element of what the original speaker herself is understood to have said. Therefore any interpretive stance which is expressed with the aid of the reportative subjunctive will concern the extent to which the reporter believes the embedded proposition to be true or plausible. Finally, because it is the embedded proposition alone that is being reported, a speaker cannot be accused of unfaithful reporting if the matrix clause is moved to a marked position after the embedded proposition.

Before we investigate types B and C indirect speech, both of which have in common the circumstance that the matrix *verbum dicendi* reports part of what is attributed to the matrix subject, we need to consider in some detail an aspect of relevance theory which we did not look at in Chapter 3: Sperber and Wilson’s distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts.

### **5.3 Relevance theory and speech acts**

#### *5.3.1 The distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts*

In their 1986/95 text Sperber and Wilson begin their discussion of speech acts by calling into question Levinson’s assumption that ‘[...] in linguistic pragmatics, speech acts remain, along with presupposition and implicature in particular, one of the central phenomena that any general pragmatic theory must account for’ (Levinson 1983: 226). In particular, they question the traditional speech-act-theoretic assumption that many of the various types of speech act form a crucial part of what a speaker intends to communicate and therefore play a necessary role in communication. Whilst, as Sperber and Wilson concede, there is a genuine place in

pragmatics for the study of non-declaratives such as imperatives and interrogatives (1986/95: 243), the role played by many so-called assertive speech acts is less clear. For example, Blakemore, in her relevance-theoretic discussions of speech acts (1991, 1992), considers the speech act of warning (example from Blakemore 1991: 201):

(3a) The path is slippery here.

According to the traditional speech-act-theoretic point of view, a speaker who intends this to be understood as a warning does not necessarily have to include a performative prefix such as 'I warn you that', but she does nevertheless require the hearer to understand that she intended to communicate the proposition in (3b):

(3b) The speaker of (3a) is warning the hearer that it is slippery in the place indicated.

But, according to Blakemore, this cannot be the case:

A speaker who intends [3a] to be interpreted as a warning simply intends the hearer to process the utterance in a particular way. More specifically, she expects the hearer to recover certain sorts of contextual implications – ones that have to do with the dangerous or unpleasant consequences of the situation the utterance describes.

(Blakemore 1991: 201)

Blakemore adds that '[i]f she does identify the speaker's intentions in this way, it is because she has already understood the relevance of the utterance' (1991: 201). However, we would be wrong to claim that the recovery of an explicature such as the one in (3b) *never* plays a role in the process of comprehending of an utterance such as (3a). Sperber and Wilson themselves remark that:

[...] this is not to say that it would never be desirable for the speaker of [3a] simultaneously to communicate the assumption in [3b] [...]. Our claim is simply that even where [3b] is manifestly true, its recovery is not *essential* to the comprehension of an utterance such as [3a].

(Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 245)<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Sperber and Wilson's quotation concerns predicting. However, their comments concern all speech acts which, their view, do not have to be identified by the hearer, and so this quotation is equally valid for warnings.

Sperber and Wilson refer to those so-called speech acts, which do not necessarily have to be understood by the hearer as speaker-intended, as *non-communicated speech acts*. Other examples of non-communicated speech acts, according to Sperber and Wilson, are asserting, hypothesizing, suggesting, claiming, denying, entreating, demanding, threatening and predicting (Sperber and Wilson: 1986/95: 245).

On the other hand, there *do* exist speech acts which have to be recognized as having been ostensibly communicated by the speaker in order to be understood by the hearer. For Sperber and Wilson these are mostly institutional and thus their study belongs principally to the study of those institutions with which they are associated, rather than to the study of verbal communication (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 245). For example, a hearer *must* understand the speaker of (4a) and (4b) as having communicated (4c) (examples from Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 245) if he is to understand the speaker as having performed the speech act of bidding two no trumps in a game of bridge. Ultimately, however, the study of this speech act belongs to the study of the institution of bridge:

- (4a) I bid two no trumps.
- (4b) Two no trumps.
- (4c) The speaker is bidding two no trumps.

Further institutional speech acts which need to be understood as having been ostensibly communicated include promising and thanking. This is because '[...] they [...] can be performed only in a society with the requisite institutions, and which must be recognised as such in order to be successfully performed' (Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 245). Furthermore, some speech acts, such as baptizing babies and naming ships, according to Blakemore '[...] do not really have anything to do with communication, and hence pragmatics, at all'. Blakemore's reasoning for this is that '[...] they can be successfully performed in the presence of an uncomprehending audience or in the presence of no audience at all' (1992: 92).

There are, however, some speech acts which must be recognized as part of what is ostensibly communicated by the speaker, but which are not associated with specific institutions and arguably occur in all human societies. An example provided by Blakemore (1991, 1992) is admitting. Imagine a situation whereby you know, or

at least suspect, that I watch *EastEnders*.<sup>111</sup> After strenuously denying this for several minutes, I eventually give up and produce the utterance in (5a):

(5a) OK. I watch it.

Since you already believe the proposition in (5b) below to be true, this cannot itself yield adequate contextual effects for your expectations of optimal relevance to be satisfied. Your expectations of relevance will not be satisfied unless you recover the higher-level explicature in (5c); it is in this explicature that the main relevance of (5a) lies:

(5b) The speaker of (5a) watches *EastEnders*.

(5c) **{The speaker of (5a) is admitting that}** she watches *EastEnders*.

Sperber and Wilson refer to these speech acts which do need to be understood as having been communicated ostensively by the speaker as *communicated speech acts*.

### 5.3.2 *Speech acts, parentheticals and explicature*

Blakemore (1991, 1992) follows Urmson (1966) in observing that in English many so-called performatives have in common with propositional-attitude verbs, such as ‘think’ and ‘believe’, the circumstance that they may be used not only in sentence-initial position, as in (6a) below:

(6a) I think you are wrong.

but also in parenthetical position. The reason for this is that in the case of propositional-attitude verbs and many verbs associated with non-communicated speech acts the main relevance of the utterance is understood to lie in the embedded proposition. Example (7a) instantiates the use of ‘I predict’ in parenthetical position:

(7a) Jennifer will, I predict, leave the room.

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<sup>111</sup> *EastEnders* is a British soap opera, set in London, which has been broadcast by the BBC since 1985.

Blakemore goes on to suggest that performatives which denote non-communicated speech acts, indeed verbs which may be used parenthetically in general, are best treated as semantic constraints on relevance since they reduce processing costs, thereby constraining the hearer's choice of context. In this sense they resemble discourse markers such as 'but' and 'nevertheless', as well as the German reportative subjunctive itself, all of which encode procedural meaning. However, the problem for Blakemore is that performatives of the type under discussion '[...] contribute to the truth conditions of the utterances that contain them' since they '[...] represent states of affairs, and the speaker may be regarded as giving evidence that the state of affairs they represent obtains' (Blakemore 1991: 205).<sup>112</sup> Consequently, Blakemore suggests that when a speaker produces an utterance consisting of a verb which may be employed parenthetically and an embedded clause, she is engaging in *two* acts of communication. On the one hand there is the expression of the embedded proposition, and on the other the act of communication associated with the matrix or parenthetical verb. For example, in uttering (7b) (slightly adapted from Blakemore 1991: 205) a speaker is providing evidence that not only the notion that 'Jennifer will leave the room' obtains, but also that the state of affairs described by (7c) obtains:

(7b) I predict that Jennifer will leave the room.

(7c) The speaker is predicting that Jennifer will leave the room.

Blakemore continues:

[...] [T]he relevance of the second act of communication lies in the way it helps the hearer understand the first act. More specifically, it leads the hearer to understand that the proposition that the speaker is presenting is relevant as an assumption for which she holds less than conclusive evidence.

(Blakemore 1991: 207)

Ultimately, since performatives which are associated with non-communicated speech acts '[...] focus on the inferential aspect of utterance interpretation' (1991: 207) yet represent states of affairs and thus may be conceived of in truth-conditional terms, they may be considered conceptual, rather than procedural, constraints on relevance.

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<sup>112</sup> In her 1987 book *Semantic Constraints on Relevance*, Blakemore suggested that procedural semantic constraints are always non-truth-conditional, whilst lexical items that encode conceptual meaning are consistently truth-conditional. This correlation has since been challenged and revised (Wilson and Sperber 1993; Blakemore 2002, 2004).

Performatives associated with non-communicated speech acts and propositional-attitude verbs can be also said to have in common the notion that they function on the level of *higher-level explicature* when in parenthetical position (Itani-Kaufmann 1990; Ifantidou 1993; Carston 2002). This is because, as we saw in section 3.2.5 of Chapter 3, a higher-level explicature is a propositional attitude or speech-act description under which the proposition expressed by an utterance is embedded. Thus the purpose of the parenthetical is to indicate the higher-level explicature to be recovered. In those cases where there is *no* explicit performative or propositional-attitude verb, any matrix verb under which the hearer embeds the proposition will function as a higher-level explicature. For instance, the higher-level explicature which the hearer of (3a) *may* recover (although it will be remembered that this is not essential for the comprehension of the utterance) is (3c):

(3c) {The speaker of (3a) is warning the hearer that} it is slippery in the place indicated.

Had he been familiar with and found plausible the concepts of basic and higher-level explicature, Urmson would have likely proposed that verbs which may appear in parenthetical position generally contribute to higher-order explicature even when their position is sentence-initial. This is because:

[i]n some contexts it will be virtually indifferent, on all but stylistic grounds, whether the verb occurs at the beginning, middle or end of the indicative sentence with which it is conjoined; this will not always be so, but when it is the verb will be said to be used purely parenthetically.

(Urmson 1966: 193)

However, Itani-Kaufmann (1990) and Ifantidou (1993) have suggested that it is not the case that such matrix verbs in sentence-initial position are essentially parenthetical and thus that it is not the case that their import functions on the level of higher-level explicature. This seems a logical position for relevance theorists as it follows from Sperber and Wilson's definition of 'explicature', repeated below (1986/95: 182):

**An assumption communicated by an utterance *U* is *explicit* [i.e. an explicature] if and only if it is a development of a logical form encoded by *U*.**<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> According to Carston an explicature is a development of *a* (not *the*) logical form because in cases of ambiguity, more than one logical form will be encoded (Carston 2002: 116).

Sentence-initial matrix verbs and the complement clause are seen as constituting a single logical form, which is then developed into single explicature, i.e. propositional form.

For Itani-Kaufmann (whose discussion focusses on propositional-attitude verbs), whilst the main relevance of (8a) resides in (8b), '[...] Relevance Theory predicts that *I suppose* in [8a] functions descriptively i.e. contributes to the truth-conditional content as it is part of the propositional form' (1990: 56):

(8a) I suppose that your house is very old.

(8b) The hearer's house is very old.

Thus, as part of the propositional form of an utterance, a non-parenthetical propositional-attitude verb can be said to make its contribution on the level of the proposition expressed. Ifantidou (1993) demonstrates the non-parenthetical nature of such sentence-initial verbs using a standard test for truth-conditionality:

The core mechanism of the test consists in embedding into a conditional the sentence which includes the expression to be tested, and seeing if this expression falls within the scope of the 'if'. If it does, it is truth-conditional; if it is not, it is non-truth-conditional [...].

(Ifantidou 1993: 198)

Ifantidou's somewhat artificial and contrived example is as follows:

(9a) If I think that John is in Berlin, he will not come to the meeting.

If 'I think' made no contribution to the truth conditions of (9a), then, according to Ifantidou, we would expect it to be synonymous with (9b):

(9b) If John is in Berlin, he will not come to the meeting.

But, according to Ifantidou, (9a) and (9b) are not synonymous; 'I think' does fall, from the point of view of formal logic, within the scope of the operator 'if'. For Ifantidou this is proof that sentence-initial 'parentheticals' contribute to the proposition expressed.

Ultimately, Itani-Kaufmann and Ifantidou subscribe to the former relevance-theoretic point of view, discussed in section 3.2.5, according to which the proposition expressed by an utterance is its truth-conditional content, whilst its higher-level

explicatures are consistently non-truth-conditional on the level of the sentence as a whole.<sup>114</sup> However, as we also saw in section 3.2.5, the current relevance-theoretic position is that we need to distinguish between the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance not in terms of their contributions to truth conditions, but in terms of their contributions to relevance (Blakemore 2002, 2004). We observed that the notion of main relevance crosscuts the distinction between proposition expressed and higher-level explicature: the main relevance of an utterance may reside in a higher-level explicature that has to be recovered through inference alone.

As we have seen, the main relevance of an utterance associated with a propositional attitude or a non-communicated speech act is (usually) understood to reside in the embedded proposition. If we take contributions to relevance, rather than truth conditions, as the main factor in distinguishing between the assumptions explicitly communicated by an utterance, then there is nothing standing in the way of us claiming that verbs which denote non-communicated speech acts and propositional attitudes have the same status in terms of the explicature to which they contribute. Whether they appear in sentence-initial or parenthetical position does not play a role. Thus from the point of view of main relevance, not only do parentheticals make their contribution on the level of higher-level explicature, verbs associated with non-communicated speech acts and propositional attitudes in sentence-initial position usually do so as well.

