

# The Expression of the Subjunctive in Older French

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This paper examines the relation between the expression of the subjunctive and the lack of subject obviation in Older French. First, I show that solutions which rely on the subjunctive/infinitive rivalry cannot explain the Older French data; I also argue that although T is anaphoric in subjunctive clauses, this feature is not directly responsible for subject obviation. Relying on Progovac (1993), I propose that the lack of subject obviation in Older French depends on the visibility of a Mood Phrase (MoodP). In Older French, the matrix verb does not select the subjunctive mood; consequently, MoodP must be visible in LF because the feature [-realized] it bears is not recoverable. The lack of subject obviation is due to the fact that the visible MoodP binds T [+anaphor] and restricts the binding domain to the embedded subjunctive clause. In Modern French, MoodP can be recovered since the subjunctive is selected by the matrix verb. As a result, the binding domain of T is extended to the matrix clause and subject obviation effects are found.

## 1. The Data

Subject obviation, namely the fact that the subject of an embedded subjunctive clause cannot be coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause, is found in many Romance languages. In Modern French, the subject of the subjunctive clause cannot be coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause, as shown in (1a). If both subjects are coreferential, the infinitive must be used (1b).

(1) *Modern French*

- a. \*Je veux que je parte        demain.  
I    want that I    leave-SUBJ tomorrow
- b. Je veux partir        demain.  
I    want    leave-INF tomorrow  
'I want to leave tomorrow.'

Subject obviation is not found in the indicative (2a). The indicative may also alternate with the infinitive (2b).

(2) *Modern French*

- a. Je crois que je pars        demain.  
I    think that I    leave-IND tomorrow
- b. Je crois partir        demain.  
I    think leave-INF tomorrow  
'I think I leave tomorrow.'

Older French differs from Modern French since it does not present subject obviation, as shown in (3)-(6). For reasons of clarity, I will use the term Older French for Old French (842 [Serments de Strasbourg] to the end of the XIIIth century), Middle French (XIVth, XVth centuries), La Renaissance (XVIth century) and Classical French (XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries).

(3) *Old French*

- Je vueil que je soye        batu.  
I    want that I    be-SUBJ beaten  
'I want to be beaten.'  
(Griseldis 135, from Jensen (1974:34))

(4) *Middle French*

- a. car je voudroie que je ne alasse jamés hors de nostre meson.  
since I would like that I not go-SUBJ never out of our house  
'since I would like never to go outside our house.'  
(Anonymous, Les XV Joies de mariage, 11)
- b. qu'il<sub>i</sub> eust bien voulus que jamais ("il<sub>i</sub>") n'eust encommencez une telle  
that he<sub>i</sub> would have liked that never he<sub>i</sub> had-SUBJ started a such  
chasse  
hunt  
'that he would have liked to have never started such a hunt.'  
(Vigneulles, Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles, 229)

(5) *XVIth century French*

- Je me repens bien, mais c'est à tard, que je n'ay suivi la doctrine  
I myself regret a lot, but it is too late that I not have-SUBJ followed the doctrine  
des bons philosophes.  
of good philosophers  
'I regret, but it is too late, not following the doctrine of the good philosophers.'  
(Rabelais, from Gougenheim (1984:169))

(6) *Classical French*

- a. Je suis surprise moy-mesmes que j'aye pu ne vous en  
I am surprised myself that I have-SUBJ been able not yourself of-it  
rien faire paroître.  
nothing to make appear  
'I am surprised myself to have been able to hide it from you.'  
(Lafayette, La Princesse de Clèves, 1170)

- (6) b. Je voudrais, en revanche, que je ne puisse voir le vostre  
 I would like on the other hand that I not can-SUBJ to see yours  
 gravé en taille-douce.  
 engraved  
 'I would like, on the other hand, not to have to see yours engraved.'  
 (Furetière, *Le Roman bourgeois*, 962)

Older French shares similarities with Italian and Spanish: clitic climbing, pro-drop, nominal infinitives. However, contrary to Older French, these Romance languages show subject obviation (7)-(8).

