Sebastian Buchczyk – Syntax Colloquium (Prof. Dr. Katharina Hartmann)

The correspondence of verb position in German and Romance subjunctives in embedded clauses

In Romance languages, subjunctive mood is mainly triggered by a subset of embedding verbs, i.e. attitude verbs. Such verbs take an argument expressing a proposition (Portner 2018; see also Kiparsky & Kiparsky 1971; Schlenker 2005; Costantini 2009, 2016). Among these attitude verbs, volitional verbs such as *vouloir* (want) typically call for subjunctive mood in embedded clauses:

(1)   Jean veut   que Marie   parte.   [French]
        Jean wants that Marty   leaves.SUBJ
        'Juan wants Pedro to leave.'

    Attitude verbs such as *espérer* (hope) take subjunctive mood only, if they are negated. Otherwise, the embedded sentence is indicative.

(2)   J'espère que tu es /   *sois   satisfait.   [French]
        I hope   that.you are.IND/are.SUBJ   satisfied
        'I hope that you are satisfied.'   (Meinunger 2007)

    Comparing some data of embedded clauses in French and German, Meinunger (2004, 2006, 2007) makes an interesting observation for the verb second phenomenon in Germanic and mood selection in Romance. He maintains that there is a *Correspondence alignment* according to which "those predicates and grammatical phenomena that block V2 in German[ic] subordinate clauses trigger subjunctive mood in Romance" (Meinunger 2004: 323; 2006: 467). The data in (2) confirms his claim as the German equivalent to *espérer*, *hoffen*, allows for a V2 construction. In comparison, the negation of *espérer* triggers subjunctive mood and according to Meinunger's (2007) claim should not allow for V2 in German embedded clauses. This seems to be the case:

(3) a.   Ich hoffe, du   bist zufrieden
              I   hope   you are satisfied
              'I hope you are satisfied.'
    b. *   Ich hoffe nicht, du   bist zufrieden.
              I   hope not   you are   satisfied
              ' I don't hope that you are satisfied.'
    c.   Ich hoffe nicht, dass du   glücklich bist.
              I   hope not   that you happy   are
              'I don't hope that you are satisfied.'

    Taking this as a starting point, I plan to look further into this phenomenon by presenting some data and observations I have made on my own so far. Furthermore, I wish to discuss ideas of possible theoretical approaches in order to capture these observations cross-linguistically.