There is, however, a problem here. Sperber and Wilson's (1986/95) definition of 'explicature', quoted above, does not allow for a parenthetical interpretation of main-clause parentheticals: it predicts that they will always contribute to the proposition expressed. Nevertheless, in our view, a parenthetical interpretation of examples such as the main-clause 'I suppose' in (8a) is predicted by a minor adjustment to the definition of 'explicature' that Carston (2002) comes to see as necessary. In Chapter 3 (section 3.2.5) we saw that sentential adverbs such as 'frankly' contribute to higher-level explicatures. However, (10a) (below) is problematic for Carston because 'frankly' modifies an embedded clause, '[...] which is certainly not a development of the logical form of the utterance, but is rather a constituent (a proper subpart) of the logical form of the utterance [...]' (Carston 2002: 121-122) (example adapted from Carston (2002: 121)):

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<sup>114</sup> It will be remembered, though, that relevance theory has long seen all the explicatures communicated by an utterance as having truth conditions in their own right; this realization lies at the heart of Blakemore's (1991) claim that performatives provide conceptual constraints on relevance.

(10a) Jennifer shouldn't pass the course, because she, frankly, hasn't done the work.

According to Carston, the problem also arises in the case of and-conjunction (example adapted from Carston (2002: 122)):

(11a) Andrew went to a party and Jennifer watched a DVD.

(11b) Andrew went to a party.

(11c) Jennifer watched a DVD.

Carston points out that '[...] intuitions seem to be unequivocal that an utterance of [11a] communicates not only the conjunctive proposition but also the two constituent propositions, [11b] and [11c]' (2002: 122).

In order to account for examples such as (10a) and (11a) (there are a number of other cases where a similar problem arises), Carston (2002: 124) proposes the following amended definition of 'explicature':

**An assumption (proposition) communicated by an utterance is an 'explicature' of the utterance if and only if it is a development of (a) a linguistically encoded logical form of the utterance, or of (b) a sentential subpart of a logical form.**

Carston's modified definition differs from the previous one essentially through the addition of clause (b). On the previous definition, an explicature was simply seen as a development of the intended logical form of an utterance (there may be ambiguity). On the revised definition, the logical form from which an explicature is derived may may be the whole sentence or a sentential subpart.

It follows from this revised definition that (10a) should have explicatures which include the following. (10b) is the proposition expressed:

(10b) Jennifer shouldn't pass the course because she hasn't done the work.

(10c) {The speaker is saying that} Jennifer shouldn't pass the course because she hasn't done the work.

(10d) Jennifer shouldn't pass the course.

(10e) Jennifer hasn't done the work.

(10f) {The speaker is telling the hearer frankly} that Jennifer hasn't done the work.

So how does this definition predict the possibility of a parenthetical interpretation of (8a)?:

- (8a) I suppose that your house is very old.
- (8b) The hearer's house is very old.
- (8c) {The speaker supposes that} the hearer's house is very old.

In (8a) the logical form of the subordinate clause 'your house is very old', as a sentential subpart of the utterance, is developed into the (basic) explicature in (8b). This thus allows (8c) to be classified as a higher-level explicature. Thus, a parenthetical interpretation of main-clause performatives associated with non-communicated speech acts and propositional attitudes is both predicted by considerations of relevance and permitted by the current definition of 'explicature'.

Significantly, Blakemore (1992: 98) observes that performatives which denote *communicated* speech acts do not typically occupy parenthetical positions. To illustrate this she uses the following infelicitous example, provided by Récanati (1987):

- (12) ? Belle d'Azur will win the race, I bet \$100.

However, Blakemore (1991: 202-203) notes that there are cases where performatives associated with communicated acts *do* occur parenthetically. Whilst example (12) is clearly unacceptable, 'I bet' sits quite comfortably in a parenthetical position in (13) (from Blakemore 1991: 203):

- (13) He'll forget to come, I bet.

Similarly, returning to our *EastEnders* example, the supposedly communicated 'I admit' seems acceptable as a parenthetical in (5d) (1991: 204):

- (5d) I do, *I admit*, watch *EastEnders*.

It seems that the parenthetical occurrences of 'I bet' and 'I admit' in examples (14) and (5d) do not have quite the same force as when in sentence-initial position, as in example (14):

- (14) OK, I admit that it was me who ate the chocolates.

Blakemore (1991) develops this point in a footnote:

[...] [T]he example in [13] might be regarded as what Sperber and Wilson call a *loose use*. The hearer is expected to derive some but not all of the contextual implications she would derive from a genuine bet. For example, although she is expected to derive the implication that the speaker is convinced that she is right about the truth of the proposition expressed, she is not entitled to derive the implication that she would be entitled to collect money should the speaker be wrong.

(Blakemore 1991: 203)

Thus Blakemore suggests that some communicated speech acts have a non-communicated variant which may appear in parenthetical position and whose function is merely to ensure that the hearer loosely recovers some, but not all, of the cognitive effects associated with the communicated variant. Like other parentheticals it makes its contribution on the level of higher-level explicature and as such does not constitute any part of the main relevance of the utterance.

In this section we have seen how Sperber and Wilson's distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts finds reflection in the circumstance that non-communicated-speech-act performatives, such as 'I conclude' and 'I warn', in common propositional-attitude verbs may in English occur parenthetically; this is explained by the circumstance that they do not contribute to the main relevance of an utterance. Those performatives which denote communicated speech acts, such as 'I admit' and 'I promise' on the other hand, cannot occupy parenthetical positions. We have shown how those verbs which may occur parenthetically both function on the level of higher-level explicature and provide a semantic constraint on the relevance of an utterance when explicitly encoded. We have suggested, contra Itani-Kaufmann (1990) and Ifantidou (1993), that they usually contribute to higher-level explicature even when the verb is in a non-parenthetical e.g. sentence-initial position.

### 5.3.3 *Alternative views on the distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts*

The suggestion that speech acts may be classified as communicated and non-communicated has not failed to attract some criticism. At this point it would be profitable to describe and challenge some of the criticisms which have emerged in order to show that they are ultimately groundless and that the relevance-theoretic

distinction between the two types of act is well-founded. We shall consider the work of Bird (1994) and Nicolle (2000).

Nicolle argues that there are no non-communicated speech acts and proposes that all speech acts are communicated, not only in the sense that the hearer is required to recover them in order to comprehend an utterance, but also in the sense that:

[a]n act can [...] be described as communicated from the *speaker's* perspective; that is, it is communicated in the sense of being an act which the speaker intends the hearer to recover. (emphasis mine)

(Nicolle 2000: 235)

Nicolle suggests that those speech acts which from the point of view of mainstream relevance theory are non-communicated fall into two categories. On the one hand there are those which convey socially relevant information, such as warnings, and on the other there are those which indicate the strength of the associated assumption, such as predictions and guesses.

According to Nicolle, speech acts such as 'warn' must necessarily be considered to be communicated acts rather than non-communicated acts because a speaker who employs such a speech act requires the hearer to recognize her intention to convey *socially relevant information*. His example of a warning is the same as that provided by Blakemore (1991):

(3a) The path is slippery here.

Nicolle follows Jary (1998) in the latter's observation that human cognition has evolved such that it is able to:

[...] form and maintain alliances, to keep track of one's relative status and that of others, to calculate the likely effect of one's actions on the way others think of you and their likely responses to your actions [...].

(Jary 1998: 165)

Thus, although it is a hugely complex procedure, socially relevant information is processed with deceptive ease and is as such inherently relevant.

Our challenge to Nicolle's position that speech acts such as warning are communicated acts concerns an apparent misunderstanding which his text betrays regarding the concept of the communicated speech act. He explains the speaker's

need for the hearer to recognize her intention to communicate socially relevant information as follows:

When the speaker warns the hearer that the path is slippery, the speaker is acting altruistically and the hearer is thereby placed in the debt of the speaker. Failure to respond appropriately, for example by thanking the speaker, has the potential to impair the social relationship between speaker and hearer. *It seems that in such situations hearers cannot help but recognise the intention to warn* and, in cultures where it is appropriate, the offering of thanks happens virtually automatically. (emphasis mine)

(Nicolle 2000: 239)

But a little later he (correctly) observes that the hearer will be able to recover the chief intended cognitive effects through processing the proposition expressed alone:

*Failure to process such information may not impair the recovery of contextual implications derivable from the proposition expressed*, but it may adversely effect [sic] the maintenance of social relations between the interlocutors. (emphasis mine)

(Nicolle 2000: 240)

Nicolle fails to recognize the following: what unites those speech acts that Sperber and Wilson and Blakemore have identified as communicated acts is the circumstance that the intended speech act contributes to the *main* relevance of the utterance. Nicolle may be correct in suggesting that a hearer will not fail to recover socially relevant information associated with a warning, but recovering this information is not an element of recovering the main relevance of the utterance. As we saw in example (5a), however, the hearer *is* required to understand the hearer to have communicated (5c) in order to have his expectations of optimal relevance satisfied:

(5a) OK. I watch it.

(5c) **{The speaker of (5a) is admitting that}** she watches *EastEnders*.

Warning is clearly a non-communicated speech act in Sperber and Wilson's sense after all.

In his discussion of the other type of non-communicated speech act, i.e. those which convey the strength of the associated proposition, Nicolle links the notion that they must necessarily be understood by the hearer to be speaker-

intended to the three ways, discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.2.2 in which an utterance can yield positive cognitive effects:

Knowing whether an utterance [...] is a prediction, hearsay, a meteorological forecast, or a guess will have a bearing on whether an utterance [...] succeeds in strengthening or contradicting an existing assumption, or whether it gives rise to a strongly or weakly held contextual assumption.

(Nicolle 2000: 237)

Thus, unless the speaker is understood to be performing a specific speech act (such as predicting or guessing), the hearer will not be able to infer the speaker's degree of commitment to the proposition. Sperber and Wilson, however, do not deny that a speaker always communicates her degree of commitment to a proposition. Their point is that the speaker does not need to be understood to have performed a discrete *speech act*, associated with a more or less inflexible set of cognitive effects, if her degree of commitment to the proposition is to be inferred. Furthermore, as in the case of speech acts which convey socially relevant information, the main relevance of a proposition which is associated with a speech act which indicates the strength of the embedded proposition will reside in the embedded proposition itself. We thus conclude that speech acts which convey the strength of an assumption, like those associated with socially relevant information, are also truly non-communicated acts.

Bird's (1994) chief objection to the notion that many speech acts are non-communicated suggests that he too has misunderstood what all communicated speech acts ultimately have in common. For Sperber and Wilson, a speaker makes a prediction if she [...] she ostensibly communicates an assumption with a certain property, that of being about a future event at least partly beyond her control' (1986/95: 245). Bird points out that these conditions are not adequate to make an utterance a prediction (1994: 301), but he concedes (1994: 302) that this does not necessarily pose a problem for relevance theory:

[...] [I]f the conditions are adequate, then the classification is recoverable from the ostensive communication, and then there is no obstacle to the classification's being an essential part of what is ostensibly communicated.

(Bird 1994: 203)

Thus, it follows from Bird's considerations that if the conditions for a prediction are ostensibly communicated, then it can be said that the speech act of predicting is

ostensively communicated. Whether or not Bird is right in this assumption need not exercise us here. However, the notion that the conditions for a given speech act are always ostensively communicated is not sufficient for us to assume that the speech act itself is an *essential* part of what is ostensively communicated, i.e. that the speech act is communicated in the relevance-theoretic sense. Like Nicolle, Bird has either overlooked or failed to understand that for a speech act to be of Sperber and Wilson's communicated variety, it is not sufficient for the conditions for that speech act merely to be ostensively communicated. This is because the *main* relevance of the utterance which contains it must at least to some extent reside in those ostensively communicated conditions.

The correlation which Blakemore (1991, 1992) draws between non-communicated speech acts and their capacity to appear in parenthetical positions provides Nicolle (2000) with grounds in addition to those cited above on which to challenge the conventional relevance-theoretic distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts. Nicolle (2000: 241) argues that some speech acts which relevance theorists hold to be non-communicated cannot be used parenthetically. 'I claim' is an example:

(15a) ? Jennifer will, I claim, leave the room.

However, for me, 'I claim' is odd not because it occupies a parenthetical position; it is odd because 'I claim' sounds a little infelicitous in this utterance in any position, at least in my informal register:

(15b) ? I claim that Jennifer will leave the room.

Furthermore, there appears to be a specific reason why 'I claim' is not quite convincing as a performative: it can be argued that it is semantically transparent. Jary (2007) uses the example 'I hereby claim that it is going to rain' in order to explain the type of semantic transparency at issue:

The case for transparency goes as follows: if it does not rain, the speaker cannot defend herself against the accusation that what she said was false by saying "What I said was that I claim it is going to rain, and that's true." Rather, the fact that it is not raining is enough to make it the case that the speaker [...] said something false. It can therefore be argued that the performative prefix makes no contribution to the semantic content of the utterance.

(Jary 2007: 214)

Therefore, it is the specific nature of the speech act of claiming that makes 'I claim' pragmatically strange in (15a) and (15b). It is not the case that claiming is a non-communicated speech act whose performative prefix can occur in sentence-initial position but not parenthetically.

