

Towards a multifactorial analysis of French Subjunctive

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Universidade São Paulo, october 29, 2014

http://www.linguist.univ-paris-diderot.fr/~amsili/talks/slides_Subj_USP2014.pdf

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Joint work with Floriane Guida [2013]

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Subjunctive Mood in French

According to traditional French grammars, subjunctive is used to express (1) that the action is subordinated and (2) that it is subject to a doubt.

[Damar, 2009]

But...

Sometimes this mood appears in matrix sentences

- (1) a. Qu' il parte_{SBJ} !
 That he go
 'Let him go'
- b. Je ne sache_{SBJ} pas que Paul soit_{SBJ} médecin.
 I NEG know NEG that Paul be doctor
 'As far as I know, Paul is not a doctor'

⇒ we won't consider those cases

Subjunctive Mood in French II

According to traditional French grammars, subjunctive is used to express (1) that the action is subordinated and (2) that it is subject to a doubt.

[Damar, 2009]

But...

Many uses of subjunctive do not seem to convey any doubt

- (2)
- a. Paul est surpris qu' il pleuve_{SBJ}.
Paul is surprised that it rain
'Paul is surprised that it's raining'
 - b. Il est heureux qu' il pleuve_{SBJ}.
It is happy that it rain
'It's a good thing that it's raining'
 - c. J'ai attendu qu' il vienne_{SBJ} et je l' ai vu.
I've waited that he come and I him have seen
'I've waited for him to come and I've seen him'

Subjunctive Mood in French III

According to traditional French grammars, subjunctive is used to express (1) that the action is subordinated and (2) that it is subject to a doubt.

[Damar, 2009]

But...

Various obvious cases of doubt are not expressed with subjunctive

- (3) a. J' espère qu' il {vient_{IND}/**vienne*_{SBJ}}.
 I hope that he come
'I hope that he will come'
- b. Je me demande s' il {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} malade.
 I wonder if he be sick
'I wonder whether he is sick'

Subjunctive Mood in French IV

In fact, the distribution of subjunctive mood in French cannot be reduced to its alleged semantic contribution ;
it seems to be largely lexically driven:

- (4) a. souhaiter (*wish*) requires subjunctive mood
- b. espérer (*hope*) requires indicative mood
- (5) a. possible (*possible*) requires subjunctive
- b. probable (*likely*) can be used with indicative

... but some constructions also seem capable of licencing subjunctive.

Three situations

- Subordinations cases:

- Indicative mood is the only option (6a), (7a) ;
- Subjunctive mood is the only option (6b), (7b) ;
- Both moods are possible: those are alternation cases (6c), (7c).

- (6) a. Max est **certain** que Paul {vient_{IND}/***vienne**_{SBJ}}.
Max is certain that Paul come
- b. Tout le monde **souhaite** que Paul {***vient**_{IND}/vienne_{SBJ}}.
Everybody wishes that Paul come
- c. Que Paul {vient_{IND}/vienne_{SBJ}}, Marcel **s'en doute**.
That Paul comes, Marcel suspects it
- (7) a. Claude **croit** que Pierre {est_{IND}/***soit**_{SBJ}} parti.
Clause believes that Pierre has left
- b. Claude **veut** que Pierre {***part**_{IND}/parte_{SBJ}}.
Clause want that Pierre leaves
- c. Claude **ne croit pas** que Pierre {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} parti.
Clause does not believes that Pierre has left

Aims of the work

- empirical study of one alternation case
- possible explanations
- a multifactorial problem

Outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Description of the alternation
 - Phenomenon
 - Explanations
- 3 Completion experiment
 - Protocol
 - Results
- 4 Towards a multi-factorial analysis
 - Possible factors
 - Method

Roadmap

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- Terminology: We call CAN (canonical) contexts like (8a), and NON-AFF (non affirmative) contexts like (8b) or (8c).

- (8)
- Marie croit que sa camarade {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} arrivée
Marie believes that her comrade has arrived
 - Marie ne croit pas que sa camarade {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} arrivée.
Marie does not believe that her comrade has arrived
 - Marie croit-elle que sa camarade {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} arrivée ?
Does Marie believes that her comrade has arrived?

