Mood in relevance theory: a re-analysis focusing on the Spanish subjunctive[*]

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Abstract

Accounts of non-interrogative mood in relevance theory have standardly assumed that what is encoded by these forms is information concerning the type of world they represent: actual, possible or potential. This paper highlights some problems with this view when it is applied to the indicative-subjunctive contrast in Spanish. An alternative account is proposed which makes use of a distinction, already present in relevance theory, between assumptions presented as relevant in their own right and those which serve to facilitate the processing of the utterance. A comparison with other accounts of the indicative/subjunctive contrast in Spanish is then made and broader implications for relevance theory are discussed.

1 Introduction

A pragmatic theory which seeks to account successfully for the role played by linguistic mood in the interpretation of utterances needs to describe how the information encoded by mood markers interacts with contextual factors to arrive at the interpretation intended by the speaker. This presupposes both that we have an idea of what is encoded by these forms and that we are able to characterise adequately the different interpretations of utterances of clauses of particular moods. One needs to be careful, however, not to mistake successful characterisations of interpretations with explanations of the process used to derive these. Take the indicative/subjunctive contrast in Spanish, for example. Since Terrell and Hooper (1974), it has often been suggested that what distinguishes these two moods is that while the former marks the proposition expressed as asserted, the latter marks it as non-asserted, and this distinction has recently played a major part in an attempt to map the interpretations of different moods in Spanish in terms of their distance from the speaker's 'deictic centre' (Gregory 2001).

However useful such systematic mappings of interpretations might be, they nevertheless do not explain the processes by which the interpretations in question

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are arrived at. That is, in saying that the indicative marks assertion and the subjunctive non-assertion we are in fact characterising rather than explaining interpretations, unless of course we believe the notions of assertion and non-assertion to be psychological primitives of some sort. The disadvantage of such a move would be that we generally expect our cognitive systems to be dumber than this. The notion of assertion is a complex one, combining commitment to truth and elements of information structure (asserting contrasts both with commanding and questioning on the one hand and presupposing and implying on the other) and positing it as a psychological primitive would require both a very tight definition and some sort of mental faculty that could well amount to a semanticist/pragmatist in the head.

What would be preferred, of course, is an account which led to assertion/non-assertion interpretations without claiming that this distinction is encoded. Following suggestions made by Lunn (1989a,b; 1992), I propose in this paper that Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory (1995) has the machinery to provide such an account. However, when one consults the relevance theory literature on mood, one finds a problem very similar to the one I have described above, for mood (with the exception of interrogative mood) is generally explained in terms of world-type encoding. In other words, linguistic mood is seen as specified for describing different types of world (actual, possible and potential), with the effect that the word-to-world mapping that results from the interpretation of these forms is said to be encoded in the form itself, rather than falling out naturally from the interpretation process.

This paper, then, has two main aims. One is to propose an account of the indicative/subjunctive distinction in Spanish that makes use only of existing relevance theory concepts and mechanisms, and the other is to argue that this is a superior approach to linguistic mood to that hitherto taken in relevance theory. I start by outlining the standard approach to mood in relevance theory and highlighting some problems with it. I then look at parenthetical verbs in order to provide the grounds for an alternative hypothesis which I test using data from Spanish. This is followed by a discussion of some of the implications of this account.[1]

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[1] I should point out from the outset that I limit myself primarily to present tense forms of the subjunctive and indicative in order to be sure that I do not make claims for features of the semantics of mood that might in fact be the result of tense.

2 Mood in relevance theory

The standard approach to non-interrogative linguistic mood indicators in relevance theory has been to argue that they encode information about whether the proposition expressed by a clause is intended as a description of the actual world or as a description of a possible, perhaps desirable, world. In practical processing terms, these claims are cashed in by arguing that mood encodes procedural constraints on the utterance's higher-level explicatures (of which more later). However, most of the discussion by Wilson & Sperber (1988a&b), Clark (1991) and Rouchota (1994) centres on how information encoded by the different moods about the type of world described can account for the differences in their interpretation (with little or no discussion of the procedures they are thought to encode). Consequently, that is what I will focus on in this section.

Huntley (1984) at first seems to be offering a similar account when he seeks to explain the fact that main-clause indicatives can be uttered assertorically while non-indicatives cannot. He suggests that the function of indicative mood is to link an utterance of a sentence to a particular contextually specified world (often, but not necessarily, the actual world) at which it can be evaluated as true or false. Clauses which lack this element are thus not linked to any particular world and the speaker is consequently not committed to the truth of the proposition expressed by her utterance. Note, though, that this is not to say that non-indicatives are not truth-conditional: they will have a truth value at any world against which they are evaluated. It is simply that because the world at which they are to be evaluated is not specified, the speaker cannot be said to have uttered a truth or falsehood. Thus Huntley's account neatly allows for non-indicatives to be truth-conditional (in that to understand them is to be able to pair them with the situations they describe) without their utterance involving a commitment by the speaker to truth.

Huntley's main concern is with imperative sentences (i.e. main clause non-indicatives) and it is in their discussion of imperatives that Wilson & Sperber (1988a&b) make reference to his approach and when developing relevance theoretic account. They focus on Huntley's claim that his proposed lack of deictic reference to a world enables non-indicatives to represent a situation merely as an envisaged possibility. While they agree that this may indeed be the case for utterances of infinitival clauses, they argue that it cannot be the case for all non-indicatives. This is because one can utter an infinitival clause–but not an imperative sentence–without imperatival force. Consequently, Wilson & Sperber argue that a stronger semantics needs to be assigned to imperatives, one that includes the notions of desirability and achievability. They therefore propose that the imperative form encodes the information that the speaker views the state of affairs described by her utterance as both potential (in the sense that it is compatible with all her assumptions about the actual world) and desirable, though to whom it is desirable is

not encoded but is left to the hearer to infer according to considerations of relevance (1988a&b).

Clark (1991) develops this proposal and applies it to a range of data, including less straightforward cases of imperative usage and imperative-like constructions (see also Clark 1993a&b). He also looks briefly at infinitive clauses, extending Wilson and Sperber's suggestion that these are best analysed as encoding the information that the proposition expressed is represented as a description of a possible world. He gives the semantics of declarative sentences and infinitive clauses as follows:[2]

> A declarative with propositional content P communicates that P represents a thought entertained as a description of an actual or possible state of affairs (1991: 47)
> An infinitive clause with propositional content P communicates that the thought represented by P describes a possible state of affairs (1991:141)

So declarative sentences, on Clark's view, represent thoughts entertained as descriptions of *actual or possible* states of affairs, while infinitival clauses represent thoughts entertained as descriptions of *possible* states of affairs. This raises the question of why both forms are needed. If declarative sentences can be used to describe either actual or possible states of affairs, then what is the motivation for uttering an infinitive clause to describe a possible but non-actual state of affairs? In other words, why aren't (1a) and (1b) synonymous?

(1)   a. For my son to play for Arsenal.
      b. My son plays for Arsenal

The reply might be that infinitives reduce processing effort by marking the state of affairs to be possible but non-actual, but it is easy to show that this is not the case:

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[2] Clearly we are here dealing to a large extent with a false opposition: declarative *sentences* and infinitive *clauses*. Clark doesn't address this issue, probably because his aim is to contrast imperatives and the infinitival utterances of the type:

(i) To live forever.

