Mood alternations in Old High German subordinate clauses

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Background: In recent years, mood alternations (MAs) – especially the licensing of the subjunctive (SUBJ) in subordinate clauses (SCs) – have received attention in many languages, for instance in Modern Greek and Romance languages (Farkas 1985, 1992, Quer 2001, Giannakidou 2009, Roussou 2009, etc.). Contrasts like (1)-(2) for Catalan and (3)-(4) for Modern Greek have been interpreted in several ways: as a reflex of (non-)veridical properties of the embedding predicates, or of the _realis_ vs. _irrealis_ interpretation of a certain event, etc. As to Modern German (MG), it is well known that this language has almost completely lost the use of SUBJ in SCs in favor of the indicative (IND) (5), apart from indirect speech and other special contexts. However, interestingly enough, Old High German (OHG) SCs may exhibit SUBJ, as shown in (6) and (7) (cf. Schrodt 1983).

Hypotheses: Recent studies on OHG try to determine the licensing condition of SUBJ in SCs, especially in complement clauses (Schrodt 1983, 2004: 184ff, Petrova 2013, etc.). However, no investigations have so far been conducted based on the entire corpus of OHG texts, nor did any previous systematic survey focus on MAs in OHG relative and adverbial clauses.

The present paper intends to investigate mood distribution (in particular, the licensing of SUBJ) in OHG SCs, based on the now available Reference Corpus Old German. An in-depth study of mood distribution will be presented by considering complement clauses, relative clauses and adverbial clauses separately. The following issues arise:

a) What are the factors determining MAs in OHG? Are these the same as described for Greek or for Romance languages?

b) Is there one overarching factor responsible for the licensing of SUBJ (for example, 'overt marking of information about model interpretation', Quer 2001: 109)? Alternatively, do we have to resort to different explanations for each type of SC?

c) How can mood distribution in OHG be modelled morphosyntactically?

d) What can be said about the diachronic change that led to the situation in MG? Which morphosyntactic and semantic features or properties responsible for the licensing of SUBJ were ultimately lost in later stages of the language?

Discussion and analysis: The inspection of IND/SUBJ alternations _vis-à-vis_ the different types of SCs is particularly insightful. Only 11% of relative clauses exhibit SUBJ, in clear contrast to complement and adverbial clauses with 44% and 34%, respectively. However, a more fine-grained account of the subtypes reveals significant differences inside each group, with SUBJ – for instance – scoring 88% in intentional contexts like final clauses, but only 3% in causal clauses. Also within the same semantic type of SC, variation may be observed. Considering the example of temporal clauses, Giannakidou (1994, 1998) points out that, being non-veridical contexts, Greek _before_-clauses license SUBJ, in contrast to other types of temporal clauses, which typically exhibit IND. The contrast in (8) and (9) seems to indicate the presence of a similar situation in OHG, but the scrutiny of _before_-clauses in the corpus reveals that, whilst the use of SUBJ is preferred in these contexts (ca. 71%), the use of IND is not completely excluded (cf. Erdmann 1973: 123). The quantitative analysis of the data will be accompanied by a qualitative (and theoretical) investigation of individual clause types (further considering the semantics of specific SCs). We will explain these facts based on the recent aforementioned generative approaches to licensing of mood. In particular, we will show that the conditions for licensing SUBJ are different in complement, adverbial and relative clauses. For the syntactic

implementation, we will adopt a feature-based approach in which MAs are explained by means of an Agree operation between internal featural specifications in C and Mood of the SC (according to the notion of Upward Agree as formulated in Zeijlstra 2012). We will show that the semantic interpretation and the different syntax of each type of SC may also influence the licensing of mood.

Examples:

(1) L'Anna pensa   que els pingüins **volen /*volin**
    the Anna think.3SG that the penguins fly.IND/SBJ.3PL
    'Anna thinks that penguins fly' (Quer 2001: 83)

(2) L'Anna vol   que li **comprin/*compren** un pingüí
    the Anna want.3SG that her buy.SBJ/IND.3PL   a   penguin
    'Anna wants them to buy her a penguin' (Quer 2001: 83)

(3) O Pavlos ipe   **oti**   efije   i Roxani
    the Paul   say.AOR.3SG that.IND leave.AOR.3SG the R.
    'Paul said that Roxanne left' (Giannakidou 2009: 1886)

(4) Thelo   **na**   kerdisi   o Janis
    want.1SG SBJ   win.PNP.3SG the John
    'I want John to win' (Giannakidou 2009: 1887)

(5) Anna möchte,   dass sie   ihr einen Pinguin **kaufen/*kauften**
    Anna would.like that they her a   penguin buy.IND/SBJ.3PL
    'Anna wants them to buy her a penguin'

(6) bát   hér Inan   thaz her íz   fon erdu/   **arleitti**
    asked he   him.ACC that he   it.ACC from shore.DAT pushed.3SG.SBJ
    'He asked him to push it [the boat] away from the shore' (T 55, 10)

(7) er   wolta   [...], thaz er   ouh sin **wari**
    he   wanted [...]   that he   also his was.3SG.SBJ
    'He [the devil] truly wanted him [Jesus in the desert] to be his own [servant]' (O II, 4, 15)

(8) Er   sé   joh hímil **wurti**
    before sea and sky   became.3SG.SBJ
    'Before sea and sky were created' (O II 1, 3)

(9) thô sie   thar **uuarun**
    when they there were.3PL.IND
    'when they were there'(T 35, 22)

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