Predicates

- *Modal epistemic predicates* (opinion predicates): verbs *penser*, *croire*, *trouver*, *avoir l'impression*, *estimer*, *considérer...*, adjectives *sûr*, *certain...*
- Simple predicative verbs (*verbes implicatifs simples* according to Mørdrup [1975]) : *démontrer*, *prouver*, *faire que...* (9).

- (9)
- a. Paul a prouvé que la terre {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} ronde.
Paul has proved that the earth is round
 - b. Personne n'a prouvé que la terre {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} ronde.
Noone has proved that the earth is round
 - c. Ces données ont fait que la décision {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} prise.
These data have made that the decision be taken
'These data caused the decision to be taken'
 - d. Ces données n'ont pas fait que la décision {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} prise.
These data didn't cause the decision to be taken

Predicates II

- Factive epistemic predicates like *savoir* (know), semel-factives like *découvrir* (discover), *réaliser* (realize), which require indicative mood, do not give rise to the alternation (10).

(10) a. Jean ne sait pas que Marie {connaît_{IND}/**connaisse*_{SBJ}} le Morbihan.

Jean doesn't know that Marie knows Morbihan

b. Personne n'a réalisé que Max {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} malade.

No one has realized that Max is sick

- No alternation as well for emotive factive predicates like *regretter* (regret) *apprécier* (enjoy), *déplorer*, which (always) require subjunctive mood (11).

(11) a. Tout le monde regrette que Max {**est*_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} malade.
Everybody regrets that Max be sick

b. Personne ne regrette que Max {**est*_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} malade.
Nobody regrets that Max be sick

Predicates III

- ⇒ Non homogeneous class of predicates
- even with respect to alternation contexts
(completive under negation \neq extraposed completive)

- Factivity :

(12) Alix ne se souvient pas que Luc {fait_{IND}/fasse_{SBJ}} partie du groupe.

Alix does not remember that Luc be member of the group

- ⇒ ... not a relevant criterion to characterize alternating predicates

Tenses

SBJ	IND	
pres	pres	(13a)
	futur	(13b)
	imparfait	(13c)
passé	pass. compos.	(13d)
imparfait ¹	imparfait	(13e)

- (13)
- Jean ne croit pas que Max {fait_{IND-PRES}/fasse_{SBJ-PRES}} ça.
 - Jean ne croit pas que Max {fera_{IND-FUT}/fasse_{SBJ-PRES}} ça.
 - Jean ne croyait pas que Max {faisait_{IND-IMP}/fasse_{SBJ-PRES}} ça.
 - Jean ne croit pas que Claude {a_{IND-PRES}/ait_{SBJ-PAS}} fait ça.
 - Jean ne croyait pas que Max {faisait_{IND-IMP}/fisse_{SBJ-IMP}} ça.

⇒ High dependancy to the context

¹Archaic

Contexts

- Adverbial negation with *pas* ; but also with the other *semi-négations* [Muller, 1991].

(14) Max ne croit pas que Claude {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
Max doesn't believe that Claude be dishonest

(15) a. Personne ne croit que Claude {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
No one believes that Claude be dishonest

b. Rien ne permet de penser que Claude {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
Nothing allows (us) to think that Claude be dishonest

c. Une mère n'a jamais l'impression que son enfant {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
A mother never has the feeling that her child be dishonest

d. Marc ne pense plus que Claude {est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ}} méchant.
Marc doesn't think anymore that Claude be mean

- The alternation can be triggered even when negation doesn't bear directly on the embedding verb (15b), (16)

- (16)
- Max pense que Claude {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
 - Max **ne** pense **pas** que Claude {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
Max (doesn't) think(s) that Claude be dishonest
 - Cette histoire me fait penser que Claude {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
 - Cette histoire **ne** me fait **pas** penser que Claude {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
This story (doesn't) make(s) me think that Claude be dishonest
 - Tout le monde dit que cette histoire me fait penser que Claude {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
 - Personne ne** dit que cette histoire me {fait_{IND}/*fasse*_{SBJ}} penser que Claude {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} malhonnête.
Every/No -body says that this story makes me think that Claude be dishonest