- (7) *Italian*  
 \*Non credo possa venire io.  
 not think can-SUBJ come I  
 'I don't think I could come.'  
 (Motapanyane (1992:2))

- (8) *Spanish*  
 \*Queremos que nos vayamos temprano.  
 want that ourselves go-SUBJ early  
 'We want to leave early.'  
 (Luján (1978:113))

In this paper, I first show that solutions which rely on the subjunctive/infinitive rivalry cannot explain the Older French data (Section 2). I will rather follow the approach which argues that subject obviation is a consequence of the fact that the binding domain of the embedded subjunctive clause is extended to the matrix clause (e.g., Picallo (1985), Kempchinsky (1985), Raposo (1985)); since pronouns must be free in their binding domain (Chomsky (1981)), the subject of the embedded clause cannot corefer with the subject of the matrix clause. In Section

(3), I examine the anaphoric tense analyses. I agree with these analyses that Tense is anaphoric in the subjunctive clause; however, I do not consider that subject obviation is triggered by the anaphoric feature of Tense.

Section 4 deals with the lack of subject obviation in Older French. I argue that the presence or absence of subject obviation in French depends on the way the subjunctive is expressed. In French, subjunctive complements are headed by MoodP. Relying on Progovac (1993), I argue that in Older French, MoodP must be visible in LF because its content is not recoverable. Because MoodP is visible, it can bind the anaphoric Tense and restricts its binding domain to the embedded clause. In Section 5, I show that the subjunctive is lexically selected by the matrix verb in Modern French. As a result, MoodP is transparent, the binding domain is extended to the matrix clause and subject obviation effects are found.

## 2. The Infinitive/Subjunctive Rivalry Analysis

Bouchard (1984:128) proposes to link the subject obviation phenomenon to the *Elsewhere Principle*:

### (9) *Elsewhere Principle*

Don't put a pronoun in a position where an anaphor is possible, i.e. in a position where the pronoun will be interpreted as coreferential with an NP that can bind it.

Following this principle, the embedded pronoun in (10a) must have a disjoint reference since PRO may also occur in that context (10b).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> According to Bouchard, empty categories are defined contextually. A controlled PRO would be an anaphor in (10) since it has to be coindexed with an argument. In (10b), a pronoun coreferential with the matrix subject is forbidden since an anaphoric PRO is possible. According to Bouchard, pronouns and anaphors are in complementary distribution.

- (10) a. \*Je veux que je parte (SUBJ).  
b. Je veux PRO partir (INF).  
'I want to leave.'

Farkas (1985) proposes an idea along the same lines. She argues that in languages such as Rumanian and Greek, the lack of subject obviation in subjunctive clauses is triggered by the lack of infinitive structures. In (11) and (12), the subjunctive must be used since the infinitive is not available in these languages, and coreference between the matrix and the embedded subjects is allowed.

- (11) *Rumanian*  
Vrea să citească cartea.  
'He wants to read the book.'  
(Rivero (1991:282))

- (12) *Greek*  
thelo na pao stin eladha.  
'I want to go to Greece.'  
(Felix (1989:113))

On the other hand, Romance languages such as Italian and Spanish, which have true infinitives to express control, show subject obviation in subjunctive clauses (see (7) and (8)).

However, although the infinitive/subjunctive rivalry is regularly found when the matrix verb is volitional, it does not exist for all semantic classes of verbs in Modern Romance languages (see Ruwet (1984), Farkas (1985), Picallo (1985), Suñer (1986), Laka (1992)). For instance, verbs of emotion (13) and verbs of influence (14) allow both constructions: the subjunctive without subject obviation or the infinitive:

(13) a. *Modern French*

Je regrette que j'aie ennuyé (SUBJ)/d'avoir ennuyé (INF) cette femme.

'I regret that I have annoyed that woman/having annoyed this woman.'

(Ruwet (1984:103))

(13) b. *Spanish*

[yo<sub>i</sub>] sentí mucho que no lo haya visto (SUBJ)/no haberlo visto (INF) cuando...

'I deeply regretted that I have not seen him when/not having seen him when...'

(Obaid 1967, 117, from Suñer (1986:187))<sup>2</sup>

(14) a. *Modern French*

??Marie a convaincu Paul; qu'il; s'en aille (SUBJ)/de s'en aller (INF).

'Mary has convinced Paul to leave.'

(Farkas (1985:5))

b. *Spanish*

José; lo; animó a que pro; apagara (SUBJ) la TV/a PRO; apagar (INF) la TV.

'José encouraged him to turn off the TV.'