This is not the only evidence which for Nicolle can be used to challenge the notion that non-communicated speech acts can always be employed parenthetically, whilst communicated speech acts can never appear in such a position. 'I promise', which denotes a communicated speech act, does not have to sit in sentence-initial position; it can also be placed in parenthetical positions (example from Nicolle 2000: 242):

(16a) I promise I'll be there.

(16b) I'll be there, I promise.

In response to this, Blakemore might refer Nicolle to a footnote in her 1991 paper where she remarks that such occurrences of 'I promise' are truly parenthetical, like example (6b) above, and as such (16b) have '[...] much more the quality of a reassurance than a promise' (1991: 203). Yet this is not quite convincing. A hearer would be quite justified in expressing annoyance with a speaker who uttered (16b) but then failed to turn up. After all, she promised! This suggests that 'promise' has in all cases the force of a communicated speech act.

We believe that there are two different analyses which explain the parenthetical occurrence of the communicated speech act 'promise' in (16b), whilst not weakening the more conventional relevance-theoretic account of the two types of speech act.

The first possible analysis is as follows. For Sperber and Wilson (1986/95) it is necessary to include the performative prefix 'I promise' in order to perform the communicated speech act of promising:

We take it that promising is different from merely asserting that one will do something that the hearer wants one to do. In the latter case, someone who fails to do what she said she would and is accused of not keeping her promise would be quick to deny having promised, and would be quite right to do so.

(Sperber and Wilson 1986/95: 290)

For Searle (1969), on the other hand, the speech act of promising (like admitting) can be performed *without* including the explicit performative:

It is possible to perform the act without invoking an explicit illocutionary force-indicating device [...]. I may only say "I'll do it for you", but that utterance will count as and will be taken as a promise in any context where it is obvious that in saying it I am accepting (or undertaking, etc.) an obligation. Seldom, in fact, does one actually need to say the explicit "I promise".

(Searle 1969:68)

If Searle is right, then the notion that 'I promise' can be used parenthetically is not unexpected. If it is possible for one's intention to perform a given communicated speech act to be recognized without the need to utter the explicit performative, then it ought to be possible to include the explicit performative parenthetically. This would *ensure* that the hearer recovers the speaker's intention to perform the speech act. Indeed in the case of the communicated speech act of admitting, which certainly can be performed without including 'I admit', the performative may be placed in a parenthetical position (although the insertion of the personal pronoun 'it', which stands for the embedded clause, is essential). For example:

(5e) OK. I watch it, I admit it.

If this is right, then it seems that the correlation which Blakemore (1991, 1992) posits between the status of a speech act as a communicated or a non-communicated act and its ability to be used parenthetically needs to be slightly revised. Those performatives which can be used parenthetically are not only those that denote non-communicated speech acts, but also those (such as admitting) that denote communicated speech acts which can be performed without the need to name the speech act explicitly.

An arguably less plausible analysis would be that 'I promise' in example (15b) above in reality occupies a non-parenthetical main-clause position and introduces a deleted subordinate clause which repeats the preposed clause:

(16c) I'll be there, I promise ~~I'll be there~~.

The advantage of this analysis, however, is that if we accept it then the notion that there is a correlation between the status of a speech act as a non-communicated act and its capacity to occupy a parenthetical position can be maintained.

## 5.4 The report of speech acts

### 5.4.1 *Introductory remarks*

In the remainder of this chapter we shall consider the implications of the observations made thus far for indirect speech, focussing on German. Although we shall make reference to the report of propositional attitudes, we shall for reasons of space concentrate on instances of the report of speech acts. We shall first look at non-communicated speech acts (type B indirect speech), and then at the report of communicated speech acts (type C indirect speech).

Crucially, by ‘reported speech act’ we mean speech acts which are reported as indirect speech. Examples are the report of habitives, such as *kritisieren* and *loben* (‘praise’) which we considered in Chapter 4. Thus we are interested in cases which have a reportative subjunctive finite verb which makes explicit that the utterance is to be understood as an instance of prototypical indirect speech. The reportative subjunctive is not always essential for the indirect-speech reading to be available, but since our purpose is to investigate from a relevance-theoretic point of view the semantic/pragmatic effect of the reportative subjunctive, all examples of reports of speech acts will contain an embedded subjunctive.

(17a) is an example of the type of speech-act report which is of interest to us:

(17a) *Bei der Gründung versprach Erdoğan, die neue Partei **werde***  
at the founding promised Erdoğan the new party will.S1

*demokratischer sein.*  
more democratic be

‘At the foundation ceremony, Erdoğan promised that the new party would be more democratic.’

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*. 16.08.2001)

The reportative subjunctive in (17) ensures that it is understood as an instance of indirect speech. Thus it guarantees that the reported proposition is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject and in so doing blocks the (potential) interpretation on which the embedded proposition is presupposed by the matrix verb. Furthermore, since the original speech act is itself reported (by the matrix verb), the

hearer will supply a matrix clause which reflects this on the level of basic explication:

(17d) {*Erdoğan sagte bei der Gründung*}, er *verspreche*, die neue Partei *werde demokratischer sein*.

As indirect speech, (17a) purports to report actual words attributed to Erdoğan, such as (17b) or (17c):

(17b) *Ich verspreche, dass die neue Partei demokratischer sein wird*

(17c) *Die neue Partei wird demokratischer sein.*<sup>115</sup>

Example (17a) contrasts with (18) which is an example of the type of speech-act report which is *not* of interest to us, i.e. the *object* case, discussed in relation to the report of habitives and emotional attitudes in Chapter 4:

(18) *Die Warnemünder Tourismuszentrale hatte es versprochen, dass noch*  
the Warnemünde tourist office had it promised that still  
  
*vor dem Saisonstart 2009 alle Strandzugänge wieder*  
before the start of the season 2009 all beach access points again  
  
*frei geschoben werden.*  
free pushed become.IND

'The Warnemünde tourist office had promised that all beach access points would be unblocked before the start of the 2009 season.'

([http://www.der-warnemuender.de/dwm\\_3978.shtml](http://www.der-warnemuender.de/dwm_3978.shtml): accessed 25.06.12)

The use of the expletive *es* in the matrix clause and concomitant embedded indicative indicate that this is an instance of the object case. Thus the possibility of (18) being understood as prototypical indirect speech is ruled out; as such it does not purport to report the precise words of the Warnemünde tourist office.

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<sup>115</sup> It will be remembered from section 5.3.3 above that it can be argued that promising is one of those communicated speech acts in the case of which the performative may be supplied inferentially on the level of higher-level explication.

(19a), however, is ambiguous between the two types of reading (as example (11a) would be in Chapter 4 if it contained an embedded indicative<sup>116</sup>). Whether or not the precise words of the original utterance are reported seems to be irrelevant for the writer's purpose; there is thus no need to use a linguistic device, such as the reportative subjunctive or an expletive *es* (and embedded indicative), in order to constrain the hearer's comprehension procedure:

(19a) [...] *Wagenseil* [...] *versprach*, *dass die Veranstaltungsreihe deshalb*  
*Wagenseil*      promised      that      the series of events      therefore  
*auch im kommenden Jahr fortgesetzt wird.*  
also   in the coming      year   continued   becomes.IND

'Wagenseil promised that the series of events would therefore continue next year as well.'

(*Frankfurter Rundschau*: 13.08.1999)

Substituting a subjunctive for the embedded indicative, as in (19b), would ensure that the prototypical-indirect-speech reading is the only one available:

(19b) *Wagenseil versprach*, *dass die Veranstaltungsreihe auch im kommenden*  
*Jahr fortgesetzt werde.*

Adding an expletive *es* and maintaining the indicative mood, on the other hand, would rule out the possibility of a prototypical indirect-speech reading:

(19c) *Wagenseil versprach es*, *dass die Veranstaltungsreihe auch im kommenden*  
*Jahr fortgesetzt wird.*

We shall continue to speak of the *purported* original utterance and shall often make reference to the *purported* original speech act. This is because with no access to the original utterance or indeed to the original context we can only *assume* that a given reported utterance is faithful and that the matrix *verbum dicendi* reports the

<sup>116</sup> Example (11a) in Chapter 4 is '*Schließlich kritisiert Erol auch, dass von den 900 Millionen Schilling, die insgesamt seit 1990 an Altlastensanierungsbeiträgen gezahlt worden sind, bloß elf Prozent für Sanierungen ausgegeben worden seien*'. We claim that this would be ambiguous between a prototypical-indirect-speech reading and an object-case reading if the embedded verb were the indicative form *sind*.

actual original speech act. The *verbum dicendi* thus cannot be understood to have been selected from the point of view of the reporter herself. Furthermore, our judgements regarding whether the speech act reported is of the communicated or non-communicated variety can rely solely on the context of the host discourse within which the relevant instance of indirect speech occurs. As we have seen, some speech acts, e.g. 'admit', have in direct discourse both a communicated and a non-communicated variant. Just because we claim that an instance of the speech act of admitting is reported as, for example, a non-communicated act does not preclude the possibility that the original speaker actually intended it to be understood as a communicated speech act. As we pointed out in Chapter 1, host-discourse considerations are paramount.

#### 5.4.2 *Type B indirect speech: The report of non-communicated speech acts*

##### 5.4.2.1 Preliminary remarks

Relevance theory claims that some utterances to which classical speech act theorists would have assigned a specific speech-act description can in reality achieve optimal relevance without the hearer having to understand the speaker to have performed a specific speech act. This is because the main relevance of the utterance is not understood to consist in the notion that such-and-such a speech act, such as warning or predicting, is being performed. We have suggested that similar remarks may also be made about utterances associated with propositional attitudes, such as those denoted by 'think' and 'believe'; the notion that the speaker specifically *thinks* that such-and-such is the case does not contribute to the main relevance of the utterance. If the hearer understands the speaker to have *communicated* that she is issuing e.g. a warning implicitly in the sense that this information is not explicitly encoded, then it will operate on the level of higher-level explicature. In those cases where an explicit performative or propositional-attitude verb is included, this also contributes to the higher-level explicatures of the utterance, even, contra Itani-Kaufmann (1990) and Ifantidou (1993), when in sentence-initial position. It should be remembered that if information associated with a specific speech act is communicated, either implicitly or explicitly, the speech act is still of the non-communicated variety if this information is not understood to contribute to the main relevance of the utterance.

It follows that when an utterance associated with a non-communicated speech act or a propositional attitude is transposed into indirect speech, the main relevance of the original utterance will generally be understood to have consisted in the assumption which is presented in the reported version as the embedded proposition. The function of the *verbum dicendi* will be to report a higher-level explicature of the original utterance.

For each of our examples in the next section we shall supply two pieces of evidence which support our claim that the speech act reported is reported as a non-communicated act. Firstly, since the explicature which is reported by the matrix *verbum dicendi* is not understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the original utterance, we hypothesize that one should be able to place such *verba dicendi* in marked i.e. interposed or postposed positions (*Übergangsformen*). (20a), which exemplifies the report of the non-communicated behabitive *loben* ('praise'), provides evidence that this is the case. The circumstance that for the reporter's purposes the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted in the proposition *Schüler ist ein Glücksfall für das hessische Archivswesen* ('Schüler is a stroke of luck for the Hessian archives') means that the matrix clause can be placed *after* the reported utterance:

(20a) *Schüler sei ein Glücksfall für das hessische Archivswesen,*  
 Schüler is.S1 a stroke of luck for the Hessian archives

*lobte der Staatssekretär im Ministerium für Wissenschaft*  
 praised the Secretary of State at the ministry for science

*und Kunst, Frank Portz (FDP) den promovierten Historiker und*  
 and art Frank Portz (FDP) the holding a doctorate historian and

*Germanisten.*  
 Germanist

'Schüler is a stroke of luck for the Hessian archives, said the Secretary of State at the Ministry for Science and Art, Frank Portz (FDP) in praise of Dr Schüler, who is an historian and Germanist.'

(*Frankfurter Rundschau*: 22.07.1999)

This may be considered a corollary of the notion that in direct speech those performatives and propositional-attitude verbs which do not carry part of the main relevance of the utterance may in English appear in a parenthetical position, as in (7a) (repeated below):

(7a) Jennifer will, I predict, leave the room.

In this sense, propositional-attitude and non-communicated-speech-act verba dicendi resemble neutral verba dicendi such as *berichten* and *sagen*, whose complement clause may also be postposed (see section 5.2).