However, he is clear that the semantics he proposes for infinitives is for both the type of use exemplified by (i) and embedded clauses (p. 141). It's not clear whether he'd want the same semantics for indicative clauses as he assigns to declarative sentences, but given that he characterises the latter as specified for describing possible or actual worlds, it's hard to see how one could argue that indicative clauses were specified for describing any more or any less.

(2)   We believe you to be the best person for the job
(3)   They were glad to see him again

In (2) and (3) the speaker is clearly presenting the proposition expressed by the infinitive clause as a description of the actual world. This forces us to interpret Clark's use of the term 'possible' to include 'actual', with the result that his semantics for infinitive clauses is essentially the same as that he assigns to declarative sentences.

Rouchota is faced with a similar problem in her relevance-theoretic analysis of the Greek subjunctive. In an early paper (1991), she suggests that this form encodes that the proposition expressed is presented as a description of a non-actual world, but she is later forced to modify her view (1994) so that her use of the term 'possible' includes the actual. Indicatives, meanwhile, are said to differ from subjunctives in that they present states of affairs as obtaining in a 'base world', which she defines as the world which the speaker is in, and which is by default the actual world (1994:69). She is then able to deploy arguments based on processing effort in an attempt to explain why subjunctive clauses often have a non-actual interpretation: although the subjunctive can be used to present states of affairs as obtaining in the actual world, the indicative is a less costly means of doing this as it is specified for describing the base world, which is by default the actual world. Therefore, her argument goes, considerations of processing effort will tend to favour a non-actual interpretation of subjunctive clauses because, had an actual-world interpretation been intended, the indicative could have been used at less processing cost to the hearer.

I want to focus on two objections to this proposal. The first relies on evidence from Spanish, and as such isn't really an argument against Rouchota for she can always claim that there are important differences between the subjunctive in Spanish and in Modern Greek. It is, however, strong evidence that her account won't work for Spanish. The second is a more theoretical objection, centring on the distinction often drawn by relevance theorists between linguistic semantics and 'real' semantics.

One obligatory use of the subjunctive in Spanish is in the verbal complements of evaluative predicates such as in (4):

(4)   a.   Me alegro de que venga
             myself please+1SG of that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'I'm happy that he's coming,
       b.   Es raro que venga
             is strange that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'It's strange that he's coming'

    c. Me sorprende que venga
         me surprise+3SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
         'I'm surprised that he's coming'

Here, the speaker is commenting on a situation in the real world, so the subjunctive is clearly being used to represent the world she is in. On Rouchota's account, we would expect additional cognitive effects to be gained as greater effort would be needed to assign an actual world interpretation than if an indicative complement had been used. In other words, in (4) we would expect the fact that someone is coming to be of high relevance. However, this is not the case. What is notable about cases such as (4) is that they cannot generally be used to communicate the state of affairs described by the complement clause, but can only be used when the situation represented by that clause is mutually manifest to the speaker and the hearer. Hence this information is often described as being presupposed or non-asserted. Examples such as (4) therefore show that Rouchota's account cannot be applied to Spanish and raise questions about the approach of trying to account for all mood distinctions in terms of world-type encoding. By arguing that additional effort is required to arrive at an actual-world interpretation of an subjunctive, Rouchota predicts that extra effect will be gained in such cases. The Spanish data shows that the contrary is often the case.[3]

Further doubt is cast by the distinction generally drawn by relevance theorists between linguistic and 'real' semantics (see e.g. Clark 1991). On the relevance-theoretic view, linguistic forms are not interpreted by mapping them directly onto states of affairs or possible worlds. Rather, the role of linguistically encoded information is to provide input into a process which delivers up incomplete logical forms to inferential systems which in turn develop these into fully propositional assumptions. These assumptions are fully truth-conditional in that they are true or false depending on whether they accurately represent the world. However, comparing assumptions with the world is not something that a cognitive system does. Rather, it evaluates the likely truth of assumptions in terms of their compatibility with other assumptions. Hence while the decoding of linguistic forms and the inferential enrichment of the resultant logical forms are psychological processes, the pairing of these enriched truth-conditional forms with states of affairs is not. It is this decoding of linguistic forms and the way in which the

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[3] It might be objected at this point that as the examples in (4) are obligatory uses of the subjunctive, they do not provide evidence against Rouchota's world-type encoding account. However, as we will see later, there are cases of so-called double selection where either an indicative or a subjunctive complement are permitted. In some of these cases, the subjunctive presents the state of affairs as more certain than the indicative, in contrast to what a world-type encoding account would predict.

resultant logical forms influence the inferential stage of utterance interpretation which relevance theorists see as the domain of linguistic semantics; 'real' semantics (i.e. mapping conceptual representations to states of affairs) is not a psychologically real process.

World-type encoding accounts tend to conflate these two types of semantics by claiming that linguistic semantics encodes information about 'real' semantics. That is, they argue that linguistic forms encode information about the type of world the resultant propositional forms are presented as representing and that the hearer then uses this 'real' semantic information in interpreting the speaker's utterance. It could therefore be argued that this approach suffers from the confusion between interpretations and the process of interpreting mentioned in the introduction to this paper. I will return to this point later when I argue that the account of linguistic mood to be presented in this paper has greater respect for the linguistic/'real' semantics distinction.

Before concluding this section, however, it is worthwhile highlighting a fundamental difference between Huntley's approach and that taken by most relevance theorists. Huntley's strategy is to argue that indicative clauses pick out the world they are intended to describe–be this the actual world or some contextually specified alternative–in a manner analogous to the way that pronouns pick out their referents, while non-indicative clauses do no such thing and float free, as it were, of any deictic reference to a world. It is this feature of non-indicatives, on Huntley's view, which allows them to be used to represent situations envisaged as possibilities. Huntley's claim, therefore, is not that indicatives are specified for describing actual worlds and non-indicatives for describing possible worlds. Rather, he claims that all clauses represent descriptions of possible worlds, but by uttering an indicative clause a speaker specifies which possible world she is describing, which is often, but by no means necessariliy, the actual world.[4]

The approach taken by relevance theorists, by contrast, is to claim that different clause or sentence types are specified for describing different types of world. The problem that arises, however, is that while at first there appears to be a correlation between world type and clause/sentence type, closer inspection reveals things not to be so clear cut. The need then arises to add further machinery to the account–

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[4] Rouchota (1994: 68) criticises Huntley for claiming that indicatives present information as true or false in the actual world, pointing out that indicatives can be used in non-actual-world cases such as conditional clauses, hypothetical discourse and 'make-believe' contexts. However, it is clear that Huntley allows for these cases when he says that 'the indicative mood locates states of affairs in a way that makes essential reference to *this world* (i.e. the actual world) **or some contextually specified alternative**' (1984: 120, italics Huntley's, bold mine).

such as the notion of a default base world–which proves less than satisfactory when applied to a wider range of data.