(Suñer (1986:186))

Moreover, the infinitive/subjunctive rivalry analysis cannot be extended to the Older French data since the infinitive and the subjunctive without subject obviation freely alternate. In (15), the volition verb *vouloir* can take an embedded subjunctive clause (15a), or an infinitive clause (15b). In both sentences in (15), the verb *vouloir* has the same meaning:<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For some speakers, (13b) is really bad. It would be better to say 'sentí mucho que no lo hubiera visto' or 'siento mucho que no lo haya visto'.

<sup>3</sup> Sentences such as (15) also alternate with sentences such as (i) in which the infinitival clause has its own subject (the 'accusative with infinitive' construction).

(i) a. Je ne veux l'innocent souffrir pour le coupable.

'I don't want the innocent man to suffer for the guilty one.'

(R. Garnier, *Les Juifves*, III, v. 1091, from Gougenheim (1984:173))

- (15) a. car je voudroie que je ne alasse (SUBJ) jamés hors de nostre meson.  
 'since I would like never to go outside our house.'  
 (Anonymous, *Les XV Joies de mariage*, 11)
- b. Je vueil venir (INF) à eulx et leur demander (INF) une question.  
 'I want to go see them and ask them a question.'  
 (Vigneulles, *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, 59, 104)

In the next section, we will turn to the anaphoric tense analyses which argue that subject obviation is due to a Tense operator.

### 3. The Anaphoric Tense Analyses

The anaphoric tense analyses rely on the fact that subjunctive complements present more restrictions on tense dependencies than indicative complements (e.g., Raposo (1985), Picallo (1985), Terzi (1992)). For instance, according to these analyses, if the matrix verb is in the present tense, the embedded verb cannot be in the past when the complement is subjunctive (16). Unlike the subjunctive, the indicative does not show these restrictions.

- (16) a. *Italian*  
 \*Gianni vuole che io lavorassi con voi.  
 John wants that I worked-SUBJ with you  
 'John wants me to work with you.'  
 (Terzi (1992:78))

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- (i) b. et aucuns d'autres estats eussent voulu les Bourguignons et les autres seigneurs estre dedans Paris.  
 'and some other states would have liked the Bourguignons and other lords to be in Paris.'  
 (Commynes, *Mémoires*, 979, from Junker and Martineau (1992:5))

See Martineau (1990) and Junker and Martineau (1992) for an analysis of this construction.



(16) b. *Spanish*

\*Juan quiere que yo trabajara contigo.

John wants that I worked-SUBJ with you

'John wants me to work with you.'

(Terzi (1992:78))

c. *Portuguese*

\*O Manel deseja que o filho fosse o melhor aluno.

Manel wishes that his son was-SUBJ the best student

'Manel wants his son to be the best student.'

(Terzi (1992:78))

Similarly, if the matrix verb is in the past tense, the embedded verb cannot be in the present, as shown in (17).

(17) *Italian*

\*Gianni voleva che io lavori con voi.

Gianni wanted that I work-SUBJ with you

'Gianni wanted me to work with you.'

(Terzi (1992:77))

According to Raposo (1985), an operator [-Tense]<sup>4</sup> appears in CP (= S') when the embedded clause is subjunctive (18). This operator [-Tense] is anaphoric and needs to be bound to [+Tense] in the matrix clause; consequently, the binding domain is extended to the matrix clause. The need for the operator [-Tense] to be linked to the operator [+Tense] explains why the subjunctive clause is temporarily dependent on the matrix clause, and why coreference between the matrix and the embedded subject pronouns is not allowed.

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<sup>4</sup> In Raposo's analysis, this [-Tense] operator must be distinguished from the functional category tense (T°).

(18) *Portuguese/Subjunctive clause*

[S' [+Tense] [S o Manel deseja [S' [-Tense] [S (ele) leia mais livros]]]]

(Raposo (1985:81))

The anaphoric tense analyses imply that languages without subject obviation will not present restrictions on unlike sequences of tenses in subjunctive clauses, whereas languages with subject obviation will show tense restrictions in subjunctive clauses.

First, we must observe that in Older French, past-present sequences are regularly found, as shown in (19); this fact correlates with the fact that Older French does not show subject obviation effects. However, Modern French, which shows subject obviation, does not have restrictions on the past-present sequences when the embedded verb is subjunctive; sentences in (20), parallel to (19), are perfectly grammatical.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Written and spoken Modern French must be distinguished. In spoken French, the past subjunctive is currently replaced by the present subjunctive as far back as the beginning of the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century. In written French, the past-past sequences are still used but a ministerial order officially 'allowed' the past-present sequences in written texts (arrêté du 28 décembre 1976). We may also find past-present sequences when the event of the subjunctive is a general truth. For instance, in (i), the first subjunctive verb is past and the second, which appears after the phrase *en général*, is present.