The second piece of evidence that we are dealing with reports of non-communicated speech acts is as follows. If the non-communicated speech act reported by the matrix verbum dicendi is not understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the original utterance, then it ought to be possible, without being accused of unfaithful reporting, to substitute for the matrix verb a neutral linguistic expression (neutral in the sense that it is not associated with a specific non-communicated speech act) which is *entailed* by the matrix verb. For example 'warning' necessarily involves *saying* something, and so 'warn' entails 'say'. Importantly, a verbum dicendi which reports a non-communicated speech act will indicate a specific degree of factivity which the original speaker assigned to what is presented as the embedded proposition. For instance 'warning' indicates that the original speaker held that the assumption which is presented in the reported version as the embedded proposition is true, in other words she assigned the value [-non-factive]. Thus the speech-act neutral verbum dicendi will be entailed by the matrix verb only if it is capable of indicating the same degree of factivity that the original speaker assigned to the original proposition. Speech-act neutral expressions which indicate that the original speaker assigned the value [-non-factive] include *sagen* and adverbial constructions such as *laut Polizeiberichten* ('according to police reports'). On the other hand, neutral expressions which indicate that the original speaker assigned the value [non-factive] include *meinen*. Evidence that we are right is provided by example (20b). Here *sagte* has been substituted for *lobte* since the former is an entailment of the latter in this case, but because the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted in the subordinate proposition, the report cannot be said to be unfaithful:

(20b) *Schüler sei ein Glücksfall für das hessische Archivwesen, sagte der Staatssekretär im Ministerium für Wissenschaft und Kunst, Frank Portz (FDP) den promovierten Historiker und Germanisten.*

As we saw above in section 5.3.2, Blakemore (1991) suggests that performatives which denote non-communicated speech acts may, like discourse markers, be treated as semantic constraints on relevance (albeit conceptual rather than procedural) since they constrain the hearer's choice of context. Blakemore (2010) follows Wilson and Sperber (1993), Rieber (1997), Bach (1999) and Potts (2005) in observing that '[...] certain discourse markers which have been analysed in procedural terms may fall within the scope of indirect thought reports' (Blakemore 2010: 584). The following example has been adapted from Wilson and Sperber (1993: 15). In (21a), which is to be understood as direct speech, Andrew uses 'so' in order to constrain his hearer's comprehension process such that the proposition 'I should have a holiday' is understood as a conclusion that follows from 'Jennifer has had a holiday':

(21a) Jennifer has had a holiday, so I should have one too.

In (21b), however, the reporter is not responsible for this inference; as part of the reported utterance it is attributed to Andrew:

(21b) Andrew thought that Jennifer had a holiday, so he should have one too.

We propose that similar comments may be made about verba dicendi which report higher-level explicatures whose recovery is constrained in direct speech by corresponding performatives which denote non-communicated speech acts. Like the inferential computations which the discourse marker *so* in (21b) instructs the original hearer to perform, the reported higher-level explicature is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. In reporting this explicature, the matrix verb makes explicit, in conceptual terms, those inferential computations which the reporter intends the original speaker to be understood as having intended the original hearer to perform over the conceptual content of her original utterance. Consequently, in making explicit that an utterance is to be understood as prototypical indirect speech, the German reportative subjunctive has the effect, when used in the report of a non-communicated speech act, of ensuring that the original speaker is understood to be

responsible for the inferential computations associated with the reported non-communicated speech act.

Type B indirect speech has in common with type A indirect speech the circumstance that the embedded clause reports the main relevance of the original utterance (in the case of type A indirect speech it may be said to report the *only* relevance). We would therefore expect a reporter to be able to imply contextually any attitude towards this embedded proposition in the same way that she may imply any attitude towards the embedded proposition of type A indirect speech. We shall show in the next section (5.4.2.2) that this is the case.

In direct speech it is possible for a hearer to challenge a higher-level explicature which he understands his interlocutor to have intended to communicate, as in (22). In (22) Jennifer facetiously queries Andrew's use of the parenthetical sentential adverbial 'frankly' which contributes to a higher-level explicature:

- (22) ANDREW: Frankly, you're probably going to fail the exam.  
JENNIFER: That's not true. You're not being frank.

From this it follows that in the case of the report of a non-communicated speech act it should also be possible for a reporter to imply contextually not only an attitude towards the embedded proposition, but also an additional attitude towards any higher-level explicature of the original utterance which she reports. Unlike assertions, a speech act cannot be described as true or false, and this point is illustrated by Jary (2007: 213) who gives the example of a private uttering (23) to a general:

- (23) I hereby order you to clean the latrines.

Jary points out that the general cannot respond to this by saying 'That's not true', rather what she might plausibly say is 'You can't order me: you don't have the authority' (2007: 213). We hold that the notion that a speech act cannot be judged in terms of truth or falsehood is true of both communicated and non-communicated speech acts in the relevance-theoretic sense, which differ primarily in terms of their respective contributions to relevance. But when a speech act is reported as indirect speech, it *is* possible to judge the reported act in terms of truth and falsehood. We repeat (17a):

(17a) *Bei der Gründung versprach Erdogan, die neue Partei **werde** demokratischer sein.*

On hearing (17), a person could respond, 'That's not true, Erdoğan didn't promise that'. However, the speaker is assumed to be a rational communicator and thus (17a) will in the normal case be assumed to be a faithful report of Erdoğan's original utterance: the reporter will have adequate reason to believe that Erdoğan did perform the speech act of promising (either explicitly or implicitly). Therefore the interpretive stance which the reporter contextually implies will not concern whether or not it is true that the embedded proposition was promised. Instead we suggest that a reported *non-communicated* speech act may be assessed in terms of whether the reporter believes the original proposition to have been justifiably associated with the non-communicated speech act in question.<sup>117</sup> For example, did the original speaker have good reason to intend an utterance to be understood as a warning? Is the embedded proposition *valid* as a conclusion in the sense that it follows logically from its premises, or does it represent a *valid* criticism? This attitude towards the reported non-communicated speech act will be implied contextually by the reporter. Thus relevance theory is able to explain how the hearer recovers this attitude: interpretive hypotheses are considered in order of accessibility and the comprehension procedure stops when the hearer's expectation of optimal relevance is satisfied (or abandoned).

#### 5.4.2.2 The report of the non-communicated speech acts of concluding, and criticizing

We are now in a position to examine in detail some examples of the report of non-communicated speech acts. In this section we shall look at two examples: one example of the non-communicated act of concluding, and one of the non-communicated act of criticizing. Whilst it is possible that the matrix verbs *schließen* and *kritisieren* have been supplied by the reporter, and thus reflect the reporter's own interpretation of the original utterance (which in this case would be represented by the embedded clause alone), these verbs in our view (at least) *purport* to report an illocution of the original speaker. We thus do not consider them to reflect the

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<sup>117</sup> We shall consider the implications of this for the report of communicated speech acts in section 5.4 below.

interpretive stance of the reporter. Instead, the reporter implies contextually an attitude towards the original speaker's performance of this speech act.

Our analysis of each example will consist of two elements. We shall firstly supply evidence that the speech act reported is of the non-communicated variety, and this will involve showing that the matrix clause can be moved to a marked postposed position and that a speech-act neutral *verbum dicendi* may be substituted for the matrix *verbum dicendi*. We shall then investigate the attitudes which the reporter implies contextually towards the embedded proposition and the original non-communicated act, reported by the *verbum dicendi*.

Our first example which the reporter intends the hearer to understand as the report of a conclusion is (24a):

(24a) [CONTEXT] Ladenburg police have accused an as yet unknown man of fish poaching. He ran away when officers arrived, leaving his catch behind, which consisted of two large asps.<sup>118</sup>

*An der Neckar-Staustufe bei Ladenburg hatte ein Zeuge den*  
at the Neckar barrage near Ladenburg had a witness the

*Angler beobachtet, wie er die fangfrischen Fische ziemlich*  
angler noticed as he the freshly caught fish fairly

*unwaidmännisch in seinen Taschen verstaute und daraus*  
unsportsmanlike in his pockets put and from that

*geschlossen, dass es sich hier wohl kaum um einen*  
concluded that it itself here probably hardly about a

*legalen Vorgang handeln könne. [...] Von dem Flüchtigen*  
legal procedure deal can.S1 of the fugitive

*ist [...] ein Autokennzeichen bekannt, die Ermittlungen dürften*  
is a number plate known the investigations should

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<sup>118</sup> *Fischwilderei wirft die Polizei in Ladenburg einem noch unbekanntem Mann vor, der unter Zurücklassung der aus zwei großen Rapfen bestehenden Beute beim Eintreffen der Beamten das Weite suchte.*

also über kurz oder lang zum Erfolg führen.  
therefore over short or long to the success lead

'At the Neckar barrage near Ladenburg a witness noticed the angler putting the freshly caught fish in his pockets in a rather unsportsmanlike manner, and *concluded* from this *that the man could hardly be acting legally*. [...] The number plate of the escaping man's car is known and so the investigations should sooner or later end with a positive result.'

(*Mannheimer Morgen*: 22.09.2007)

As this is an example of indirect speech, the hearer will supply on the level of basic explicature a matrix clause which reflects the fact that the matrix verbum dicendi itself reports part of the purported original utterance:

(24b) {**Der Zeuge sagte**}, er **schließe** daraus, dass er sich hier wohl kaum um einen legalen Vorgang handeln **könne**.

We believe that the speech act of concluding in example (24a) is reported as a non-communicated act, and thus that we are right in considering it to be an example of type B indirect speech, for the following reasons. In the context of a suspected crime which is being investigated, it is the notion that a crime has possibly been committed that is of most interest to those investigating, for example the police. The main relevance of the original utterance is thus understood to have resided in (24c):

(24c) *Es kann sich hier wohl kaum um einen legalen Vorgang handeln.*

As a result, the communicative effect of the report is not noticeably weakened if the matrix verbum-dicendi clause is postposed.

(24d) *An der Neckar-Staustufe bei Ladenburg hatte ein Zeuge den Angler beobachtet, wie er die fangfrischen Fische ziemlich unwaidmännisch in seinen Taschen verstaute. Es **könne** sich hier wohl kaum um einen legalen Vorgang handeln, schloss der Zeuge daraus.*

Furthermore, it is possible to substitute for the verbum dicendi a speech-act neutral verbum dicendi which the former entails. In (24e) *gemeint* ('thought/believed'), which

is the past participle of *meinen*, has been substituted for *daraus geschlossen* ('concluded from that'):

(24e) *An der Neckar-Staustufe bei Ladenburg hatte ein Zeuge den Angler beobachtet, wie er die fangfrischen Fische ziemlich unwaidmännisch in seinen Taschen verstaut und gemeint, es **könne** sich hier wohl kaum um einen legalen Vorgang handeln.*

*Meinen*, like the original *schließen*, is capable of indicating that the original speaker assigned the value [non-factive] to the proposition which is now being reported.<sup>119</sup> The use of *gemeint* does not necessarily prevent the hearer from understanding the original utterance to have been spoken aloud.

Having provided evidence that a non-communicated speech act is reported in (24a) we are in a position to investigate the attitudes which the reporter implies contextually towards the embedded utterance and reported speech act. The relationship between a proposition and its status as a conclusion can be described as symbiotic. On the one hand, the truth or plausibility of a proposition which is concluded depends in part on the extent to which it is justifiable as a conclusion. On the other hand, the extent to which the proposition is a valid conclusion rests on the assumption that the concluded proposition itself is plausible.

In this specific case the notion that the man was probably doing something illegal (A) can be said to follow logically from the fact that he was seen putting fish in his pockets (B) and is thus plausible, whilst the fact that this is plausible implies in turn that it follows logically from its premise, i.e. that it is a justified conclusion. In order to understand that A follows logically from B, however, it is necessary for a further assumption to be manifest: fish poaching is illegal.

Whether the reporter herself considers this logical relationship between premise and conclusion to hold and thus believes the embedded proposition, (24c), to be both plausible as an opinion and justified as a conclusion depends on some contextual considerations. Firstly, the man has been accused by police, an institution of authority which must have had good reason to accuse him. In other words they must have found the notion that the man had been fish poaching plausible, which implies that they believed it to follow as a conclusion from the fact that he had been seen putting fish into his pocket. Secondly, the man ran away and left his catch when officers arrived. The reason why this functions as evidence that

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<sup>119</sup> Whilst the original speaker feels he has adequate evidence for his conclusion, he cannot be certain that his conclusion is true. Thus the value assigned is [non-factive].

the embedded proposition is held to be plausible and justified as a conclusion is that the reporter assumes that the assumption in (24f) was manifest:

(24f) People who run away when the police arrive may have committed a crime.

Thirdly, the assumption that the man may be guilty is confirmed in the final sentence: because the man's number plate is known he is expected to be convicted eventually.

Ultimately, the text contains no contextual features which prompt the hearer to infer that these three states of affairs do not correspond to reality. Thus the interpretation that the hearer will recover contextually is one according to which the embedded proposition is understood to be a true and valid conclusion.