Neg-raising

- *neg-raising* interpretation [Prince, 1976], according to which the form (17a) is semantically interpreted as (17b):

- (17) a. Max ne trouve pas qu'il faille_{SBJ} investir d'argent.
Max doesn't find that one have to invest money
- b. = Max trouve qu'il ne faut pas investir d'argent.
Max finds that one doesn't have to invest money

- Connexion between *neg-raising* and alternation?

⇒ No: *neg-raising* can also be found with predicates that do not give rise to the alternation indicatif/subjonctif, for instance the verb *vouloir* (want) which requires subjunctive in all cases cas (18)

- (18) a. Paul ne veut pas que Jean s'en {*va_{IND}/aille_{SBJ}}.
Paul doesn't want that Jean go away
- b. = Paul veut que Jean ne s'en aille pas.
Paul wants that Jean doesn't go away

Neg-raising (II)

⇒ Besides, all opinion predicates do not give rise to a *neg-raising* interpretation. Thus, (19a) is not by default interpreted as in (19b).

- (19) a. Il n'est pas certain que Jean {ment_{IND}/mente_{SBJ}}.
It is not certain that Jean be lying
- b. ≠ Il est certain que Jean ne ment pas.
It is certain that Jean be not lying

Interrogation

- According to some authors [Huot, 1986; Togeby, 1966], two forms favor the alternation:
 - interrogative contexts with clitic inversion (20a)
 - interro-negative contexts (without clitic inversion) (20e)

- (20)
- a. Crois-tu que Marie soit venue ?
Believe-you that Marie be come?
'Do you believe that Marie came'
 - b. *Le directeur croit que Jean soit un bon joueur de tennis ?
[Huot, 1986]
 - c. *Est-ce que le directeur croit que Jean soit un bon joueur de tennis ?
(Ibid.)
 - d. ?Le directeur croit-il que Jean soit un bon joueur de tennis ?
(Ibid.)
Does the director believe that Jean be a good tennis player
 - e. Tu ne crois pas que Jean soit un bon candidat ?
You don't think that Jean be a good candidate?
(Ibid.)

Interrogation

- But it is relatively easy to find exceptions in corpora:

(21) a. On est sûr que ce soit lui au moins ?

We are sure that it be him at least

(France Inter, 13/03/2013)

b. *Tu es sûr que ce soit lui ?

c. Ça ne me dit pas quand on est sûr que ce soit Lui avec qui on aimerait finir sa vie ?

It doesn't tell when we are sure that it be him with whom we'd like to end our live

(forum forum.aufeminin.com, mars 2014)

- Subjunctive strongly limited in partial interrogations

(22) ?Qui croit que Jean soit un bon candidat ?

[Huot, 1986]

Who believes that Jean be a good candidate

⇒ A study remains to be made about the influence of these various factors

Distribution

- traditional grammars, more or less prescriptivist: subjunctive is the normal mode
- sociolinguistic studies : all tend to conclude that subjunctive is more or less abandoned:
 - sociolinguistic study from [Poplack, 1990, p. 22] (spoken French in Ottawa region) : « *les verbes d'opinion au négatif, qui cumulent avec les hésitations de l'histoire la condition supplémentaire de ne plus entraîner le subjonctif que lorsque la proposition principale est non-affirmative, défavorisent fortement l'emploi du subjonctif.* »
 - corpus studies Sand [1983] on a corpus of spoken French in several regions of France (Caen and Orléans): very similar conclusion: « *Après ces verbes, employés dans des propositions négatives, on trouve le subjonctif aussi bien que l'indicatif. La tendance à l'indicatif semble être la plus forte.* »
 - same conclusion for Vandergheynst [1982]

Distribution II

⇒ Still to be explored. In any case, one can observe a lack of coherence in current usage:

- (23) a. Si vous jouez ou avez joué aux MMO, pensez vous qu'il y a_{IND} une forme de discrimination positive envers les femmes ?
 (Questionnaire en ligne : « Le sexisme dans les jeux vidéos »)
- b. Si vous jouez ou avez joué aux MMO, pensez vous qu'il y a_{IND} une forme d'exclusion des femmes ? *(Ibid.)*
- c. Pensez vous que le fait d'être une femme est_{IND} un atout ou un inconvénient dans le milieu du jeu vidéo ? *(Ibid.)*
- d. Pensez vous que l'homosexualité ait_{SBJ} sa place dans le monde du jeu vidéo ? *(Ibid.)*
- (24) a. Pensez-vous que la force de la chaîne France 3 soit_{SBJ} sa dimension régionale ?
 (Questionnaire en ligne : « Votre perception de France 3 m'intéresse »)
- b. Pensez-vous que la chaîne met_{IND} en place des moyens pour améliorer son image et pour la rendre plus jeune et attractive ? *(Ibid.)*

Summary

- The subjunctive mood is legitimated in completives of some epistemic predicates by the presence of a negation directly or indirectly bearing on the predicate;
- The indicative mood seems to “resist”, since it is still used in those context, so that we have an alternation.

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Semantic role of subjunctive mood I

- Frequent proposal: subjunctive is expected in NON-AFF contexts: the propositional content is not endorsed by the speaker.

⇒ Relies on a hypothesis of an irrealis *value* of the mood.

- this hypothesis is supported by the behavior of the verb *douter*:

- (25) a. Paul doute que nous { *pouvons_{IND} / puissions_{SBJ} } réussir cette fois.
Paul doubts that we can succeed this time [Godard et al., 2013]
- b. Paul ne doute pas que nous { pouvons_{IND} / puissions_{SBJ} } réussir cette fois.

Semantic role of subjunctive mood II

- Well-known counter-argument: subjunctive is also used in contexts where there is little doubt that the speaker endorses the proposition. (26)

- (26) a. Mais il y a en vérité autre chose chez Jeanne qui explique qu'elle soit_{SBJ} pucelle.
But there is (...) something else in Jeanne that explains that she be a virgin
 (M. Tournier, Gilles et Jeanne, 1983 ; Frantext)
- b. Dommage que tous mes invités ne puissent_{SBJ} pas venir.
(It is a) pity that all my guests can not come

- In addition, the prediction would be that subjunctive be the only available mood: the alternation is not predicted.

Prediction of indicative: “grammaticalized” mood

- Remember: indicative is lexically associated with predicates. The alternation could be the result of a tension:
 - mood lexically associated with the predicate: : indicative ;
 - mood semantically associated with the construction : subjunctive
- Godard [2012] : the indicative mood would be undergoing a grammaticalization process: its association with some predicates has no semantic value, whereas subjunctive remains semantically motivated in NON-AFF contexts.

Prediction of indicative: “grammaticalized” mood II

- Thus there are two possible visions:
 - either subjunctive is motivated semantically, which doesn't predict the presence of indicative in the relevant contexts, and which postulates a specific semantic value for subjunctive, which in turn is questioned by the use of subjunctive in other contexts;
 - either the alternation is the result of a tension between lexical mood and contextual mood, without it corresponding to a semantic difference.
- We tend to prefer the second option, but a number of differences between the two moods are worth investigating...

Negative Polarity Items I

- NON-AFF contexts, since they comprise a negation, are contexts that license NPI, like the preposition *de* with indefinite or temporal meaning, the conjunction *ni*, the locution *lever le petit doigt*, or the expressions *quoi que ce soit*, *le moindre N*, *grand-chose*, etc. [Fauconnier, 1975] :

- (27) a. *Paul croit que Jean a la moindre solution.
 b. Paul ne croit pas que Jean ait la moindre solution.
Paul (doesn't) believe(s) that Jean has the least solution

- But it is interesting to note that the alternation doesn't seem so free when there is an NPI in the context:

Negative Polarity Items II

- (28) Je ne crois pas qu'il y { $*a_{IND}/ait_{SBJ}$ } de différences entre ces deux reproductions.
I don't believe that there be de_{NPI} difference between these two copies
- (29) Je ne pense pas que Fifi { $*a_{IND}/ait_{SBJ}$ } dormi de la nuit.
I don't think that Fifi have slept de_{NPI} (during) the night.
[adapted from Prince [1976]]
- (30) a. Je ne crois pas que des déclarations précises à ce sujet soient_{SBJ} opportunes ni souhaitables.
 (P. Mendès-France, Œuvres complètes (3) Gouverner, c'est choisir. 1954-1955,1986)
- b. ?Je ne crois pas que des déclarations précises à ce sujet sont_{IND} opportunes ni souhaitables.

Negative Polarity Items III

- Not all items seem to carry constraints as strong, as can be seen from the contrast between (31a) and (31b).

(31) a. Le commissaire ne croit pas que le témoin {a_{IND}/ait_{SBJ}} vu quoi que ce soit d'intéressant.

The inspector doesn't believe that the witness have seen anything interesting

b. Le chef ne pense pas que Max {?a_{IND}/ait_{SBJ}} levé le petit doigt pour nous aider.

The boss doesn't think that Max have raised a finger to help us.

- [Prince, 1976, p. 412]: when there is negraising, subjunctive is required, the presence of NPI in the completive is taken as a trace of the neg-raising.

⇒ Question still to be worked out

Negative Polarity Items IV

- Additional difficulty: the difference between *neg-raising* interprétation and *in situ* interprétation is systematically difficult to establish for opinion predicates (32), contrarily to what happens with other negraising verbs like *vouloir* (want) (33).

- (32) a. L'entraîneur n'estime pas que Jean soit prêt.
The coach does not estimate that Jean be ready
- b. =? L'entraîneur estime que Jean n'est pas prêt. [*neg-raising*]
- c. =? Ce n'est pas le cas que l'entraîneur estime que Jean est prêt. [*in situ*]
- (33) a. Le directeur ne veut pas que Jean parte.
The director does not want that Jean leave
- b. = Le directeur veut que Jean ne parte pas. [*neg-raising*]
- c. ≠ Le directeur n'a pas la volonté que Jean parte. [*in situ*]

Negative Polarity Items V

⇒ Indicative mood blocks NPI, what we take as a sign that it prevents neg-raising.

Metalinguistic vs. descriptive negation

- Metalinguistic negation [Horn, 1989]: indicative seems more natural than subjunctive:

- (34) a. Je ne crois pas que Pierre {est_{IND}/**soit*_{SBJ}} grand, mais (qu'il est) immense.
I don't believe that Pierre be tall, but (he is) immense
- b. Je ne crois pas que Pierre {est_{IND}/*soit*_{SBJ}} souple, mais (qu'il est) sportif.
I don't believe that Pierre be flexible, but (he is) athletic

- ⇒ When the interpretation is clearly oriented towards a metalinguistic reading of negation, indicative seems to be preferred.
 This is compatible with a previous observation, since when negation is metalinguistic, there is no *neg-raising*.
- ⇒ Subjunctive operates as a non marked form, in contrast with indicative, which seems compatible with marked uses.

Factive presupposition I

- Correlation with a difference in presupposition
- After some perception semel-factive verbs like *remarquer*, there is a difference with respect to mood:

- (35) a. Sophie n'a pas remarqué que l'actrice a_{IND} fait ce geste sur scène.
 b. Sophie n'a pas remarqué que l'actrice ait_{SBJ} fait ce geste sur scène.
Sophie has not noticed that the actress have made this gesture on stage

Factive presupposition II

- [Schlenker, 2005] proposes to apply this analysis to the case of the verb *nie*, which is normally not factive, but which accepts an alternation (independantly from the polarity of the matrix sentence) (36a).