- (i) De ce que les corps ecclésiastiques avaient besoin d'être réformés, il ne s'ensuivait pas qu'il *fallût* (SUBJ-PAST) les détruire, ni qu'en général les corps propriétaires *soient* (SUBJ-PRES) mauvais dans une nation.

'Because the ecclesiastical groups had to be improved, it did not followed that they had to be eliminated nor, in general, that the owner's groups were bad in a nation.'

(Taine, *Origines de la Fr. contemp.*, t. III, p. 255, from Grevisse (1988:1310))

(19) a. *Old French*

Li rois manda (PAST) par ses messages a touz ceus qui de lui tenoient terre qu'il soient (SUBJ-PRES) au jor nommé a Kamaalot.

'The king sent his messengers to all his vassals to ask them to go to Camaalot the appointed day.'

(Mort Artu, 105, 5, from Ménard (1976:158))

b. *Classical French*

Vous êtes grand (...) et relevé, comme j'ai toujours désiré (PAST) que vous soyez (SUBJ-PRES).

'You are tall and distinguished, as I have always wanted you to be.'

(Malherbe, II, 427, from Haase (1969:162))

(20) *Modern French*

- a. Le roi demanda (PAST) par l'intermédiaire de ses messagers à tous ceux qui étaient propriétaires qu'ils soient (SUBJ-PRES) au jour dit à Kamaalot.

'The king sent his messengers to all his vassals to ask them to go to Camaalot the appointed day.'

- b. J'ai toujours désiré (PAST) que vous soyez (SUBJ-PRES) grand.

'I have always wanted you to be tall.'

Second, even if the present-past sequences are used less often than the past-present sequences, they can be found in Older French, which does not show subject obviation (21), but also in Modern French, which shows subject obviation (22).

(21) a. *Old French*

Or ne quidiés (PRES) mie que j'atendisse (SUBJ-PAST).

'Don't think that I would wait.'

(Aucassin, 14, 7, from Ménard (1976:157))

(21) b. *XVIth century French*

Qui fait doute (PRES) qu'un enfant, arrivé à la force de se nourrir ne sceust (SUBJ-PAST) qu'ester sa nourriture.

'Who doubts that a child who can feed himself could not ask for his meal.'

(Montaigne, II, 12; t. 1, p. 179, from Gougenheim (1984:135))

c. *Classical French*

Séparons-nous (PRES), de peur qu'il entrât (SUBJ-PAST).

'Let us part, for fear that he enters.'

(Corneille, *Veuve*, I, 2, 142, from Haase (1969:163))

(22) *Modern French*

- a. J'aime (PRES) qu'Herbert Spencer travaillât (SUBJ-PAST) avec le portrait de la reine Victoria au-dessus de sa table.

'I like that Herbert Spencer works with the picture of Queen Victoria above his table.'

(Benda, *Exercice d'un enterré vif*, p. 149, from Grevisse (1988:1309))

- b. Je crains (PRES) que, dans un cas semblable, la "renaissance" amoureuse ne s'effectuât (SUBJ-PAST) pas facilement.

'I fear that, in a case like that, the amorous "renaissance" would not be easy.'

(R. Kemp, *Les Nouv. litt.* 12 sept. 1957, from Grevisse (1988:1310))

The fact that unlike sequences of tenses are found in Modern French is not expected in Raposo's analysis since Modern French presents subject obviation effects.

To sum up the discussion so far, I have shown that the degree of freedom of tense sequences (present-past; past-present) cannot explain the lack of subject obviation in Older French, and the further appearance of subject obviation in Modern French since unlike tense sequences are found in all stages of French.

However, I agree with the anaphoric tense analyses that Tense in the subjunctive clause is anaphoric, even if I do not consider that this feature triggers subject obviation. As it is well-known, the subjunctive shows fewer tense possibilities than the indicative. For instance, in (23a), the future tense is used in the embedded indicative clause to express something that will happen; as the subjunctive does not have a future tense, the present must be used in (23b).