Our next example concerns the report of the non-communicated speech act of criticizing:

(25a) [CONTEXT] BERLIN. German minister for trade and commerce Werner Müller is in a good mood as he looks to the future. Three per cent economic growth over the next few years is definitely forecast, he says at the presentation of his economic report for the year 2000 – and this growth will be achieved 'almost in the absence of inflation'. 'If we do nothing wrong, then we will have a good chances a period of persistent economic boom like in America'. However, he did not neglect to issue a warning as well: only if all reforms are completed, above all the revision of the tax law, can these dreams come true, he said. He remarked further that if the tax reform fails 500,000 jobs will be in jeopardy. [...] Above all, Müller puts his trust in new technologies. According to the study, urged on by companies all over the internet, by 2010 750,000 additional jobs will be created in the IT sector alone. [...] The opposition's reaction to the report was highly critical.<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> BERLIN. Bundeswirtschaftsminister Werner Müller blickt gut gelaunt in die Zukunft. Drei Prozent Wirtschaftswachstum seien in den nächsten Jahren auf jeden Fall drin, sagte er bei der Vorstellung seines Wirtschaftsberichts 2000 - und das auch noch "praktisch ohne Inflation". "Wenn wir nichts falsch machen, haben wir die Chancen auf einen dauerhaften Aufschwung wie in Amerika." Allerdings unterließ er es auch nicht, zu warnen: Nur falls alle Reformprojekte vollendet würden, vor allem die Neuregelung des Steuerrechts, könnten die Träume wahr werden. Falls aber die Steuerreform scheitere, seien 500 000 Jobs gefährdet. [...] Müller vertraut vor allem auf die neuen Technologien. Angetrieben durch die Unternehmen rund um das Internet, würden bis 2010 allein in der IT-Branche 750 000 zusätzliche Arbeitsplätze entstehen, heißt es in der Studie. [...] Die Opposition reagierte mit scharfer Kritik auf den Bericht.

CDU und CSU kritisierten, es **fehle** ein klares Konzept wie  
CDU and CSU criticized it lacks.S1 a clear concept how

die Chancen zu nutzen **seien**. Der FDP-  
the prospects to use are.S1 the FDP

Wirtschaftspolitiker Rainer Brüderle sprach gar von  
minister for trade and commerce Rainer Brüderle spoke even of

einem "überflüssigen Bericht eines machtlosen Ministers".  
a pointless report of a powerless minister

'The CDU and CSU made the criticism that a clear concept of how we should take advantage of these prospects is lacking. The FDP minister for trade and commerce Rainer Brüderle even spoke of a "pointless report by a powerless minister.'

(*Rhein-Zeitung*: 11.07.2000)

The basic explicature which the hearer recovers will resemble that in (25b):

(25b) {**CDU und CSU sagten**}, sie **kritisierten**, es **fehle** ein klares Konzept, wie die Chancen zu nutzen **seien**.

As we saw in Chapter 4, section 4.2.3, Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø observe that in the case of the report of a criticism, the embedded proposition is used in order to convey 'disapproval of something  $\alpha$  has done or is doing' (Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø 2011: 86). We further saw that this proposition will usually contain what Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø describe as a negative 'evaluative element'. This evaluative element alone may have prompted the original hearer to understand the utterance as a criticism, without being explicitly instructed to do so by a performative. Criticizing is therefore analyzable as a non-communicated speech act.

In (25a) this negative evaluative element is *Es fehle ein klares Konzept*, and the main relevance of the reported act of criticism in (25a) above, which is best understood as a summary of indeterminate utterances attributed to the parties concerned, is understood to have consisted in (25c):

(25c) *Es fehlt ein klares Konzept, wie die Chancen zu nutzen sind*.

Since the main relevance of the purported original utterance is understood to have consisted in (a) proposition(s) which resemble (25c), the matrix clause may be moved to a marked postposed position with little influence over the overall communicative effect:

(25d) *Es **fehle** ein klares Konzept, wie die Chancen zu nutzen **seien**, kritisierten CDU und CSU.*

As in the case of example (24a), it is possible to substitute a speech-act neutral verb for *kritisierten*. The fact that the embedded proposition is to be understood as a criticism is not only implied by the negative evaluative element; this is made explicit by the preceding context which tells us that the opposition's reaction to the report was critical. In (25e) we have substituted *laut CDU und CSU* ('according to the CDU and CSU') for the original *kritisierte*. *Laut* is appropriate since as well as being 'speech-act neutral' it is often employed in media language to introduce an opinion. Accordingly, we have substituted indicatives for the subjunctive forms, although subjunctives would not be impossible in this context (Carlsen 1994).

(25e) *Laut CDU und CSU fehlt ein klares Konzept, wie die Chancen zu nutzen sind.*<sup>121</sup>

What attitudes are implied contextually towards the embedded proposition and purported original act of criticizing in (25a)? Naturally, the reporter may imply contextually any attitude regarding whether she considers the embedded proposition to be true or false. We hypothesize that when the non-communicated speech act of criticizing is reported, if the reporter implies contextually that she believes the subordinate proposition to be true, then the optimally relevant attitude regarding whether this proposition is valid as a criticism may fall anywhere along the spectrum of possible attitudes. For example, she may imply contextually that she considers the embedded proposition to be true and also that it is valid as a criticism. Alternatively, the embedded proposition may be undeniably true, yet not seem worthwhile to the reporter as a criticism. On the other hand, we hypothesize that if the reporter believes the embedded proposition to be untrue, then the speaker is

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<sup>121</sup> Following German rules of dummy-es insertion, the es in (25e) has been deleted.

likely to imply an attitude whereby the embedded proposition is not understood to constitute a worthwhile criticism.

This specific text provides an overview of the contents of the German business secretary's economic report. The bulk of the text is made up of quotations which are attributed to Müller. These are presented using direct speech and reportative-subjunctive indirect speech, the predominant reporter attitude which is implied contextually being one of impartiality. There are at least two factors which prompt the hearer to recover this attitude. Firstly, the reporter does not explicitly comment on what Müller says. Secondly, the indirect speech is accompanied by essentially neutral linguistic expressions which do not imply the extent to which the reporter considers them to be true. These include the verbum dicendi *sagen* and the matrix clause *heißt es in der Studie*, adequately rendered in English by 'according to the study'.

The function of the strong criticisms of Müller's report provided at the end is to ensure that a sense of balance is maintained. As in the case of the utterances attributed to Müller, the reporter does not comment on what the CDU, CSU and Brüderle have said. Consequently, the hearer is likely to recover contextually an interpretation on which the purported original utterance, (25c), is reported impartially. This means that, in keeping with the dominant objective tone of the text there is no reason for the hearer to understand the reporter's attitude concerning whether the embedded proposition is justifiable as a criticism to be one of anything other than impartiality.

This brings us to the end of our discussion of the report of non-communicated speech acts. In the next section we shall look in some detail at the report of a class of speech acts which themselves contribute to the main relevance of the utterances with which they are associated: communicated speech acts.

### 5.4.3 *Type C indirect speech: The report of communicated speech acts*

#### 5.4.3.1 Preliminary remarks

In section 5.4.2 we examined in detail the notion that when a non-communicated speech act is reported the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted in the embedded proposition. We saw how in making explicit that the utterance constitutes indirect speech the function of the reportative subjunctive, as a marker of interpretive use, is partly to enable the reporter to imply contextually her

attitude towards the embedded proposition in terms of whether she considers it to be true or false. Additionally, the subjunctive is compatible with any attitude that the reporter may imply contextually towards the reported non-communicated speech act.

We propose that when a *communicated* speech act is reported, the speech act denoted by the matrix verb is itself understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the original utterance. A straightforward example is (17a) (repeated from above) which may be understood as a report of an utterance that resembles (17b):

(17a) *Bei der Gründung versprach Erdoğan, die neue Partei **werde** demokratischer sein.*

(17b) *Ich verspreche, dass die neue Partei demokratischer sein wird.*

It is not only in the notion that Erdoğan has *said* that the new party will be more democratic that the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted; equally important is the notion that Erdoğan *promised* this. We further propose that the interpretive stance which is implied contextually towards a reported communicated speech act will concern chiefly the reporter's view of the performance of the speech act – the extent to which she considers it to have been sincere/performed with good reason/worthwhile etc. – rather than whether the embedded proposition is true or plausible. As in the case of the report of non-communicated speech acts, it is not impossible that the matrix *verbum dicendi* has been selected by the reporter and thus ultimately reflects her own interpretive stance towards the reported proposition. However, we believe that this verb will purport to report an illocution which is attributed to the original speaker, and thus, from the point of view of the host discourse, the choice of *verbum dicendi* does not normally reflect the attitude of the reporter.

In section 5.4.2.1 we suggested that when a non-communicated speech act is reported, it is possible to postpose the matrix clause. We might therefore expect it not to be possible to postpose a matrix clause which reports a communicated speech act; an assumption which is understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the purported original utterance winds up being separated from the embedded proposition. However, in the next section we shall suggest that this is not actually always the case. Nevertheless, we shall show that it is *not* possible to substitute a speech-act neutral *verbum dicendi* for a matrix verb which reports a communicated speech act (even though the speech-act neutral *verbum dicendi* will

arguably be entailed by the *verbum dicendi* which reports a communicated act). This is because the matrix *verbum dicendi* is understood to report at least part of the main relevance of the original utterance. If it is not possible to substitute a neutral *verbum dicendi*, then this can be said to constitute evidence that the speech act reported is communicated.

In (17b), the performative *ich verspreche* contributes to the proposition expressed by the utterance, or basic explicature. Thus the matrix verb *versprach* in (17a) reports an element of the basic explicature of the purported original utterance. Sometimes, however, when a communicated speech act is reported, the matrix *verbum dicendi* will report a *higher-level* explicature which must be recovered inferentially by the hearer and is understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the original utterance. This will often be the case, for example, when the communicated speech act of admitting is reported. Returning to our *EastEnders* example above, a speaker may utter (5a):

(5a) OK. I watch it.

But in our imagined context, the notion that I watch *EastEnders* is already strongly suspected; the assumption in which the main relevance of (5a) lies is the higher-level explicature (5c):

(5c) **{The speaker of (5a) is admitting that}** (s)he watches *EastEnders*.

Thus it is this higher-level explicature which (5g) reports:

(5g) David admitted that he watches *EastEnders*.<sup>122</sup>

Thus, when a communicated speech act is reported the matrix verb will report either a higher-level explicature of the purported original utterance, but in either case this explicature will have contributed part of the main relevance of the original utterance.

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<sup>122</sup> He doesn't.

#### 5.4.3.2 The report of the communicated speech acts of guaranteeing and agreeing

If somebody *guarantees* that a given state of affairs obtains, she does not merely say that such-and-such is the case; she indicates that she is thoroughly confident of the truth of what she is saying. A hearer would be quite justified in expressing his dissatisfaction if it subsequently transpired that what the speaker had guaranteed was not actually honoured. Thus the circumstance that a guarantee is being issued constitutes part of the main relevance of what the speaker has to say: guaranteeing is a *communicated* speech act in the relevance-theoretic sense. Therefore, when an act of guaranteeing is reported, the fact that a guarantee was being issued will be understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the purported original utterance. We give (26a) as an example:

(26a) [CONTEXT] The CLC, which in the medium term is planning a stock market launch, has set itself similarly ambitious aims. 'We estimate the annual turnover of our competitors to be between 550 and 600 million schillings and our plan is to be able to deal with 20 per cent of all calls to directory enquiries as early as next year' [says Cevdet Canar]. According to Cevdet Canar, at the moment around 40 employees work at CLC, which operates call centres in Linz, Vienna and Burgenland, and a further 150 telephonists are required short-term.<sup>123</sup>

*Zwar "garantiert" CLC in einer Aussendung, "dass jeder Anruf*  
it is true guarantees CLC in a statement that every call

*innerhalb von 50 Sekunden vollständig abgewickelt" werde,*  
inside of 50 seconds completely dealt with becomes.S1

*auf Grund der enormen Nachfrage in den ersten Tagen,*  
on ground of the enormous demand in the first days

*die die Erwartungen der Betreiber um das Dreifache*  
which the expectations of the operators by the three times

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<sup>123</sup> Ähnlich ehrgeizige Ziele hat sich die CLC, die mittelfristig einen Börsengang plant, gesetzt: "Wir schätzen den jährlichen Umsatz unserer Mitbewerber auf 550 bis 600 Millionen Schilling und planen bereits im nächsten Jahr, 20 Prozent aller Telefonauskünfte abwickeln zu können." Derzeit seien bei CLC, die Call-Center in Linz, Wien und dem Burgenland betreibt, rund 40 Mitarbeiter beschäftigt, kurzfristig werden weitere 150 Telefonisten gesucht.

übertraffen **hätten**, **sei** es jedoch zu Engpässen gekommen,  
exceeded have.S2 is.S1 it however to bottlenecks come

bedauert der CLC-Manager.  
regrets the CLC manager

'It is true that the CLC "guarantees" in a statement "that every call will be dealt with completely within 50 seconds", but CLC's manager regrets that because of enormous demand in the first few days, which exceeded the expectations of the operators threefold, there have however been cases of bottlenecks.'

(Salzburger Nachrichten: 03.11.2000)

As in the previous examples where a speech act is reported, the hearer will recover the basic explicature in (26b) on the level of mental representation:

(26b) {**Zwar sagt CLC in einer Aussendung**}, sie **garantiere**, dass jeder Anruf innerhalb von 50 Sekunden abgewickelt **werde**.

The main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted in the proposition in (26c), including the performative *wir garantieren*:

(26c) *Wir garantieren, dass jeder Anruf innerhalb von 50 Sekunden abgewickelt wird.*

It is therefore not possible to substitute for the matrix verbum dicendi *garantiert* a speech-act neutral verbum dicendi. In (26d) we have substituted *einer Aussendung zufolge* ('according to a statement') for the original *Zwar "garantiert" CLC in einer Aussendung* and accordingly replaced the reportative subjunctive with an indicative:

(26d) *Einer Aussendung zufolge* wird "jeder Anruf innerhalb von 50 Sekunden abgewickelt".