   In what follows I want to propose an alternative account of how mood might be accounted for in relevance theory, using the indicative/subjunctive contrast in Spanish to illustrate its explanatory potential. First, however, I need to discuss briefly parenthetical verbs, as the relation of these verbs to mood selection provides the springboard for the hypothesis I wish to propose.

3 Parenthetical verbs

Parenthetical verbs were first identified by Urmson (1952/1963), who noted that certain verbs can function not primarily to contribute to the information communicated by an utterance, but to 'prime the hearer to see the emotional significance, the logical relevance and the reliability of our statements' (1963: 224). (5) to (7) below illustrate each of these uses:

(5)   a.   I regret your application has not been successful
      b.   Your application has not, I regret, been successful
      c.   Your application has not been successful, I regret
(6)   a.   I admit your idea has some merit
      b.   Your idea has, I admit, some merit
      c.   Your idea has some merit, I admit
(7)   a.   I guess they'll be here by ten
      b.   They will, I guess, be here by ten
      c.   They'll be here by ten, I guess

   In (5) the speaker communicates both that the application has been unsuccessful and that she recognises that this is likely to cause the speaker sadness. Although on one reading of (5a) she could be said to be expressing her regret that the hearer's application has been unsuccessful (hence a non-parenthetical reading), there is an equally likely reading in which her aim is to inform the hearer of this fact and to acknowledge that it is likely to cause the speaker distress (a parenthetical reading). In (6) the speaker commits herself to the truth of the proposition that the hearer's idea has some merit and uses *I admit* to signal her acknowledgement that this goes against the general thrust of her argument. In (7) the function of *I guess* is to qualify the assertion that they will arrive by ten.

   These examples are presented in triplets to illustrate a defining feature of parenthetical verbs: that they are syntactically independent of their complement clauses and can be positioned either prior to, within or after that clause. Ifantidou

(1994), however, has argued that it is in fact necessary to distinguish genuine from apparent cases of parentheticals. She points to cases such as (8):

(8)   a. I urge you to reconsider
        b. Reconsider, I urge you
        c. I urge you, reconsider
        d. *To reconsider, I urge you

Only (8b) and (8c) are genuine parentheticals, she argues, because only in these cases is *I urge you* syntactically detached from *reconsider*, as the unacceptability of (8d) shows. From this observation, she goes on to show that only cases such as (5b&c), (6b&c) and (7b&c) are genuine parentheticals and terms cases such as (5a), (6a) and (7a) 'main-clause parentheticals'. Main-clause parentheticals and genuine parentheticals behave very differently when tested for their truth-conditionality by embedding them within the scope of *if*:

(9)   If I think the bus is late, we'll have to walk [Ifantidou's 20a, p166]
(10)   If the bus is late, I think, we'll have to walk [Ifantidou's 20b, p166]

In (9) *I think* takes narrow scope (i.e. relating to only the antecendent clause) while in (10) a wide scope interpretation is preferred. That is, in (9) *we'll have to walk* is presented as a consequence of the speaker thinking the bus is late, regardless of whether it actually is late or not, while in (10) *we'll have to walk* is presented as a consequence of the bus being late. However, Ifantidou shows how when embedded within the scope of a factive conjunction, the results are different:

(11)   We'll have to walk because I think the bus is late
(12)   We'll have to walk because the bus is late, I think

In (11) an interpretation is possible where *I think* falls outside the scope of *because* and the bus being late is presented as the cause of their having to walk, as in the genuine parenthetical (12). In other words, a parenthetical reading of a main-clause parenthetical is possible when embedded under a factive connective, but not under a non-factive connective.

Building on suggestions made by Blakemore (1990/1) and others, Ifantidou argues that utterances of genuine parentheticals perform two assertions, one fine-tuning the interpretation of the other by encoding information about its intended higher-order explicatures. The explicatures of an utterance are those assumptions which are (a) communicated by the utterance and (b) derived by enriching the logical form which results from decoding the utterance's linguistic form. If the proposition expressed by the utterance is communicated, then it is an explicature of

the utterance. Moreover, it is this explicature which exhausts the truth-conditions of the utterance, so that when the proposition expressed is not an explicature the utterance does not have truth conditions (and, as we shall see, this is the case with imperatives). Higher-order explicatures are derived by embedding the proposition expressed (regardless of whether it itself is an explicature) in a speech-act or propositional attitude description. So an utterance of (13) might have the explicature (13b) and the higher order explicatures (13c & d):

(13)   a.   Peter's new car is very fast
      b.   The car that Peter has recently acquired is capable of moving at very high speeds
      c   The speaker has said that the car that Peter has recently acquired is capable of moving at very high speeds
      d.   The speaker believes that the car that Peter has recently acquired is capable of moving at very high speeds

Genuine parentheticals, Ifantidou argues, facilitate the interpretation of the utterance by explicitly stating one of its higher-order explicatures and thus creating a context in which the speaker's precise intentions are more easily inferred. For example, (7b) or (7c) might communicate the basic explicature (7d) and the higher-order explicature (7e), allowing the hearer to infer that the degree of certainty the speaker intends him to assign to (7d) is less than one hundred percent.

(7)   d.   The speaker's parents will be at the speaker's house by 10 o'clock.
      e.   The speaker is guessing that the speaker's parents will be at the speaker's house by 10 o'clock

Recently, Carston (2002) has suggested that the original definition of an explicature needs to be reformulated to allow for, among other things, the fact that the speaker of a main-clause parenthetical explicitly communicates the embedded proposition. Rather than being seen as developments of *the* logical form of the utterance, she suggests, explicatures should be defined as developments of *a* logical form of the utterance, as long as the logical form in question is derived from a sentential element of the linguistic form (whether the whole sentence or a sentential subpart). This would then allow a parenthetical interpretation of (7a) to be characterised in the same way as the genuine parentheticals (7b & c): (7d) would be its basic explicature and (7e) a higher-order explicature.

Carston's redefinition of explicaturehood allows a simple explanation of why a parenthetical reading of main-clause parentheticals is possible when they are embedded within the scope of factive connectives but not within the scope of a non-factive connective such as *if*. In the first case the speaker can intend the

proposition expressed as an explicature of her utterance, so there is a communicated proposition for the higher-order explicature to 'fine tune'. In the second case, however, the fact that the proposition expressed is not a communicated proposition precludes it from being an explicature of the utterance and hence there is nothing for a higher-order explicature to fine tune. Moreover, when a genuine parenthetical is embedded under a non-factive, as in (10), a wide scope interpretation (qualifying the proposition expressed by the whole sentence) is forced because this provides the only possible explicature for modification by the parenthetical.