- (23) a. Je crois qu'il viendra.  
           I think that he comes-FUT  
           'I think he will come.'  
       b. Je veux qu'il vienne.  
           I want that he comes-SUBJ-PRES  
           'I want him to come.'

Relying on Borer (1989) who proposes that functional categories may be anaphoric, I propose that these fewer tense possibilities reflect the fact that Tense in embedded subjunctive clauses is anaphoric (24); the anaphoric nature of Tense has not changed from Older-French to Modern French.

- (24) Tense is anaphoric in subjunctive embedded clauses in all stages of French.

I also assume that French complements are headed by a Mood Phrase, the highest functional category.

- (25) French complements are headed by a Mood Phrase.

This hypothesis is in the line of other proposals made for Romance languages: among others, Motapanyane (1992) and Rivero (1987) for Rumanian, Terzi (1992) for the Balkan languages, Ambar (1993) for Portuguese and Pollock (1993) for French, all of them arguing for an extended structure of the embedded functional categories.

If it is not the anaphoric nature of T° which has changed, what else could explain the absence of subject obviation in Older French and its further appearance in Modern French? In the next section, I argue that the lack of subject obviation in Older French must be related to the way the subjunctive is expressed.

#### **4. The Mood Phrase Analysis**

In Romance languages, the choice between the subjunctive or the indicative mostly depends on the semantic class of the main verb. For instance, volition verbs always take the subjunctive (26).

(26) *Subjunctive with volition verbs*

a. *Rumanian*

Vrea să citească cartea.

'He wants to read the book.'

(Rivero (1991:282))

b. *Spanish*

Juan quiere que yo trabaje contigo.

'Juan wants me to work with you.'

(Terzi (1992:78))

c. *Italian*

Gianni voleva che io lavorassi con voi.

'Gianni wanted me to work with you.'

(Terzi (1992:77))

d. *Modern French*

Il veut que je parte.

'He wants me to go.'

However, in Older French, the choice between the subjunctive or the indicative is not lexically determined. Moignet (1984: 226) remarks that it is only in discourse that the mood is defined, and the use of one mood or another in the complement clause may vary: "c'est dans le discours seulement que la valeur se décide, et l'emploi du mode dans la complétive est ainsi sujet à varier." In Older French, whereas the indicative is used to express a statement, the subjunctive is used to express a doubt on the realization of the event. Thus, volition verbs, although they mostly trigger the subjunctive mood in the embedded clause, may also trigger the indicative (27-29).

(27) *Volition verb/Old French*

Et por ce li *vint en talent* que il li diroit (COND)<sup>6</sup> son penser.

'Thus, he wanted to tell him what he was thinking.'

(*Queste del Saint Graal*, 22, 8, from Ménard (1976:149))

(28) *Volition verb/Middle French*

a. Je *veil*, dist monseigneur l'official, que portez (IND) robe et cheveux a demy longs.

'I want you to wear a long dress and to have long hair, said the officer.'

(Anonymous, *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, 531)

b. (Ils) luy *commandirent* qu'il la gardait (IND) bien tant qu'ilz viendroient.

'They command him to keep her until they came.'

(Vigneulles, *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*, 75)

(29) *Volition verb/Classical French*

a. Dieu *a permis* que Madame la Dauphine s'est transportée (IND) d'une telle colère...

'The Lord has allowed the Dauphine to fly into such a rage...'

(Sévigné, VIII, 493, from Haase (1969:181))

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<sup>6</sup> In (27), the conditional ('future of the past') is triggered by tense dependencies ('la concordance des temps'). If the matrix verb were present, the embedded verb will be used in the future of the indicative.

- (29) b. Mais le don qu'on *veut* qu'hier j'en vins (IND) faire en personne, est ce qui fait ici mon cruel embarras
- 'But the gift that they want I came yesterday to give, that is the reason of my embarrassment.'
- (Molière, *Amph.*, III, 1, 1468, from Haase (1969:182))
- c. Nous *ordonnons* qu'il sera mis (IND) entre les mains de la plus rigoureuse Dame.
- 'We order that he will be put in the hands of the most severe lady.'
- (Sorel, *Histoire comique de Francion*, p. 308)

In (27)-(29), the indicative is used since there is no doubt on the realization of the event. In Modern French, the indicative found in (27)-(29) would have to be replaced by the subjunctive since the matrix verb is volitional: *dît* (27), *portiez* (28a), *gardât* (28b), *se fût transportée* (29a), *vinse* (29b) and *soit mis* (29c).