The hearer of (26d) cannot understand CLC to have *guaranteed* that they will deal with all calls within 50 seconds. (26d) therefore cannot be said to constitute a faithful report of an original utterance that must have resembled (26c). However, it appears

that it *is* possible to move the matrix *verbum dicendi* to a position after or within the embedded proposition:

(26e) “Jeder Anruf” **werde** “*innerhalb von 50 Sekunden abgewickelt*”, “garantiert”  
CLC in einer Aussendung.

We propose that this is possible because the embedded proposition, in (26f) below:

(26f) *Jeder Anruf wird innerhalb von 50 Sekunden abgewickelt.*

is itself *discourse-new* in the host discourse. Birner (2004) defines discourse-new information as ‘[...] that which has not been previously evoked’ whilst discourse-old information is ‘[...] that which has been explicitly evoked in the prior discourse (or its situational context [...])’ (2004: 45). Thus the hearer of (26e) is able to derive adequate positive cognitive effects (albeit ones not associated with a guarantee) from the embedded proposition alone. The effect of postposing the matrix clause is possibly to reduce the force of the guarantee a little, but not so much that the notion that the original speaker guaranteed the truth of the embedded proposition is no longer understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the original utterance. These considerations corroborate our claim that the speech act of guaranteeing reported in (26a) is of the communicated variety.

What sort of attitude is implied contextually towards the reported speech act of guaranteeing in (26a)? The hearer is not able to infer contextually a specific reporter attitude to some of the facts reported in the first paragraph of (26a), neither is he prompted to supply, on the level of mental representation, the instance of reported speech with a *verbum dicendi* which indicates the reporter’s degree of commitment to the reported proposition. Thus these facts, i.e. the notion that around 40 employees currently work at CLC and that a further 150 telephonists are being recruited, are reported impartially. However, the notion that CLC plans to be able to deal with 20% of calls to directory enquiries by the following year, which is reported using direct speech, is described as ‘ambitious’ (*ehrgeizig*); the reporter attitude that the hearer will recover towards this aim, which is reported as direct speech, is thus one of slight scepticism.

An attitude of scepticism is also implied contextually towards the report of the guarantee. The guarantee is reported as mixed direct/indirect speech, significantly with a reportative subjunctive finite verb: because of this we shall treat it as indirect speech. Importantly, the guarantee is followed by the claim that the CLC has not

been able to fulfil it. There are no contextual features which prompt the hearer to infer that this claim, which is presented as indirect speech attributed to the manager of CLC, is untrue. Therefore the reporter attitude towards the guarantee which the hearer will infer will be one whereby the original speech act of guaranteeing is not held to have been entirely sincere.

In the case of the report of the speech act of *agreeing*, the matrix subject is often presented as agreeing with an assumption which is discourse-old in the host discourse, since the host discourse provides the clue as to whether a given proposition (the proposition with which the matrix subject agrees) is assumed to be already known. In such cases the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have resided not in the proposition represented by the subordinate clause of the reported version, but in the original speech act, which the *verbum dicendi* reports. In other words, it is not *P* that is reported (*P* is already (assumed to be) known), but that the original speaker *agrees* that *P* is the case. Agreeing, like guaranteeing, is a communicated speech act. Our example is (27a):

(27a) [CONTEXT] Klingebiel: "We can do only what is most necessary, not what is desirable." [...] Despite its good transport links, Salzgitter is almost bottom of the league in comparison with other commercial settlements. How should we create the conditions that will encourage businesses to settle and remain here?" In particular, he says, marketing must be improved. He also says that the town's low investment ratio is obvious because of the poor budgetary position. Michael Jakubke, who manages the economic development of the town, is proud that Salzgitter is much more productive than towns such as Braunschweig, and he says that incomes are also higher. The registration and deregistration of businesses must be considered over a longer period of time than was the case in the study. "There are fluctuations. We are making a great effort to encourage entrepreneurs."<sup>124</sup>

*Jakube stimmt zu, dass mehr Marketing gemacht werden **müsse**.*

Jakube agrees SP that more marketing done become must.S1

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<sup>124</sup> *Klingebiel: "Wir können nur das notwendigste [sic.] tun, nicht das Wünschenswerte." [...] "Salzgitter ist trotz seiner guten Verkehrsanbindung beinahe Schlusslicht bei den Gewerbeansiedlungen. Wie schaffen wir die Voraussetzungen, dass sich Betriebe ansiedeln und halten?" Insbesondere das Marketing müsse verbessert werden. Die niedrige städtische Investitionsquote liege wegen der schlechten Haushaltslage auf der Hand. Michael Jakubke, Geschäftsführer der städtischen Wirtschaftsförderung (Wis), ist stolz, dass Salzgitter viel produktiver sei als beispielsweise Braunschweig, auch die Einkommen seien höher. Die Gewerbe- und abmeldungen müsse man über einen längeren Zeitraum als in der Studie betrachten: „Da gibt es Schwankungen. Wir geben uns alle Mühe, Existenzgründer zu fördern.“*

*“Doch das kostet Geld.”*

but that costs money

‘Jakube agrees that more marketing must be done. “But that costs money.”’

(*Braunschweiger Zeitung*: 16.11.2006)

The hearer will recover the basic explicature in (27b):

(27b) {**Jakubke sagt**}, er **stimme** zu, dass mehr Marketing gemacht werden **müsse**.

Towards the beginning of this text Klingebiel is reported as remarking that ‘marketing must be improved’ (*Das Marketing muss verbessert werden*). Consequently, when it is reported that Jakubke agrees that ‘more marketing must be done’, it is not the proposition in (27c) that in the purported original context must have satisfied the hearer’s expectation of optimal relevance; this proposition is already discourse-old, at least in the host discourse:

(27c) *Mehr Marketing muss gemacht werden.*

Rather, the original hearer’s expectation of optimal relevance must have been satisfied by the purported original utterance in (27d):

(27d) *Ich stimme zu, dass mehr Marketing gemacht werden muss.*

Whilst the reportative subjunctive has the effect of blocking the interpretation on which the matrix verb *zustimmen* must be understood to presuppose that *mehr Marketing muss gemacht werden*, the fact that this latter proposition is discourse-old in the host discourse means that the hearer will recover inferentially an interpretation on which it *is* presupposed. Furthermore, since this proposition is discourse-old, it seems that it would be pragmatically odd in the context of (27a) as a whole to postpose the matrix verbum dicendi:

(27e) ? *Mehr Marketing **müsse** gemacht werden, stimmt Jakubke zu.*

This is because the hearer reads the preposed embedded proposition as though it were discourse-new, although it is already manifest to him. It is only subsequently

that he reads *stimmt Jakobke zu* and his expectation of optimal relevance is satisfied.

In (27a) it would also be inappropriate to substitute for the matrix *Jakubke stimmt zu* a speech-act neutral *verbum dicendi* in either preposed or postposed position. This would cause the notion that Jakobke *agrees* that more marketing must be done to be forfeited in the report completely, and in so doing would result in a discourse-old proposition being reported as though it were discourse-new:

(27f) *Jakubke sagt, dass mehr Marketing gemacht werden **müsse**.*

This brings us to a discussion of the attitude which is implied contextually towards the reported speech act of agreeing in (27a). If a specific reporter attitude were implied contextually towards this indirect speech, then this would likely depend on the reporter's opinion of the embedded proposition, i.e. the object of agreement. If the reporter herself agreed that more marketing must be done, then the attitude contextually implied towards the reported speech act would be one of endorsement. On the other hand, a negative attitude, such as one of disapproval, would be implied contextually if the reporter appeared not to agree with the subordinate proposition.

In practice, the reporting is impartial: the example consists entirely of indirect, reported and direct speech. The first instance of direct speech is accompanied by no *verbum dicendi*, merely the name of the speaker and a colon. There are then a number of sentences which constitute reported speech whose ellipsed subordinate clauses must be supplied on the level of mental representation; no indication is given as to the nature of the intended *verba dicendi*. In this context, the attitude which is contextually implied to the reported speech act of agreeing is also non-specific: it is reported objectively.

#### 5.4.4 *The report of speech acts of denial*

The third question which this study seeks to address is the frequent occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in clauses which are embedded under what we have referred to as verbs of denial. Examples are *ableugnen*, *abstreiten*, *bestreiten*, *dementieren*, *leugnen* and *verneinen*, each of which corresponds in some sense to English 'deny':

In Chapter 2, section 2.2.9 we suggested that the occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in such contexts is arguably unexpected because the

relationship between the matrix verb and the embedded proposition is (at first glance) not the same as the equivalent relationship when the matrix verb is, for example, a neutral verbum dicendi such as *berichten*. Consequently, whilst (28a) constitutes a plausible report of (28b), (29a) does not report (29b):

(28a) *Der «SonntagsBlick» berichtete in seiner letzten Ausgabe, dass der*  
The *SonntagsBlick* reported in its latest edition that the

*neue Zug aber noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden sei.*  
new train but yet at all not sufficient tested become is.S1

‘The *SonntagsBlick* reported in its latest edition that the new train has not yet been sufficiently tested at all.’

(*Die Südostschweiz*: 09.06.2009)

(28b) *Der neue Zug ist noch gar nicht ausreichend getestet worden.*

(29a) *Uhde verneint aber, dass eine Prüfung der Räume durch die*  
Uhde denies but that a check of the rooms through the

*Heimaufsicht der Stadt stattgefunden habe.*  
home supervision of the town took place have.S1

‘But Uhde denies that the rooms have been checked by the local authority.’

(*Braunschweiger Zeitung*: 26.02.2009)

(29b) *Eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt hat stattgefunden.*

In section 2.3.5 we considered Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø’s (2004) approach to instances of the German reportative subjunctive when embedded under verbs of denial. We showed their analysis to be inadequate since it is predicated on the view that the subjunctive carries a reportative presupposition, the notion of which, we argued, incorrectly predicts the distribution of reportative-subjunctive forms. For example, Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø’s analysis apparently ignores the fact that the subjunctive is employed in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial primarily in contexts of report. Additionally it incorrectly predicts that

structures such as \**Ich bestreite, dass das Gemälde eine Fälschung sei* ('I deny that the painting is a forgery') should be grammatically acceptable.

However, in this subsection we argue that cases where the reportative subjunctive is embedded under a verb of denial should be properly analyzed in exactly the same terms as reported communicated speech acts. As in the case of reported communicated speech acts, it is not the embedded proposition alone in which the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted, but in a combination of the original speech act, reported by the *verbum dicendi*, and the embedded clause. Therefore, when the reportative subjunctive is embedded under a verb of denial, the hearer will recover a(n) (additional) *verbum-dicendi* matrix clause on the level of basic explicature which reflects the fact that the matrix verb itself reports part of the purported original utterance:

(29c) {**Uhde sagte**}, er **verneine**, dass eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht stattgefunden **habe**.

As a result of the embedded subjunctive, (29a) may be understood as an indirect-speech report of an utterance which resembles (29d) in terms of its propositional form. *Uhde verneint* reports the purported original performative *ich verneine*:

(29d) *Ich verneine, dass eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt stattgefunden hat.*

But a performative such as *ich verneine* or *ich leugne ab* does not have to be included in order to deny a proposition. This is because a speaker can be understood to perform the speech act of denying in a non-communicated sense if she simply states that such-and-such is not the case. For example, in a given context (29e) with its negated finite verb may achieve optimal relevance as a speech act of denial: the speaker does not need to state specifically, i.e. by using a performative, that she denies the proposition in question. It could therefore be understood as an alternative original utterance which (29a) purports to report:

(29e) *Eine Prüfung der Räume durch die Heimaufsicht der Stadt hat nicht stattgefunden.*

If the reporter implies contextually a specific attitude to the reported utterance, then this, as in the case of the report of communicated speech acts, will concern the speech act reported rather than the embedded proposition. As a fully contextualized example of indirect speech whose verbum dicendi is a verb of denial we provide (30a):

(30a) [CONTEXT] A pregnant woman has been killed in an illegal motor race, in which she was not involved, in Frankfurt. Another woman was injured. Now both drivers involved are having to answer before Frankfurt district court. [...] At the beginning of the trial, the driver of the car that caused the accident said that he could not remember anything.<sup>125</sup>

*Der Mitangeklagte bestritt, dass er sich mit dem Techniker ein*  
the co-defendant denied that he himself with the technician a

*Wettrennen geliefert **habe**. Zeugen bestätigten jedoch die*  
race delivered has.S1 witnesses confirmed however the

*Version der Anklage.*  
version of the prosecution

‘The co-defendant denied that he had had a race with the technician.  
However witnesses confirmed the version of the prosecution.’