⇒ Distinction between variants: factive presupposition

- (36) a. Jean nie qu'il {pleut_{IND}/pleuve_{SBJ}} [Schlenker, 2005]
 b. Je nie qu'il {# pleut_{IND}/pleuve_{SBJ}}

⇒ Conclusion (with caution): the indicative mood seems to be the mood that is compatible with factive presupposition.

Summary

- 1 In most cases, and in canonical cases (a subject expresses a belief about a proposition), there is no fundamental difference between the use of indicative or subjunctive.
- 2 However, it seems that some marked situations (no negraising, metalinguistic negation, contextual presence of a presupposition) the indicative mood is clearly preferred, subjunctive being preferred for non marked cases, probably more frequent.

We don't have an explanation for the fact that indicative is associated with markedness, even though we suspect that a diachronic study could be helpful.

- 3 This capacity of indicative mood leads frequently to the idea that it is more apt to convey the idea that the propositional content is endorsed by another individual than the subject of the negative belief. We propose to analyse this interpretative "effect" as the result of a pragmatic computation: the choice of the marked form, in an alternation context, gives rise to the effect, rather than an intrinsic semantic value of the mood.

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Task

- Sentences to be completed in a natural way

(37) Les deux sœurs ne sont pas contentes que leur père (comprendre)
The two sisters are not happy that their father (understand)

Conditions

- Parameters: type of predicate, polarity of the matrix
- Epistemic predicates (V_{IND}) : *croire, penser, (être) certain, avoir l'impression*
- Emotive factive predicates (V_{SBJ}) : *(être) content, (être) surpris, s'étonner, regretter*
- 3 combinaisons (on 4)

V_{SBJ} + positif (POS_Vs) : Les deux sœurs sont contentes que leur père ... (comprendre)

V_{IND} + positif (POS_Vi) : Les deux sœurs sont certaines que leur père ... (comprendre)

V_{SBJ} + négatif (NEG_Vi) : Les deux sœurs ne sont pas certaines que leur père ... (comprendre)

Experiment

- 24 sentences, (every participant sees $8 \times$ each condition) and as many fillers
- Ibex Farm ; participants recruited at the university and on Expériences (RISC)
- 120 questionnaires, 10 participants rejected, and less than 1% of unexploitable items (38)

(38) Jeanne est contente que ses camarades ... (être) ... disent
 être ses amis

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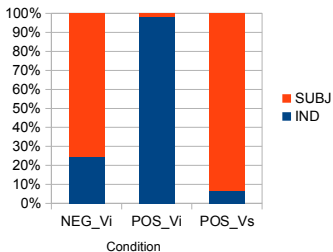
Expectations

- condition $V_{\text{SBJ}} + \text{positif (POS_Vs)}$: always subjunctive.
- condition $V_{\text{IND}} + \text{positif (POS_Vi)}$, always indicative.
- condition $V_{\text{IND}} + \text{négatif (NEG_Vi)}$: target condition of the experiment: according to many authors, we should find subjunctive, that's also what prescriptive grammars say.
But most linguists have noted an alternation, the distribution of which can be measured by the experiment.

Raw results

	IND		SUBJ		
NEG_Vi	155	24,53%	477	75,47%	632
POS_Vi	625	97,96%	13	2,04%	638
POS_Vs	42	6,58%	596	93,42%	638

Comparaison brute IND-SUBJ



Corrected measures

- Not always a fair competition between moods:

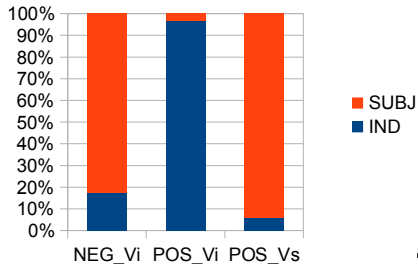
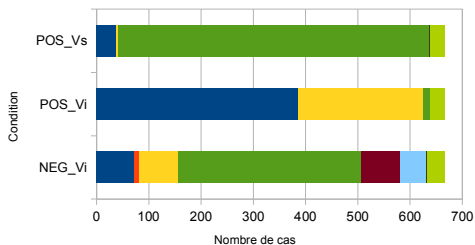
SBJ	IND	
pres	pres	(13a)
	futur	(13b)
	imparfait	(13c)
passé	pass. compos.	(13d)
imparfait ²	imparfait	(13e)