Parentheticals, whether genuine or main-clause, are of interest here, though, because ever since Bolinger (1968) it has been known that the possibility of a parenthetical interpretation of a sentence in English correlates negatively with the use of the subjunctive in Spanish. In other words, Spanish predicates with subjunctive complements cannot give rise to a parenthetical reading ((4) is repeated for convenience):

(4) a. Me alegro de que venga
         myself please+1SG of that come+3SG+SUBJ
         'I'm happy that he's coming'
     b. Es raro que venga
         is strange that come+3SG+SUBJ
         'It's strange that he's coming'
     c. Me sorprende que venga
         me surprise+3SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
         'I'm surprised that he's coming'

(4') a. *Venga, me allegro
         come+3SG+SUBJ myself please+1SG
         '*He's coming, I'm happy'
     b. *Venga, es raro
         come+3SG+SUBJ is strange
         '*He's coming, it's strange'
     c. *Venga, me sorprende
         come+3SG+SUBJ me surprise+3SG
         '*He's coming, I'm surprised'

(14) a. Creo que viene
         believe+1SG that come+3SG+IND
         'I think he is coming'
     b. Viene, creo
         come+3SG+IND believe+1SG
         'He is coming, I think'

(15)   a.   No creo que venga
             not believe+1SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'I don't think he is coming'
       b.   *Venga, no creo
             come+3SG+SUBJ not believe+1SG
             '*He is coming, I don't think'
(16)   a.   Dudo que venga
             doubt+1SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'I doubt he's coming'
       b.*Venga, dudo
             come+3SG+SUBJ doubt+1SG
             '*He is, coming, I doubt'
(17)   a.   Aviso/Ordeno que venga
             advise/order+1SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'I advise/order that he come'
       b.   *Venga, aviso/ordeno
             come+3SG+SUBJ advise/order+1SG
             '*He come, I advise/I order'

Now, one way of characterising parenthetical readings of main-clause parentheticals is to say that that the embedded clause is presented as relevant not simply as a constituent of a complex proposition but in its own right. Given that subjunctive clauses cannot generally[5] be relevant in this way, it seems worthwhile to consider whether this is what is encoded by this form. Could the indicative/subjunctive contrast be explained by the notion of a proposition being presented as (not) relevant in its own right? Before examining this question in more detail, though, a little more needs to be said about the different ways in which a communicated proposition can be relevant.

4 Ways to be relevant

Consider the pair (18a) and (18b) (capitals mark focal stress):

(18)   a. JOHN gave Peter a lift
       b. John gave PETER a lift

(18a) would be acceptable in a context where it was mutually manifest that someone gave Peter a lift, but not who, while (18b) would only be acceptable if it

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[5] Note the hedge, which will soon be explained.

was mutually manifest that John gave someone a lift, but not whom. This kind of relationship has been widely discussed in terms of focus and presupposition or given and new information (see Lambrecht 1996 for a survey). In relevance theory, these differences are seen as a result of a speaker's attempt to optimise relevance by making available/accessible the desired cognitive effects for minimal processing effort. (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 203-207)

That someone gave Peter a lift is implied by (18a), but in a context where this is mutually manifest, this assumption is unlikely to lead to significant cognitive gains simply by being made more manifest. That is to say, it is unlikely to be relevant in its own right. However, it could contribute to the relevance of the utterance as a whole if it made more accessible a context in which (18a) could lead to positive cognitive effects. For example, let's assume that it was mutually manifest that the person who gave Peter a lift probably murdered him. Making accessible the assumption that someone gave Peter a lift would also make this assumption more manifest and facilitate the derivation of the implication that John probably killed Peter. Thus in the utterance of (18a) two implications play very different roles: the implication (i) *someone gave Peter a lift* activates a context in which the implication (ii) *John gave Peter a lift* has positive cognitive effects.

Someone gave Peter a lift is a member of a special subset of (18)'s implications: (roughly) those analytic implications[6] of (18) which can be derived by substituting variables such as *someone*, *something*, *did something* for one or more constituents of the sentence. Sperber & Wilson (1995: 205-209; see also Wilson & Sperber 1979) show how these implications can be derived and used as anticipatory hypotheses in the interpretation of an utterance as more and more of its linguistic form becomes available to the hearer. Implications of this type which contribute to the relevance of an utterance in their own right (i.e. which have cognitive effects) are termed foreground implications by Sperber & Wilson. Background implications, by contrast, are not relevant in their own right but contribute to relevance by making accessible a context in which the cognitive effects of those foreground implications can be calculated. The roles played by these fore- and background implications (which are often characterised in terms of assertion and presupposition), are not mutually exclusive, however, and an implication can serve both functions.

What I want to focus on here, though, is not so much that implications can be thought of in terms of background and foreground, but that a distinction can in principle be drawn between those implications which are relevant in their own right and those which are not. As we have seen, both genuine parentheticals and main-clause parentheticals present the proposition expressed by the complement clause

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[6] An analytic implication is one derived by the application of analytic rules of deduction. These are defined by the fact that they take only one assumption as input (Sperber & Wilson 1995:104)

of the parenthetical verb as relevant in its own right. However, a subjunctive complement clause cannot generally give rise to a parenthetical interpretation: it cannot be relevant in its own right. Moreover, the notion of a proposition not being relevant in its own right has been employed in relevance theory as a means of analysing the presupposed nature of certain implications, while the Spanish subjunctive in certain linguistic environments (as exemplified by (4)) has often been claimed to mark the proposition expressed as presupposed. Given these observations, it seems reasonable to hypothesize that what distinguishes the indicative from the subjunctive mood is that while the former can be used to present a proposition as relevant in its own right, the latter cannot.

  If it could be shown to work, such an account would have two distinct advantages. First it would explain why the subjunctive is used to express both those propositions known to be false and those which are treated as known to both speaker and audience: neither would be relevant in its own right as in the first case it could lead to false implications while in the second the true implications would already be mutually manifest. Second, it would not run into the problems we have seen with world-type encoding accounts: the claim would be not that the different moods are specified for representing different types of worlds, but that the information they encode is presented as relevant in different ways. Given these potential payoffs, it seems a worthwhile line of enquiry.

5 Testing the hypothesis

The hypothesis is that the central difference between the indicative and subjunctive moods in Spanish is that while the former may be used to present the proposition it expresses as relevant in its own right, the latter cannot; and that this explains crucial differences in how the two moods are interpreted.

  Note that the claim is not that the proposition expressed by an indicative clause is *necessarily* presented as relevant in its own right, just that it *may* be; while the proposition expressed by a subjunctive clause will never be presented as relevant in its own right (except, as we shall see, under very restricted circumstances). A proposition which is presented as relevant in its own right is presented as having implications which will lead to an improvement in the hearer's representation of the world. What is being suggested here is that using a particular linguistic form (subjunctive mood) to express a proposition generally precludes the possibility that it is being presented as relevant in this way. On the other hand, an alternative linguistic form (indicative mood) permits the possibility of presenting the proposition expressed as relevant in its own right, though it does not guarantee it as relevant in this way.

Perhaps the first possible objection to this claim that springs to mind involves the use of the subjunctive mood as an imperative form (i.e. the so-called suppletive use – see Silva-Villar, 1996). In Spanish, the subjunctive is used for all forms of the imperative except the positive second-person singular informal form (where the 3rd person singular present indicative form of the verb is used) and the positive second-person plural informal form (where the stem plus *ad*, *ed* or *id* is used). (19) shows two examples of the subjunctive form being used in this way.

(19) a. ¡Coma!
          Form: eat+3SG+SUBJ; **Use**: second person singular imperative, formal
          'Eat!'
      b. ¡Coman!
          Form: eat+3PL+SUBJ; **Use**: second person plural imperative, formal
          'Eat!'