(*Rhein-Zeitung*: 19/03/2009)

The purported original utterance must have resembled (30b) or maybe (30c) in terms of its propositional content:

(30b) *Ich bestreite, dass ich mir mit dem Techniker ein Wettrennen geliefert habe.*

(30c) *Ich habe mir nicht ein Wettrennen mit dem Techniker geliefert.*

Since the negative element, which is ‘incorporated’ into the verbum dicendi *bestritt* in (30a), is an indispensable component of the proposition in which the main relevance of the original utterance resided, regardless of whether it resembled (30b)

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<sup>125</sup> *Bei einem illegalen Autorennen in Frankfurt ist eine unbeteiligte Schwangere ums Leben gekommen und eine andere Frau schwer verletzt worden: Nun müssen sich die beiden beteiligten Autofahrer vor dem Amtsgericht Frankfurt verantworten. [...] Zum Prozessauftakt sagte der Unfallfahrer, er könne sich an nichts mehr erinnern.*

or (30c) more closely, the matrix clause of (30a) is unlikely to be postposed. Hence (30d) is pragmatically improbable:<sup>126</sup>

(30d) ? *Er **habe** sich mit dem Techniker ein Wettrennen geliefert, bestritt der Mitangeklagte.*

It is, of course, impossible to substitute a neutral verb for a matrix verb of denial without reversing the polarity of the reported utterance. (30a) cannot be reported as (30e) in which we have used *teilte mit* ('informed' or 'reported'):<sup>127</sup>

(30e) *Der Mitangeklagte teilte mit, dass er sich mit dem Techniker ein Wettrennen geliefert **habe**.*

This brings us to a discussion of the attitude which is contextually implied towards the reported speech act of denial. The first two sentences are impartial in tone; they simply state some facts. However, in the third sentence, one of the defendants says that he does not remember anything about the incident. Claiming a memory lapse in judicial situations is arguably a cliché, and provided that the assumption in (30f) is mutually manifest, implies that the defendant is being untruthful:

(30f) People who claim not to remember certain facts in court have something to hide.

The following sentence includes the reported speech act of denial. In the context of the defendant's convenient attack of amnesia, it seems likely that the co-defendant is being less than honest in denying that they were racing. Our suspicions

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<sup>126</sup> It is, however, possible to postpose the matrix clause in non-indirect-speech contexts with an indicative, where *dass* must be included, e.g. *Dass er sich mit dem Techniker ein Wettrennen geliefert **hat**, bestritt der Mitangeklagte*. In this case, that the co-defendant had a race with the technician is presupposed, either in the sense of Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 41) or, following Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø (2004: 232-233), it is presupposed that someone else has *uttered* the embedded proposition. (It will be remembered that for Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø it is the notion that someone else has uttered the embedded proposition that satisfies the reportative presupposition that they believe the reportative subjunctive to carry. The fact that we find the notion of this *reportative presupposition* untenable is not inconsistent with the possibility of it being presupposed that someone else has uttered the subordinate proposition.) In our view, the reportative subjunctive has the effect of blocking not only Huddleston and Pullum's presupposition, but also that of Fabricius-Hansen and Sæbø, i.e. the very presupposition which for the latter authority motivates the subjunctive. However, interpretations on which either type of presupposition is present may still be recovered inferentially.

<sup>127</sup> It is of course possible to employ a neutral verbum dicendi and reverse the polarity of the embedded clause, in this case by adding *nicht* ('not'): *Der Mitangeklagte teilte mit, dass er sich nicht mit dem Techniker ein Wettrennen geliefert **habe***. However, the extent to which such an utterance is truly comparable with (30a) is questionable.

are largely corroborated in the last sentence where we are informed that witnesses have confirmed the defendants' involvement in the alleged incident. Thus the hearer will contextually infer that the reporter believes that the *Mitangeklagter* did not perform the original speech act of denial sincerely, the subjunctive being compatible with this attitude.

Ultimately, a reported speech act of denial strongly resembles any reported communicated speech act: the main relevance of the original utterance is understood to have consisted in what is presented in the reported version as a combination of the matrix *verbum dicendi* and embedded proposition. Consequently, any reporter attitude which the reportative subjunctive plays a role in encouraging the hearer to infer will concern not the extent to which the embedded proposition is considered to be true, but the performance of the original speech act, for example the extent to which the original speaker is considered to have performed the original speech sincerely.

## 5.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter we have examined another aspect of the German reportative subjunctive as a marker of interpretive use: the circumstance that, like Sissala *ré* and Japanese *tte*, it is compatible with any reporter attitude towards the reported proposition, which latter is ultimately recovered on the basis of context. But, importantly, we have also suggested that it is essential to understand precisely what is understood to be attributed to the original speaker, represented in indirect speech by the matrix subject. On the one hand, the embedded proposition may alone be understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. We referred to such indirect speech as type A indirect speech. If the reporter implies a particular attitude towards the embedded proposition, then this attitude will concern whether the embedded proposition is true or false, or plausible in the case of an opinion. On the other hand, the assumption represented by the matrix clause may also constitute part of what is reported. In other words, the subjunctive may have scope over the matrix *verbum dicendi* as well as the subordinate proposition.

When it is both an assumption reported by the matrix verb and the embedded proposition which are understood to be attributed to the original speaker, the indirect speech will be understood in one of two ways. The matrix *verbum dicendi* may report a higher-level explication of the original utterance which is not understood to have contributed to the main relevance of the purported original

utterance (type B indirect speech). This is the case when the matrix verb reports a non-communicated speech act or a propositional attitude. In such cases, the reporter may imply contextually an attitude not only towards the embedded proposition, but also towards the higher-level explicature which is reported by the matrix *verbum dicendi*. This latter attitude will concern the extent to which the reporter considers the embedded proposition to be, for example, justifiably associated with the attendant non-communicated speech act or propositional attitude.

Alternatively, the matrix *verbum dicendi* may report an explicature of the purported original utterance which is understood to have contributed to its main relevance (type C indirect speech); this is the case when communicated speech acts, including speech acts of denial, are reported. In such cases, if a specific reporter attitude is contextually implied then this will concern primarily the extent to which the reported communicated speech act is considered to have been performed sincerely or, the extent to which the reporter endorses the performance of the purported original speech act.

We ended the chapter by considering cases where the reportative subjunctive is embedded under verbs of denial. We argued that such occurrences are to be analyzed in exactly the same terms as reported communicated speech acts.

## Conclusion

### 6.1 The German reportative subjunctive imposes a *single* relevance constraint

The five research questions which this study ultimately sought to address were as follows. Firstly, what is the essential semantic difference between the indicative and the reportative subjunctive? How do we account for the consistent association of the reportative subjunctive with indirect speech which displays the property indirectness? Secondly, how do we account for the fact that the subjunctive may be embedded under some factive verbs such that they are understood to introduce indirect speech which exhibits indirectness? These verbs include behabitives, such as *kritisieren* ('criticize') and verbs of emotional attitude, such as *bedauern* ('regret'). Thirdly, how do we account for the occurrence of the reportative subjunctive in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial? Fourthly, in the case of reported speech, how does the hearer identify and construct the ellipsed matrix clause that he is required to supply on the level of mental representation? Finally, how do we account for the fact that the German reportative subjunctive is compatible with any attitude that the reporter may hold towards a reported proposition?

This study has shown that the single relevance constraint imposed by the feature  $I[t^1]$  of the German reportative subjunctive, whose function is simply to ensure that an utterance is understood as an instance of what we have described as *prototypical* German indirect speech, allows us to provide satisfactory answers to all these questions. The description of prototypical indirect speech that we provided in Chapter 4, section 4.2.1, was as follows:

- (i) Prototypical indirect speech consists of a matrix clause and a subordinate proposition which latter in German may or may not be introduced by *dass*.
- (ii) Pronominal deixis must be selected from the point of view of the reporter. The tense of the embedded verb must be chosen from the point of view of  $t^1$ . Other deixis may be selected from the point of view of the original speaker.

- (iii) Prototypical indirect speech must exhibit the property indirectness. Therefore the reported proposition will not be understood to be presupposed.

This constraint has the effect of blocking interpretations which conflict with prototypical indirect speech (characterized by indirectness), such as ones on which the reported proposition is presupposed. Thanks to this particular facet of the constraint, the interpretation of certain essentially factive verbs, such as *kritisieren* ('criticize') and *bedauern* ('regret'), is constrained such that they are understood to introduce prototypical indirect speech. Thus, we have a solution to the first two of our research questions: prototypical indirect speech is characterized by non-presupposition of the subordinate proposition, and the subjunctive ensures that the reported proposition is understood not to be presupposed.

The matrix verb itself often reports part of the original utterance, for instance a speech act, and in such cases an effect of the reportative subjunctive is to ensure that the indirect-speech construction as a whole, i.e. both the matrix and subordinate clauses combined, are understood to be embedded under a still higher matrix *verbum-dicendi* clause which the hearer must supply inferentially. Like the matrix clause which is mentally constructed in the case of reported speech, this clause contributes to basic explicature. Hence a hearer will understand (1a) as (1b):

- (1a) *Bei der Gründung versprach Erdoğan, die neue Partei werde demokratischer sein.*
- (1b) *{Erdoğan sagte bei der Gründung}, er verspreche, die neue Partei werde demokratischer sein.*

Additionally, the constraint in question *insists* that the tenses of the subjunctive be understood in relation to  $t^1$ , and this has the effect of ensuring that in the case of reported speech the requisite matrix clause is constructed, as a basic explicature, on the level of mental representation. The construction of this ellipsed clause formed the focus of our fourth question. The hearer is required to identify a temporal value for the feature  $I[t^1]$ , so that it is clear how  $t^1$  relates to  $t^0$ . Once this value has been identified,  $I[t^1]$  is then developed via pragmatically constrained inference into a fully determinate matrix clause under which the reportative-subjunctive form must be understood to be embedded on the level of basic explicature.

The construction of this matrix clause is principally a pragmatic process. Pragmatics also plays a role in the identification of the interpretive stance that the

reporter holds towards a reported utterance (our fifth research question), inferring whether a reported speech act is understood as a reported communicated or non-communicated act and, to some extent, inferring whether or not the matrix verb itself is understood to report part of the original utterance. However, the need to resolve these indeterminacies arises directly from the reportative subjunctive's function of ensuring that an utterance is understood as prototypical indirect speech. Significantly, relevance theory is capable of explaining in cognitively plausible terms the lines along which these pragmatic processes proceed,

Finally, the fact that the German reportative subjunctive frequently occurs in clauses which are subordinate to verbs of denial can be attributed to the nature of the feature I[t<sup>1</sup>]. As in the case of the report of communicated speech acts, the subjunctive ensures that the matrix verb and embedded proposition *combined* are understood as the report of an original utterance. In doing so, the subjunctive blocks interpretations on which the embedded proposition is understood to be (logically) presupposed, whilst ensuring that the indirect-speech construction as a whole is understood to be embedded under a matrix *verbum dicendi* on the level of the proposition expressed. Thus we have an adequate solution to our third research question.

Ultimately, the German reportative subjunctive is an interpretive use marker which is restricted to a specific type of interpretive use: indirect speech. Like interpretive use markers in other languages it encodes procedural meaning: it constrains the inferential computations that a hearer performs over those conceptual representations which are delivered by linguistic decoding and whose constituents are said to encode conceptual meaning. The result is that an utterance with a finite verb in the reportative subjunctive can be understood *only* as indirect (or reported) speech. However, there is a fundamental difference between the German reportative subjunctive and markers of interpretive use in other languages such as Japanese and Sissala, in addition to the fact that the subjunctive has a much more restricted use. Whilst the Japanese particle *tte* (Itani 1991, 1998) and the Sissala *ré* (Blass 1989, 1990) make their contribution on the level of higher-level explicature, we have shown in this study that the reportative subjunctive contributes to the construction of a *basic* explicature, both in the case of reported speech and when a speech act or propositional attitude is reported, as in example (1b) above. Significantly, we showed in Chapter 2 that the modal verbs *sollen* ('should') and *wollen* ('want') also function on the level of basic explicature in their evidential functions.

## 6.2 Implications of our conclusions and recommendations for further research

In our view, our claims have implications within relevance theory for the analysis of interpretive use markers in other languages on the one hand and the wider study of indirect speech cross-linguistically on the other.

As an interpretive use marker which is associated only with indirect speech, the German reportative subjunctive is much more restricted in use than, say, the Japanese interpretive use marker *tte* or the Sissala marker *rɛ́*. However, we hypothesize that the pragmatic effect of the subjunctive is similar to that of *tte* and *rɛ́* in indirect-speech-type constructions, where these particles have the function of a complementizer. An example from Sissala, previously used in Chapter 3 section 3.4.5:

(2) *Ba se rí ba yálá há kúé make doŋ pine weri*  
they said *rɛ́* their aunt who has-come show sleep lying well

*pa wo.*  
give them

‘They said that their aunt who has come will show them how to sleep properly.’

We leave it to future research to ascertain whether these particles have in such constructions the effect of blocking interpretations on which a reported proposition is presupposed, i.e. whether in a specific syntactic environment these particles become associated with a specific prototype of indirect speech (or an indirect-speech-type construction). Future research could also investigate whether, in cases where the reporting verb itself reports part of the original utterance, the hearer may recover a matrix clause which corresponds to that in (1b) above on the level of mental representation. Furthermore, the notion that *tte* and *rɛ́* are plausibly used to imply the reporter’s attitude towards any original speech act (as well as the complement proposition), in the sense that they are compatible with any attitude, suggests that across languages the question of the attitudes which are implied towards a reported proposition is arguably more complex than has thus far been acknowledged in the literature.