⇒ Need for a more fine-grained annotation

Fine-grained annotation

IND		indicatif présent ou passé composé
IND-TPS		indicatif à un autre temps
SUBJ		subjunctif présent ou passé composé
SUBJ-FUT		subjunctif présent à valeur temporelle future (le subjunctif alterne alors avec les indicatifs futurs). Ce codage sert à noter les subjunctifs qui s'interprètent le plus naturellement avec une valeur 'futur'.
SUBJ-IMP		subjunctif imparfait, disparu en français contemporain courant, employé seulement à deux reprises (et de façon fautive).
SUBJ-SA	ou	la forme utilisée est le semi-auxiliaire <i>devoir</i> ou <i>pouvoir</i> alors que ce n'était pas demandé. On met à part cette catégorie car il se pourrait que ce type de semi-auxiliaire influence l'emploi du subjunctif.
IND-SA		
NULL		Erreur : pas de verbe conjugué, forme ambiguë...

New results



Discussion(s)

- Significant differences between the 3 groups with respect to subjects and to items
- Variables *age*, *social category* : no effect found
- Important variability between subjects, but all subjects produce subjunctive in large quantity, at least in the control condition POS.Vs

Summary

- There is, in contemporary French,
 - a class of predicates for which there is a tension between ind. and subj. moods
 - in NON-AFF contexts.
 - This tension is more often solved in favor of subj. mood which is chosen in 75 to 80% cases,
 - but in a non negligible proportion of cases ind. mood is preferred,
 - and this fact has not received an explanation so far.
- ⇒ The phenomenon is (probably) not categoric but it is not random

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Subject of the matrix verb: person effect?

- [Boysen, 1969]: the first person favors subj.
- search in Frantext:
 - texts from 1970 to now
 - subjunctive massively used with 1st person
 - with 3rd person, data not numerous enough: 7 ind. and 7 subj. are found, leaving aside futur tense
 - 2nd person: not to be found in such corpora in declarative negative context

Sentence type

- What else than declarative sentence type?

⇒ In Frantext, indicative is massive in interro-negative sentences without clitic inversion (30 ind. and no subj.), which take the form of a negative declarative sentence (39). All the instances have a 2nd person subject.

(39) Tu ne crois pas que tu en fais_{IND} un peu trop ?
You don't think that you are making too much fuss
 (G. Dormann, La Petite main, 1993 ; Frantext)

⇒ Imperativ-negative context (still 2nd person) is an alternation context: both moods are used (12 subj. and 6 ind. in Frantext) :

(40) a. Ne crois pas que je sois_{IND} à la recherche de distractions.
Don't believe that I be looking for distractions
 (J.-B. Pontalis, Loin, 1980 ; Frantext)

b. Ne crois pas que tu n'es_{SBJ} pas la bienvenue parmi nous !
Don't believe that you be not wellcome at home
 (C. Aventin, Le Cœur en poche, 1988 ; Frantext)

Morphology of the verb

- Neglected factor in literature: formal proximity between the two modes
 - Homophonous forms (1st group — regular verbs)
 - Very closed forms: : dit_{IND}/dise_{SBJ}, sort_{IND}/sorte_{SBJ}
 - Very different forms: irregular verbs: est_{IND}/soit_{SBJ} va_{IND}/aille_{SBJ}
- ⇒ Factor relevant not only in the NON-AFF contexts we are considering here.

Other factors

- form of negation or interrogation
- lexical items themselves
- tense of the matrix and of the subordinate
- (lots of) discourse factors still to be elicited

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Method: research project

- Collection of large corpora
- that will be annotated according to as many variables as we suspect might play a role
- so that *logistic regression* techniques can be used
- to assess
 - (in)dependance of variables
 - relative influence of variables
- so that an accurate prediction of actual usage can be performed.

[Bresnan *et al.*, 2007]

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