The objection would be that as these cases of subjunctive mood are not embedded under a higher clause, they must be presented as relevant in their own right. However, on the relevance-theoretic account, imperatives are interpreted by embedding under a propositional attitude description of desire and achieve relevance in this way (Carston 2002). That is to say, an imperative has only higher-order explicatures and the proposition expressed does not contribute to the relevance of the utterance in its own right. Imperatival utterances of subjunctives do not therefore falsify the hypothesis.

As a complement, the subjunctive is associated with three main types of predicate: those where the speaker is expressing a comment on (or a reaction to) a state of affairs (as discussed earlier); those where doubt about the truth of a proposition is expressed; and those where volition is expressed. The interpretation given to the subjunctive is different in each case. Nevertheless, these differences can be accounted for by taking into consideration the nature of the predicates in question and the hypothesis that what is encoded by the subjunctive mood is that the proposition is not presented as relevant in its own right.

The presuppositional interpretation of the subjunctive complement clauses of comment predicates such as (4) can be explained by (i) the fact that these predicates are factive in nature[7] combined with (ii) the hypothesis that the subjunctive encodes the information that the proposition expressed is not presented as relevant in its own right. The first element explains the speaker commitment to the truth of the complement, while the second explains the fact that the speaker cannot be understood as intending to inform the hearer of the state of affairs

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[7] I return to the issue of factivity in section 6.1

described by the complement clause (in other words, that these predicates are not open to a parenthetical reading).

But it is now high time to elaborate on the hedge made throughout this paper that a proposition expressed by subjunctive clauses is not presentable as relevant in its own right *except in highly restricted cases*. It is well known that under certain circumstances announcements can be made where the relevant information is expressed as the complement of a factive verb. Take Horn's example (20):

(20)   We regret that HP Grice is ill and will be unable to attend the conference. (cited in Abbot 2000: 1430)

(20') Lastimamos que HP Grice esté enfermo y no pueda assistir en la conferencia.
       regret+3PL that HP Grices be+1SG+SUBJ and not can+1SG+SUBJ attend in the conference

Here, it is the complement that is presented as relevant in its own right and, as (20') shows, this would be expressed using the subjunctive mood in Spanish. The point here seems to be that genre considerations can override the effects that would normally be achieved in less stereotypical events of communication. The effect of genre is also noted by Lunn (1989a&b), who shows how the past subjunctive is often used in journalism to mark information which is assumed to be known to the readership. Such usage, however, is not to be found in general conversation and Lunn's informants describe it as a style particular to journalism. Similarly, an example such as (20) is immediately recognisable as a case of a formal announcement, and someone who introduced new information into a normal conversation in this way would be taken to be echoing that style for rhetorical effect.

Where doubt is expressed (as in (16)), the selection of a subjunctive is clearly predicted by the current hypothesis: it would be irrational to present a proposition both as dubious and as likely to lead to positive cognitive effects. In cases of volition predicates such as (17), the current hypothesis predicts a subjunctive complement, as the state of affairs described is presented as unrealized and therefore relevant not in its own right but only as an object of a desire representation.

But although these cases are consistent with the hypothesis, they do not provide direct evidence of its explanatory power, for the information encoded by the predicate alone would be enough to give a presupposed, doubtful or unrealized interpretation of its complement (as in fact happens with those English equivalents which take an indicative complement). Rather, to see how the hypothesis can shed light on the process of utterance interpretation we need to look at cases where the speaker has some latitude over the selection of complement mood. Indeed, it is in

the cases of so-called 'double selection' that the current hypothesis comes into its own. Consider the minimal pairs (21) and (22):

(21)   a.   Siento que venga
             feel+1SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
             'I'm sorry he's coming'
       b.   Siento que viene
             feel+1SG that come+3SG+IND
             'I feel/sense he's coming'
(22)   a.   Insisto en que los niños estén (subj)
             insist+1SG in that the children be+3PL+SUBJ
             'I insist that the children be here'
       b.   Insisto en que los niños están
             insist+1SG in that the children be+3PL+IND
             'I insist that the children are here'

With a subjunctive complement sentir has a comment interpretation, as in (21a) where the speaker is expressing her sorrow that a third party has not arrived and treating this fact as mutually manifest. The indicative complement of (21b), in contrast, forces a parenthetical interpretation in which the complement clause is presented as relevant in its own right. The function of the matrix clause is to signal that this assertion is based on a feeling and therefore made with less than full certainty. Notice again that a world-type account of mood such as Rouchota's would not be able to explain the difference between (21a) and (21b), for if anything the indicative clause here presents the state of affairs as less certain than the subjunctive does.

(22) shows how a volitional reading of insistir is dependent on a subjunctive complement. Only (22a) implies that the state of affairs described by the complement is desirable to the hearer and as yet unrealized. (22b) lends itself to a parenthetical reading, with the matrix clause strengthening the speaker's commitment to her assertion that the children are present.

Lunn has further evidence that speakers exploit the mood system in Spanish in order to communicate whether or not they are presenting the proposition expressed by a clause as relevant is its own right. Two examples are cited below:

(23)   Mi Dios me manda contestarte que no te ame (*La familia de León Roch* by
       Benito Pérez Galdós, cited in Lunn, 1989a: 250)
       my god me tells+3SG answer.you that not you love+1SG+SUBJ
       'My God tells me to answer that I don't love you'

(24)   El mundo no va dejar de girar porque me hayan dado el Nobel (remark
        attributed to Camilo José Cela by Lunn, 1992: 436)
        the world not go+3SG stop of turn because me have+3PL+SUBJ given the
        Nobel
        'The world's not going to stop turning because they've given me the Nobel'

Lunn explains that the context for (23) is that the speaker in fact loves her husband (the addressee) but is commanded by her priest to say that she doesn't. The use of the subjunctive can therefore be explained as follows: by expressing in the subjunctive mood the proposition that she does not love her husband, she marks this as not relevant in its own right and does not invite him to investigate the implications of this 'fact'. The motivation for (24) is, according to Lunn, modesty: by expressing the fact that he has won the Nobel Prize in the subjunctive mood Cela downplays its importance. Again, this can be explained by the hypothesis that the subjunctive marks information as not presented as relevant in its own right, for by expressing information in this way the speaker distracts attention from it while remaining committed to it by virtue of the factive connective *porque*.

However, there is another explanation of Cela's choice of mood that Lunn does not mention. The English translation of (24) is ambiguous (depending on intonation) between (24') and (24''):

(24') [Not[the world is going to stop turning]] because they've given me the Nobel
(24'') [Not[the world is going to stop turning because they've given me the Nobel]]

In (24') the fact that the world is not going to stop turning is presented as the result of Cela having been awarded the Nobel prize, while in (24'') the idea that the world could stop turning because he has been awarded a Nobel is denied. Clearly the latter is Cela's intended meaning and the use of the subjunctive ensures that this is the only possible interpretation. This is compatible with the current analysis: the fact that the *because*-clause is in subjunctive mood means that the propositional form it represents must be treated as contributing to the relevance of the utterance as a constituent of a more complex representation, not as a relevant constituent in its own right.