Compare now (27)-(29) with (30)-(32). In Modern French, opinion verbs usually trigger the indicative. However, in Older French, since the subjunctive is not lexically selected, it is often found after verbs of opinion if there is some doubt on the realization of the event, as shown in (30)-(32).

(30) *Opinion verb/Old French*

...car il *pense* bien que li anemis l'ait porté (SUBJ) mout loing de l'abeie ou il vit ier le roi Mordrain.

'...since he thinks that the enemy has brought it far away from the abbey where he yesterday saw king Mordrain.'

(*Queste del Saint Graal*, 93, 6-8, from Foulet (1982:209))



(31) *Opinion verb/XVith century French*

Il *croira* que tu sois (SUBJ) le plus grand clerc.

'He will think that you are the best clerk.'

(Des Périers, Les Nouvelles Recreations et Joyeux Devis, 385)

(32) *Opinion verb/Classical French*

On *croyoit* que mon esprit allât (SUBJ) revenir.

'They thought that my mind would come back.'

(Sévigné, II, 490, from Haase (1969: 187))

Relying on Progovac (1993) who proposes that functional categories which are recoverable may delete in LF (a level which contains only syntactically and semantically unrecoverable information, according to Chomsky (1989)), I argue that MoodP is visible in LF in Older French because the choice of the mood (subjunctive [-realized] or indicative [+realized]) is not lexically determined by the matrix verb and cannot be recovered.

(33) MoodP is visible in LF in Older French.

In Section 3, I have assumed that Tense ( $T^0$ ) in subjunctive clauses is anaphoric. I have also argued that it remains anaphoric from Older French to Modern French. As an anaphor,  $T^0$  in subjunctive clauses must be bound by an  $X^0$ -element. To explain the lack of subject obviation effects in Older French, I propose the hypothesis in (34).

(34) In Older French, anaphoric Tense ( $T^0$ ) is bound by the head of MoodP.

The structure of sentence (35) would be as follows :

- (35) a. Je croy que je l'eusse rompuë.  
 b. je croy [MoodP [MoodP Mood [-realized]] CP [C' que<sub>i</sub> [AGRP je [AGR' [AGR' l'eusse rompuë<sub>i</sub> [TP [T' t<sub>i</sub> [VP [V' t<sub>i</sub> ]]]]]]]]]]

In (35), as a result of its visibility, Mood° is a potential binder for anaphoric T° in the subjunctive clause.<sup>7</sup> Since MoodP selects CP which selects AgrP, and since the embedded verb has moved from T° to Agr°, T° and Mood° are coindexed. The embedded subjunctive clause is the binding domain for T° and coreference between the matrix and the embedded subjects is allowed. The lack of subject obviation would be related not to the fact that T° is anaphoric but to the visibility of the head of MoodP which binds T°.

The fact that anaphoric T° is coindexed with the head of Mood° will also explain why the temporal reference of T° in embedded subjunctive clauses is often defined by the general meaning of the sentence. Compare (36a) and (36b). In (36a), the past subjunctive refers to something future. In (36b), the past subjunctive refers to something past. Only the context can tell us the temporal reference of the subjunctive.

- (36) a. Gentiz hom sire, un noz en vendissiez!  
 dear Lord, one to-us of-them sell-SUBJ  
 'Dear Lord, you can sell us one of them.'  
 (Ami et Amile, 2641, from Ménard (1976:147))  
 b. Moult volentiers s'en vengast, s'il petist.  
 very willingly himself of-them take-his-revenge-SUBJ if he can-SUBJ  
 'He would have liked to take his revenge, if he would have been able.'  
 (Laurin, 10268, from Ménard (1976:148))

<sup>7</sup> See Rivero (1987) for an analysis where CP and IP are coindexed in Rumanian.

## 5. Lexical Selection of the Subjunctive in Modern French

At the beginning of Classical French, changes in the way the subjunctive is used start to appear. Verbs which allowed both moods, subjunctive or indicative, start to be used only with one or the other mood. For instance, in Modern French, verbs of volition such as *vouloir* trigger the subjunctive mood (37a), whereas verbs of opinion such as *croire*, more often trigger the indicative mood (37b).

### (37) Modern French

#### a. Volition verb

Je veux que tu partes demain.