The German-specific prototype of indirect speech with which the reportative subjunctive is associated differs quite considerably from German indirect speech

with an indicative and indirect speech in languages such as English and Russian which employ the indicative in both direct and indirect speech. Whilst English and Russian indirect speech is syntactically comparable to the corresponding German construction with a subjunctive, it is clearly not the case that potential interpretations on which a given embedded proposition is presupposed are blocked in indirect speech. Compare the German (with an indicative), English and Russian examples below ((3a), (3b) and (3c)), which presuppose (3e), with the subjunctive German version (3d) which does not (although such an interpretation may be recovered pragmatically):

(3a) *Mein Bruder sagte, dass er **bedauert**, dass er das Jobangebot nicht angenommen **hat**.*

(3b) My brother said he regretted that he did not accept the job offer.

(3c) *Moj brat skazal, čto **žaleet**, čto ne prinjal predloženie*  
My brother said that regrets that not accepted offer

*o rabote.*  
about work

(3d) *Mein Bruder sagte, er **bedauere**, dass er das Jobangebot nicht angenommen **habe**.*

(3e) My brother did not accept the job offer.

These considerations provide evidence that indirect speech in English and Russian as well as indicative indirect speech in German is less homogeneous than German reportative-subjunctive indirect speech. These considerations also raise the question of whether a wider, typological programme of research into indirect speech and indirect-speech-type constructions may be worthwhile. Such research would need to consider not just the syntactic make-up of such constructions, but would also consider questions relating to presupposition, the attitudes which may be semantically encoded or pragmatically implied towards a reported proposition and, if conducted from a relevance-theoretic perspective, the role of interpretive use markers.

Other issues which remain to be clarified concern the distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts. In Chapter 5 we suggested that in cases where the matrix verbum dicendi is speech-act neutral or reports a

propositional attitude or non-communicated speech act, it is possible to move the *verbum dicendi* to a marked, postposed position, e.g. *schließen* ('conclude'), *kritisieren* and *zugeben* ('admit'). Verba dicendi which report communicated acts, on the other hand, either cannot be postposed or cannot be moved without weakening the communicative effect of the reported illocution, e.g. *garantieren* ('guarantee') and *zustimmen* ('agree'). However, further research is in our view required in order to ascertain the extent to which the relevance-theoretic distinction between communicated and non-communicated speech acts truly finds reflection in the positioning of the matrix clause when they are reported. This could also be investigated cross-linguistically within the programme of typological research suggested above (though bearing in mind that the position of the matrix clause does not display flexibility in all languages). If it should turn out to be a widespread phenomenon that the potential positions of the matrix verb within indirect speech are determined by the type of illocution which it reports, then this would further corroborate the distinction that relevance theory draws between communicated and non-communicated acts.

This study has not considered the question of reported interrogatives and imperatives. According to Wilson and Sperber (2004: 623) the higher-level explicature communicated by (4a) is (4b):

- (4a) Will you pay back the money by Tuesday?  
 (4b) {**Andrew is asking Jennifer whether**} she will pay back the money by Tuesday.

Obviously, Jennifer *must* understand (4a) as a question, in other words she *must* recover (4b). Thus it follows that if we transpose (4a) into indirect speech, not only the proposition 'Jennifer will pay back the money by Tuesday' is understood to be attributed to Andrew, the original speech act of asking is as well:

- (4c) Andrew asked Jennifer whether she would pay back the money by Tuesday.

Or in German:

- (4d) *Andrew fragte Jennifer, ob sie ihm das Geld bis Montag*  
 Andrew asked Jennifer whether she to him the money until Monday

zurückzahlen **werde/würde/wird**.

pay back will.S1.S2.IND

We hypothesize that any reporter attitude implied contextually will concern the reporter's view of the original question, for example, was it a sensible or justified question?

An analysis of reported imperatives would proceed along similar lines, with the original speech act constituting a crucial part of what is understood to be attributed to the matrix subject. However, unlike the case of interrogatives where there are no communicated and non-communicated speech acts, such an analysis would need to pay attention to this distinction. We hypothesize that one could not be accused of unfaithful reporting if a non-communicated speech act, such as advising, were reported using a neutral verbum dicendi as follows:

- (5) *Der Lehrer sagte ihm, dass er nach Hause gehen **solle**.*  
the teacher said to him that he to house go should.S1

'The teacher told him to go home/said to him that he should go home.'

But communicated acts, such as ordering, need to be reported using a verbum dicendi which reports the specific purported speech act:

- (6) *Der Lehrer befahl ihm, dass er nach Hause gehen **solle**.*  
the teacher ordered to him that he to house go should.S1

'The teacher ordered him to go home.'

We have also not paid attention to the question of the German reportative subjunctive when embedded under a *negated* verbum dicendi. In Chapter 2 we mentioned briefly the distinction which for Thieroff (1992) holds to exist between (7a), with an indicative and (7b), which has the subjunctive form *sei*:

- (7a) *Bild hat nicht geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden **ist**.*  
Bild has not written that the count arrested become is.IND

- (7b) *Bild hat nicht geschrieben, dass der Graf verhaftet worden **sei**.*

In (7a) the focus is on the notion that *Bild* has not reported a presupposed proposition, whilst (7b) should be understood '[...] as a contradiction of the claim that *Bild* has announced the arrest of the count' (Thieroff 1992: 254).

In our own relevance-theoretic terms, (7a) achieves optimal relevance through *contradicting* a specific assumption which the hearer is believed to entertain, namely, that *Bild* has reported that the count has been arrested. It is therefore not to be understood as negated prototypical indirect speech. In cases of negated prototypical indirect speech such as (7b), however, the reported assumption is attributed to the matrix subject in the sense that it is the sort of assumption that one would *expect* the matrix subject at least to entertain and possibly express. The purpose of negated indirect speech is then to make manifest to the hearer that this person, contrary to expectations, does not entertain or has not expressed the assumption concerned, or an assumption that resembles it. For example, (8) might be relevant if Einstein had not made the criticism that Bohr abandoned causality early, yet, in view of all the mutually manifest assumptions about him, one might expect him to have done so:

(8) *Einstein kritisierte nicht, dass Bohr voreilig die Kausalität aufgegeben **habe**.*

Crucial here, in our view, is that the assumptions about the matrix subject, which would prompt one to expect him at least to entertain the assumption concerned, be mutually manifest. In example (9), where a verb of denial is negated, the assumption that one would not expect the original speaker to deny the embedded proposition is made mutually manifest by the subsequent context:

(9) *Sein Verteidiger bestritt nicht, dass mehr Indizien*  
his defence lawyer denied not that more circumstantial evidence

*für die Täterschaft seines Mandanten **sprächen** als für*  
for the guilt of his client speak.S2 than for

*jene der Frau: «Doch blosse Wahrscheinlichkeit genügt nicht*  
that of the woman but mere probability suffices not

*für einen Schuldspruch – es braucht Beweise.»*  
for a guilty verdict it needs proof

‘His defence lawyer did not deny that more pieces of circumstantial evidence suggested the guilt of his client than that of the woman: “But mere probability is not sufficient for a guilty verdict – proof is needed.”

(*St. Galler Tagblatt*: 17.12.2010)

In view of the comment that probability is not enough for a guilty verdict, one might expect the defence lawyer to deny that the evidence suggests that his client might be guilty. But, contrary to this expectation, he does not deny this. Hence the first sentence above is pragmatically felicitous as an instance of negated indirect speech.

We hypothesize that in all cases of negated indirect speech, regardless of the nature of the original speech, the reporter attitude implied will concern whether the reporter considers the original speaker to be justified in not producing or to have good reason not to produce the utterance concerned.

We wish to make two more suggestions for further research. Firstly, as mentioned in Chapter 1, one device that often marks reported discourse is discourse representative adverbials: adverbials which consist of *laut*, *nach* and *zufolge* (‘according to’) followed by the source. These adverbials are discussed in detail in Carlsen (1994). She observes that in the majority of cases these are collocated with the indicative. However, in a very small proportion of cases, the reportative subjunctive occurs. This is most common in relative clauses where either *nach* or *zufolge* is coupled with a pronoun (*laut* does not occur in such constructions), such as *wonach* or *dem zufolge* (example from Carlsen (1994: 467)):

(10) *Scotland Yard dementierte einen Bericht, dem zufolge Experten*  
Scotland Yard denied a report which according to experts

*nach einem Besuch in Sambia deutlich erklärt haben sollen,*  
after a visit in Zambia clear explained have should

*die Sicherheit der Königin könne dort nicht garantiert werden.*  
the safety of the Queen can.S1 there not guaranteed become

‘Scotland Yard denied a report in which, following a visit to Zambia, experts are said to have made clear that the safety of the Queen there cannot be guaranteed.’

(*Süddeutsche Zeitung*: 04.07.1979)

In this case it is very clear that the source of the reported utterance is the report concerned: *dem zufolge* contributes to the proposition expressed, and analysts such as Itani-Kaufmann (1990) and Ifantidou (1993) would maintain that it is truth-conditional. However, the subjunctive does sometimes occur in cases where one of these three prepositions governs a noun phrase (example from Carlsen (1994: 467)):

(11) *Nach wie vor ungelöst bleibe nach Ansicht des*  
 after as before unsolved remains.S1 according to opinion of the

*Ministers die Bedarfs- und Wirtschaftlichkeitsfrage.*  
 minister the demand and question about cost-effectiveness

‘In the opinion of the minister the question of demand and cost-effectiveness still remains unsolved.’

(*Süddeutsche Zeitung*: 30.06.1979)

We suggest that adverbials of the type under discussion are ambiguous between parenthetical and non-parenthetical use when collocated with the indicative. It is true that they indicate the source of the utterance and can thus be a handy device in journalistic writing where there is the risk of litigation if unsubstantiated claims are made. However they cannot necessarily be said to contribute to the main relevance of the utterance, especially if placed in an unstressed sentence position. Whether such an adverbial is understood to be parenthetical or non-parenthetical is ultimately determined by considerations of relevance. We hypothesize that when accompanied by the reportative subjunctive, such adverbials *always* contribute to the main relevance of the utterance, regardless of their positioning in the sentence. This is because examples such as (11) above are, in our view, instances of a type of reported speech: the source of the utterance corresponds to the subject of the matrix clause under which the subjunctive must be understood to be embedded on the level of mental representation. Precisely how  $t^1$  relates to  $t^0$ , i.e. the question as to when the source mentioned in the discourse representative adverbial uttered the reported proposition, is solved pragmatically. Whether we are right requires further investigation.

Finally, we propose a similar analysis for *wie*-clauses, such as *wie ein Sprecher mitteilt* (‘as a spokesperson informs us/announces/makes known’). For Fabricius-Hansen (2006: 534), such clauses are parenthetical and are used to back

up a claim made by the speaker. The example she provides is accompanied by an indicative:

(12) Wie die Thurgauer Polizei mitteilt, **schossen** die Jugendlichen  
as the Thurgau police informed shot.IND the youths

aus Langweile und Übermut auf die vorbeigehende Frau.  
out of boredom and mischief on the passing woman

‘As Thurgau police reported, the youths shot at the passing woman out of boredom and mischief.’

(SZ 1997)

A similar view to that of Fabricius-Hansen is that of Pittner (1993). She considers the subjunctive to occur ‘very rarely’ in the accompanying main clause (1993: 319).<sup>128</sup> On the other hand, Carlsen (1998) considers *wie*-clauses to introduce reported discourse regularly, even when the finite verb in the accompanying clause is an indicative. It seems that some further empirical corpus-based research is required in order to establish the extent to which *wie*-clauses are used to substantiate claims of the speaker on the one hand and to introduce reported discourse on the other. However, Pittner and Carlsen do agree that such clauses always introduce reported discourse when the verb of the accompanying clause is an unambiguous reportative subjunctive form (example from Carlsen (1998: 63)):

(13) Wie die „New York Times“ am Samstag unter Berufung auf  
as the New York Times on the Saturday under appeal on

Regierungsbeamte berichtete, **habe** der Mann die Informationen  
government officials reported has.S1 the man the information

nicht an die amerikanische Botschaftlerin in Guatemala weitergegeben.  
not to the American ambassador in Guatemala passed on

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<sup>128</sup> *sehr selten*

'As the *New York Times* reported on Saturday citing government officials, the man did not pass the information on to the American ambassador to Guatemala.'

(*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*: 31.03.1995)

We hypothesize that in such cases the *wie*-clause is never parenthetical and as such always makes its contribution on the level of the proposition expressed. Importantly, the tense of the *wie*-clause makes explicit the relationship of  $t^1$  to  $t^0$ .

If the hypotheses we have made over these few paragraphs should turn out to be correct, then this will throw even greater weight behind our claim that relevance theory is able to account fully for the various phenomena which characterize the German reportative subjunctive.

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