There is further evidence of the information-structure role played by mood choice in Spanish. Krakuskin & Cedeño (1992) analysed mood choice after *el hecho de que* ('the fact that') in a ten-year series of magazine articles by a particular columnist. Among their findings was that subjunctive clauses appeared before the main verb (when the nominal clause introduced by *el hecho de que* was the subject of the main verb) while the indicative appeared after the main verb (when the nominal clause was the complement). Sperber & Wilson (1995:216) point out that information presented early in an utterance generally has the primary function of

making accessible encyclopaedic information which the speaker considers essential for the successful interpretation of her message. In other words, this information is not generally relevant in its own right. It is therefore no surprise, on the current analysis, that the subjunctive is the choice for pre-verbal nominal clauses of this type. Note that this data raises significant problems for those who would seek to account for the indicative/subjunctive contrast in terms of formal possible-world semantics. Besides Rouchota this group includes Farkas (1992) who looks at Romanian and French, and Portner (1997) who discusses English and Italian. Whatever the merits of these accounts, it is difficult to see how they could be made to reflect what is essentially a functional processing criterion for mood selection.[8]

Less obvious support for the analysis presented here comes from the contrast between restrictive relative clauses in the indicative and subjunctive moods (these are discussed by Rivero, 1971). Compare the following:

(25) a. Estoy buscando a una mujer que tiene ojos negros
          be+1SG looking to a woman that have+3SG+IND eyes dark+PL
          'I'm looking for a woman who has dark eyes'
      b. Estoy buscando una mujer que tenga (subj) ojos negros
          be+1SG looking a woman that have+3SG+SUBJ eyes dark+ PL
          'I'm looking for a woman who has dark eyes'

In her discussion of mood in modern Greek, Rouchota (1994: 250-259) shows that, contrary to what is often supposed, indicative restrictive relative clauses (RRCs) such as (24a) can be used with either a referential or an attributive reading of the NP. She also argues that, in line with what is generally supposed, subjunctive RRCs such as (24b) always have an attributive reading. She argues that this is because if a proposition is entertained as a description of a state of affairs in a possible world, then nothing follows as to whether this is a true description of the actual world and therefore nothing follows about whether an individual matching the description of the NP exists in the actual world. Similar arguments follow from an account that assumes that what is encoded by subjunctive mood is that the proposition expressed is not presented as relevant in its own right: the implications of the proposition expressed will not be derived; the existence of the possible referents will not be implied; and an attributive interpretation will be arrived at.

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[8] Quer (2001) attempts to explain such cases, but his account is too detailed to do justice to here. I believe that formal treatments of mood such as his, Farkas (1992), Portner (1997) and Villalta (2000) offer very promising insights and I intend to examine these and their relationship to the picture presented in this paper at a later date.

Before moving on to a more general discussion of the merits and implications of this account, I would like to consider a possible counterexample. Consider (26) and (26'):

(26)   Tal vez venga
       Perhaps come+3SG+SUBJ
(26') Tal vez viene
       Perhaps come+3SG+INDIC
       'Perhaps he's coming'

In both cases the proposition *He's coming* is expressed with less than certainty, but in the first case the subjunctive is used while in the second it is the indicative. I suggest that this reflects two ways in which a proposition which is entertained as less than certain can be represented. The first is as the object of a higher order representation something like *It's possible that P*, while the second is simply to entertain the thought which expresses P with less than maximal strength. This appears a straightforward way to deal with the difference between (26) and (26'): the former, being marked as not relevant in its own right, would be presented as relevant in the first way, the latter in the second, though the difference in meaning would be difficult to articulate (which, according to most informants, is indeed the case).

6 Discussion
6.1 The assertion/non-assertion account restated?

It might be thought that the account offered here is little more than a restatement of the assertion/non-assertion account proposed many years ago by Terrell & Hooper (1974). Even if this were the case, though, I would still argue that it was a worthwhile exercise for two reasons. Firstly, Terrell & Hooper's account is not grounded in a psychological theory of utterance interpretation and it would strengthen its claims considerably if it could be shown that it could be integrated into such a theory without major revision. Moreover, it would be to relevance theory's benefit if it could be shown accommodate a broadly accepted insight into this mood distinction.

However, I would argue that the current proposal does much more than simply restate Terrell & Hooper's insight as it does away with assertion and non-assertion as theoretical primitives and instead employs notions which are fundamental to a well-developed theory of utterance interpretation. One problem faced by Terrell & Hooper's account has been how to deal with the complements of so called 'semifactive' predicates. These are cases such as those listed in (27), which contrast

with those in (28) in that while both have complements which survive under negation (a standard test for presupposition), this commonality is not reflected in their selection of mood. Moreover, unlike 'true factives', these can give rise to a parenthetical interpretation when they have a indicative complement.

(27) a. i. Se ha enterado de que viene
            REFL has found-out of that come+3SG+IND
            'She's found out that he's coming'
        ii. No se ha enterado de que viene
            not REFL has found-out of that come+3SG+IND
            'She hasn't found out that he's coming'
        iii. No se ha enterado de que venga
            not REFL has found-out of that come+3SG+SUBJ
            'She hasn't found out that he's coming'

      b. i. Se ha dado cuenta de que viene
            REFL has notice of that come+3SG+IND
            'She has noticed that he's coming'
        ii. No se ha dado cuenta de que viene
            not REFL has notice of that come+3SG+IND
            'She hasn't noticed that he's coming'
        iii. No se ha dado cuenta de que venga
            not REFL has notice of that come+3SG+SUBJ
            'She hasn't noticed that he's coming'

      c. i. Sabe que viene
            know+3SG that come+3SG+IND
            'She knows he's coming'
        ii. No sabe que viene
             not know+3SG that come+3SG+IND
            'She doesn't know he's coming'
       iii. No sabe que venga
            not know+3SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
            'She doesn't know that/if he's coming'

(28) a. i. Es una lastima que venga
            is a shame that come+3SG+SUBJ
            'It's a shame he's coming'
        ii. No es una lastima que venga
             not is a shame that come+3SG+SUBJ
            'It's not a shame he's coming'

  b. i. Es raro que venga
          is strange that come+3SG+SUBJ
          'It's strange he's coming'
      ii. No es raro que venga
          not is strange that come+3SG+SUBJ

  c. i. Me sorprende que venga
          myself surprise that come+3SG+SUBJ
          'I'm surprised he's coming'
      ii. No me sorprende que venga
          not myself surprise that come+3SG+SUBJ
          'I'm not surprised he's coming'

The semifactives (27) are presented in triplets because they have a wider choice of complement: the indicative is required for affirmative predicates while either the subjunctive or the indicative can follow a negative. What's more, it is the indicative complement that may be presupposed in these cases (i.e. the subjunctive complements of the (27 iii.) cases are not presupposed), whereas in the (28) cases the presupposed complement is marked with a subjunctive, as Terrell and Hooper's account predicts. Hooper (1975) considers this point and notes that the (27) cases demonstrate many of the characteristics of so-called assertive predicates (i.e. those open to a parenthetical reading) and therefore concludes that they are assertive and do not pose a problem for Terrell and Hooper's analysis. However, this still leaves unexplained the fact that the subjunctive in one environment marks presupposition, while in another it marks its absence.