I want that you leave-SUBJ tomorrow

'I want you to leave tomorrow.'

#### b. Opinion verb

Je crois que tu pars demain.

I think that you leave-IND tomorrow

'I think you leave tomorrow.'

Interestingly, these changes in the choice of the mood are closely related to the appearance of subject obviation in Classical French. An observation made by the grammarian Thomas Corneille is particularly revealing. He suggests using with the matrix verb *croire* one or the other mood in the embedded clause when *croire* is second or third person (38a), but he says that the indicative is better used if *croire* is first person (38b). In (38b), there is coreference between the matrix and the embedded subjects.

### (38) a. Tu crois/Il croit que je suis /sois malade.

you think/he thinks that I am-IND/am-SUBJ sick

'You think/he thinks that I am sick.'

(38) b. Je crois que je suis malade.

I think that I am-IND sick

'I think I am sick.'

I propose that these changes are due to a change in the way the subjunctive is expressed. Contrary to what is found in Older French, the subjunctive is lexically selected in Modern French. The choice of the indicative or the subjunctive does not depend on the general meaning of the sentence but on which type of matrix verb is used (for instance, volition verb or opinion verb).

I argue that MoodP, which was visible in Older French, becomes transparent in Modern French since it can be recovered by the lexical selection of the matrix verb. As a result of this 'transparency', Mood<sup>o</sup> cannot bind the anaphoric T<sup>o</sup> which is binded by the matrix verb. Consequently, the binding domain is extended to the matrix clause and subject obviation effects are found.

Our analysis could also be extended to cases of subjunctive not lexically selected by the matrix verb in Modern French. As the nature of the change between Older French and Modern French does not concern the presence or absence of MoodP but its visibility or transparency, we should find lack of subject obviation effects when the subjunctive is not lexically selected by the matrix verb. Compare for instance (39a) and (39b). In (39a), the indicative in the embedded clause is lexically selected by the matrix verb of opinion *croire*. But if the matrix verb is negated, as in sentence (39b), the subjunctive may be used, in place of the indicative, to add an idea of doubt on the realization of the action. As the subjunctive in sentence (39b) is not lexically selected by the matrix verb, it is not recoverable and MoodP must be visible at LF. As expected, there is absence of subject obviation in (39b) (see Huot (1986), Barbaud (1991), among others, for other examples like (39)).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> As Ruwet (1984) has shown for Modern French, the subjunctive without subject obviation may be marginally accepted with volition verbs when there is a 'distance' between the desire of the matrix subject, and the

- (39) a. Je crois que je pars            demain.  
           I think that I leave-IND tomorrow  
           'I think I leave tomorrow.'
- b. Je ne crois pas que je parte        /pars        demain.  
           I not think        that I leave-SUBJ/leave-IND tomorrow  
           'I don't think I leave tomorrow.'

## 6. Conclusion

In summary, this paper has shown that an analysis in terms of the rivalry between the infinitive and the subjunctive cannot explain the Older French data. I have argued that although  $T^{\circ}$  is anaphoric in subjunctive clauses, this feature is not directly responsible of subject obviation. I have rather put forward the hypothesis that subject obviation in French depends on the visibility of MoodP, the highest functional category. In Older French subjunctive clauses, MoodP is visible in LF because the feature [-realized] it bears is not recoverable; the lack of subject obviation is due to the fact that MoodP binds the anaphoric  $T^{\circ}$  and restricts the binding domain to the embedded subjunctive clause.

In Modern French, MoodP can be recovered since the subjunctive is lexically selected by the matrix verb. Subject obviation is due to the fact that Mood $^{\circ}$  is transparent and cannot bind  $T^{\circ}$ ; thus, the binding domain of  $T^{\circ}$  is extended to the matrix clause.

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realization of the action expressed in the embedded clause. In (i), the conditional in the matrix clause weakens the order and, consequently, the realization of the action.

- (i) Je voudrais que je sois déjà parti.  
       'I would like to have already left.'  
       (Ruwet (1984:95))

If we extend the analysis presented here, it may be the case that, for speakers who accept sentences like (i), MoodP bears the feature [-realized] (in Ruwet's words, a 'distance'), just like what is found in Older French. As this feature is not lexically selected by the matrix verb, it cannot be recovered and MoodP must be visible in LF. We leave that point for future research (see Martineau and Mainville (1993)).

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