Guitart's (1991) solution to this problem is to point to a distinction between what is semantically presupposed and what is pragmatically presupposed (a distinction he finds in Kempson 1975), the former being dependent on tests such as survival under negation and the latter depending on speaker-hearer assumptions about the background to the conversation. On this view, the fact that a proposition is semantically presupposed does not mean it cannot be pragmatically asserted. However, Guitart offers no explanation why subjunctive complements such as (28), which are semantically presupposed, cannot be pragmatically asserted.

A more promising solution is offered by Mejías-Bikandi (1994). This author starts by defining assertion as follows:

> a speaker asserts a proposition P when the intention of the speaker is to indicate that P describes the world as s/he or some other individual perceives it (p. 892)

Notice that this is a rather different notion of assertion to that standardly employed in the philosophical and linguistic literature. On Mejías-Bikandi's view an utterance of a sentence such as (29) would involve two assertions:

(29)   Jimmy believes the tooth-fairy left a coin under his pillow

The first assertion would be that *Jimmy believes the tooth-fairy left a coin under his pillow*, which, the speaker would be indicating, describes the world as she sees it; while the second would be that *the tooth-fairy left a coin under Jimmy's pillow.* Assuming the speaker to be an adult who does not believe in the existence of the tooth-fairy, she would be indicating that this embedded proposition describes the world as Jimmy perceives it. Ignoring issues that arise from characterising assertion in this way, Mejías-Bikandi's aim is clear: to provide a definition of assertion that correlates with the use of indicative clauses, whether embedded or otherwise. Mejías-Bikandi attempts to do this by characterising a speaker's beliefs about that world as a domain R(s) which contains the propositions that the speaker assumes to be accurate representations of reality. Contained within this domain will be further sub-domains which represent other people's views of reality (or, we might add, those which represented the content of works of fiction, suppositions and so on). These domains Mejías-Bikandi, following Fauconnier (1985), labels Mental Spaces. Thus to assert P, on Mejías-Bikandi's view, is to say that P is contained in a particular mental space R. (29) thus presents *Jimmy believes the tooth-fairy left a coin under his pillow* as contained in the mental space which constitutes the speaker's view of reality, while *the tooth-fairy left a coin under Jimmy's pillow* is presented as a contained in the mental space which constitutes the speaker's view of Jimmy's view of reality.

Thus Mejías-Bikandi is able to explain the use of indicative complements in cases such as (27) by arguing that the speaker is making an assertion about her representation of the 3rd person's view of the world. In cases such as (28), by contrast the speaker has no intention of indicating that the proposition expressed by the complement is contained in any R and thus the subjunctive is employed.

Notice that it would be quite simple to integrate Mejías-Bikandi's account into relevance theory using the account outlined in this paper. The notion of relevance to an individual is derived from the more fundamental notion of relevance in a context. (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 118-171). It would be possible to say that in uttering an indicative clause, the speaker marked the proposition expressed as relevant in a particular context, be that the hearer's representation of the world or an embedded world-representation such as the hearer's representation of another individual's representation of the world. Indeed, such an approach might be worth exploring.

It would represent, though, a significant shift of emphasis away from the view presented in this paper, on which the speaker, in her choice of mood, indicates to the hearer how the proposition expressed is intended to be relevant to him. Indeed, an important criticism of Mejías-Bikandi's account is that it overlooks the fact that embedded indicative clauses are often presented as relevant to an audience not as a description of another's representation of the world but in their own right. In this way it neglects the information-structure element of assertion and thus it is not obvious how it could account for the *el hecho de que* cases discussed earlier in this paper. Mejías-Bikandi is aware of this and suggests that some appeal to relevance might be in order:

> …the notion of relevance and the notion of assertion (as conceived in [Mejías-Bikandi's] article) can be related in an informal, although intuitively correct, way. By asserting some piece of information, the speaker foregrounds that information, that is, the speaker is indicating that his/her intention is directed towards that piece of information. If we assume that relevant information tends to be foregrounded, then we can conclude that relevant information will tend to be asserted; that is, it will be intentionally presented as true by the speaker. (1994: 900)

Thus Mejías-Bikandi has it that asserted information is foregrounded information, which is in turn relevant information. However, while it is clearly the case that any complete account of assertion will need to be able to account for both its commitment-to-truth element and its information-structure element, it is not clear how Mejías-Bikandi's account could ever hope to do this given the highly idiosyncratic definition of assertion on which it is predicated. This is because, for Mejías-Bikandi, an utterance will involve as many assertions as there are indicative clauses in the sentence uttered, but we are offered no account of how the foregrounded information (i.e. that which conveys the main point of the utterance) is to be picked out. Thus despite the initial promise of Mejías-Bikandi's account, it suffers from the same problem as accounts which claim that mood encodes that the proposition expressed represents a particular type of world in that it is unable to give an account of the information-structure role played by this mood-distinction.

Note though, that the account proposed in this paper has no problem coping with the data in (27). The subjunctive complements are not relevant in their own right because they are presented as doubtful or untrue; the indicative complements are potentially relevant in their own right and are hence open to a parenthetical interpretation.

Before concluding this section, it is necessary to return to the issue of why the subjunctive receives a different interpretation in the (27) cases and the (28) cases. As Guitart (1991) points out, the (27) cases all involve knowledge or acquisition of

knowledge. Now, there are two possible reasons a person can fail to have knowledge of a situation or event: either because it does not exist or because it exists but that person is ignorant of it. The indicative/subjunctive choice in the complement clauses of knowledge and acquisition-of-knowledge predicates removes this ambiguity. With an indicative complement, such predicates, be they negative or affirmative, present the proposition expressed by the complement as true because they present it as potentially relevant in its own right. Whether it is *actually* relevant in its own right depends on whether it is part of the common ground between the speaker and the audience. A subjunctive complement, by contrast, presents the proposition expressed as not relevant in its own right, and hence the reason that the subject does not have knowledge of the state of affairs in question is that it does not exist. The potential relevance in their own right of propositions expressed by the complements of knowledge and acquisition-of-knowledge predicates reflects the fact that humans are interested in the assumptions of others not only as a means of predicting and explaining behaviour but also as a potential source of knowledge.

   The reason factive-emotive cases such as (28) require the subjunctive appears to be that the complement presents the cause of the response/emotional state (Bosque 1990: 20-22; Quer 2001: 108) and is hence not presented as relevant in its own right but as part of a complex proposition expressing a causal relationship between a state of affairs and an individuals response to it.

6.2 Issues relating to relevance theory

6.2.1 Explicaturehood.   It might be thought that the account offered here could be simplified by saying that the indicative mood marks the proposition expressed as a potential explicature of the utterance, while subjunctive mood marks it as definitely not an explicature. However, there are at least two factors which would make such an equation problematic. Firstly, there is the case of metaphor. Consider (30) used to describe a teenager's bedroom:

(30)   It's a tip

   On the original relevance theory account of metaphor (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 231-237) the speaker of (30) would have been thought to have said (but not to have communicated) that the room in question was a municipal waste-dump, in order to communicate via implicature that it was dirty, untidy, a health hazard etc. On this view then, interpreting a metaphorical expression requires both decoding the utterance to arrive at its logical form and enriching this to the proposition literally expressed before deriving the implicatures and then discarding the proposition literally expressed, as this is not a communicated assumption. Note that on this

story the proposition literally expressed is relevant in its own right but, not being communicated, is not an explicature of the utterance. Metaphor would thus count as evidence that being an explicature is distinct from a proposition being relevant in its own right.

However, it turns out that the picture is not so simple. In a broad discussion of concept widening and narrowing, Carston (1996) questions the special status given to the proposition literally expressed and suggests that following a path of least effort in interpreting an utterance will lead to this being bypassed in many cases. To see why this is so, consider (30) again. Here, all that is needed to access the relevant encyclopaedic information about tips is the conceptual address activated by the constituent corresponding to *tip* in the logical form of the utterance. This makes accessible those assumptions which contribute to the relevance of the utterance (that the room is untidy, dirty, etc.) without having to go to the effort of arriving at a fully literal interpretation of the sentence uttered, which would then be discarded. On this view, the proposition expressed by the utterance is derived in parallel with and determined by the implicatures it licences. In other words, the proposition expressed by (30) is (30'), where *tip** denotes an *ad hoc* concept linked to only that encyclopaedic information filed under 'tip' which contributes to the relevance of the utterance.[9]

(30') The room is a tip*

On this revised view, then, a metaphorical utterance can have an explicature and will have on such occasions that the proposition expressed by the enriched logical form of the utterance (which will include *ad hoc* concepts) is communicated by that utterance. This is compatible with our intuitions that the speaker of (30), say, has asserted something which can be agreed with or challenged, and that this is not that the room in question is a municipal waste-dump.

Does this mean then that explicaturehood and a proposition being presented as relevant in its own right do equate? Unfortunately, the argument from metaphorical utterances is not conclusive. Carston (1996) also points out that there are a number of cases where it would be more effortful to derive *ad hoc* concepts than to derive the proposition literally expressed when interpreting metaphorical utterances, one example being sustained metaphor such as (31):

(31)   Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player that struts and frets his hour upon the stage, and then is heard no more;… (*MacBeth* V, v, 24-26, Carston's (31b))

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[9] This view has recently been elaborated upon by Wilson & Sperber (forthcoming).

In such cases, the proposition expressed is relevant in its own right but is not an explicature of the utterance (as on the original relevance theory account of metaphor).

The second class of cases which might shed light on this issue are those like (4), repeated once again for convenience:

(4) a. Me alegro de que venga
        myself please+1SG of that come+3SG+SUBJ
        'I'm happy that he's coming'
     b. Es raro que venga
        is strange that come+3SG+SUBJ
        'It's strange that he's coming'
     c. Me sorprende que venga
        me surprise+3SG that come+3SG+SUBJ
        'I'm surprised that he's coming'

The proposition expressed by the subjunctive clause is an explicature of the utterance (on Carston's refined definition) but it is not presented as relevant in its own right. It is an explicature because it expresses a proposition that the speaker is committed to (that someone is coming) which would be derived by developing a logical form encoded by the linguistic form. However, as we have noted earlier the speaker presents it as already mutually manifest and not relevant in its own right. In other words, the speaker makes it mutually manifest that she is happy about/finds it strange that/is surprised that something is the case and states explicitly what this is in order to reduce the hearer's processing effort. Here, then, an explicature serves only to identify (but not necessarily make any more manifest) an assumption that will facilitate the derivation of the implications which will fulfil expectations of relevance.

So while there does appear to be some overlap between explicaturehood and a proposition being relevant in its own right, they do not equate. This is perhaps not surprising, as the role played by the proposition expressed is being looked at from different perspectives: whether a communicated proposition is an explicature or an implicature is a question that hinges on how it is derived (Carston 2002); whether or not a proposition is relevant in its own right is a question about its function in the interpretation of the utterance.

6.2.2 Linguistic vs. 'real' semantics.   Earlier in this paper, I suggested that a weakness of prior relevance theoretic accounts of mood distinction is that, being based on world types, they fail to respect adequately the distinction in relevance theory between linguistic semantics and 'real' semantics. Consider how Clark

(1991: 48-9) analyses the contribution of information encoded by mood to the interpretation of (32):

(32)   John, you are calm (Clark's (35))

   According to Clark, what the hearer of (32)is licensed to assume, given the semantically encoded information in declarative syntax, is (32'):

(32') The proposition that John Smith has the property of being calm represents a thought entertained as a description of an actual or possible state of affairs.

This encoded information is then combined with contextual assumptions as the hearer infers the speaker's intended message.
   Compare this with how the utterance would be interpreted on the current account. The decoding of the utterance would make the following assumption manifest to the hearer:

(32'') The speaker has said that John Smith is calm

The fact that indicative mood has been used to express the proposition that John Smith is calm would mean that two inferential routes for the interpretation of the utterance were open: one exploring the implications of (32'') and another exploring the implications of the proposition that John Smith is calm. If this second route resulted in adequate cognitive effects for expectations of relevance to be fulfilled, then the main relevance of the utterance would lie down this route and the speaker would be taken to have asserted the proposition that John Smith is calm. If, however, the first route proved the more fruitful then an alternative interpretation would be arrived at, one in which the speaker was not taken to have asserted the propositional content of the sentence uttered, as in cases of irony or reported speech. Notice two things here: firstly the hearer is not entertaining assumptions about what is encoded by the choice of mood; secondly he is not entertaining thoughts about the type of world the proposition expressed is presented as representing. A 'real' semantics analysis of the communicated message, couched in possible worlds terminology, is of course possible, but it plays no role in the mental life of the hearer.

7 Conclusion

The account of the indicative-subjunctive contrast proposed in this paper differs from previous accounts in that it focuses on the interpretation process rather than

the results of that process. By doing so it is able explain a wide range of interpretations in a parsimonious manner, relying only on pre-existing theoretical concepts and machinery. It is also able to shed light on why accounts for the indicative/non-indicative contrast in terms of world-types has appealed to so many. On the relevance theoretic view, non-actual worlds are always metarepresented; that is, any proposition entertained as a representation of a non-actual state of affairs is always embedded in a higher-order assumption. If it were not, it would interact freely with assumptions about the actual world and most likely lead to the cognitive system generating false assumptions. Hence descriptions of non-actual worlds are never sincerely presented as relevant in their own right (though any proposition which is presented as relevant in its own right is necessarily presented as a description of the actual world). However, it does not follow that not being presented as relevant in its own right equates with not being presented as a description of the actual world. As we have seen, descriptions of the actual world can also be metarepresented, such as when an attitude towards that state of affairs is entertained. There is likely to be a statistical tendency for propositions not presented as relevant in their own right to be descriptions of non-actual worlds; and there is no doubt a statistical tendency for forms which allow propositions to be presented as relevant in their own right to be actually used in this way, so that indicatives (especially main-clause indicatives) will often be used to make manifest descriptions of the actual world, and non-indicatives descriptions of non-actual worlds. But these tendencies don't explain what's encoded by the forms in question. What this paper has tried to show is that the notion of a proposition (not) being presented as relevant in its own right can do a better job of this.

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