PARADIGMS – A SOMEWHAT NEGLECTED GRAMMATICAL CONCEPT

by
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This paper discusses ideas about paradigms and metalinguistic categories put forward by Carl Bache in two papers. In more detail and by means of authentic examples it also discusses how to construe paradigms within the modern German mood system, when seen from either a formal or a semantic perspective as the basic point of view. Also different levels of abstraction, nearer or further away from authentic instantiated usage, are envisaged.

1. Introduction

In modern linguistics, especially the various American brands, the understanding of paradigms, i.e. paradigmatic properties and arrangements has been rather neglected.[1] But not so by Carl Bache. In two papers, "The semantics of grammatical categories: a dialectical approach" in Journal of Linguistics (1985) and "On categories in linguistics" in Acta Linguistica Hafniensia (2002), he investigates the problem of how to understand the semantics, i.e. the content, of grammatical paradigms. How do we understand the grammatical categories we attach to the paradigms, and how do we understand the hierarchy of paradigms in metalanguage?

In the 1985 paper Carl Bache wants "to present a practical descriptive approach to the semantics of grammatical categories, especially of the binary type involving two forms only" (1985: 51). His focus is on two areas of English grammar: restrictiveness in relative clauses and verbal aspect. In both cases there is a paradigm with two members, none of which is a direct inflectional paradigm in the

traditional grammatical sense. Even so, his reflections, of course, are applicable in cases of inflectional paradigms as well:

> One of the key problems facing the analyst concerned with substitutional relations in natural language is to determine the precise relationship between the distribution of two (or more) competing members of a formal grammatical category and the index of semantic values, the semantic category, underlying the substitutional system. (Bache 1985: 52).

From this and the accompanying graphs it appears that the direction of the reflections goes from form to content, i.e. the semantics of the paradigm; thus from the tangible part, the form, to the more intangible content, which is far more elusive and therefore the more debatable part of the linguistic sign.

2. The German mood system.

The German mood system is a three part inflectional system with a fully fledged indicative and subjunctive, and a rather rudimentary imperative (which is left out of consideration here). The indicative/subjunctive system is equipollent in that both members of the paradigm share the same combination of grammatical categories (mood, tense, person, number) and the same non-finite categories. Example (1) displays the paradigm of the verb *haben*, 'to have', in the present tense, all three persons and two numbers (note that some forms are homonyms):

(1)	indicative	subjunctive	
	ich habe	ich habe	('I have')
	du hast	du habest	('you have')
	er hat	er habe	('he has/he have')
	wir haben	wir haben	('we have')

ihr habt	ihr habet	('you have')
sie haben	sie haben	('they have')

The four grammatical categories, although combined in every inflectional morpheme, function in different semantic directions and therefore have different affinities with other elements in the clause, e.g. with elements from other parts of speech. However, the mood category is functionally strongly interconnected with tense, whereas number and person are of no consequence for the matter in hand; therefore they are left out of consideration here. (2) displays the tense inflection of the verb *haben*, 'to have' in the third person singular and the six tenses in normal usage[2]:

(2)	indicative	subjunctive	
	er hat	er habe	('he has')
	er hatte	er hätte	('he had')
	er hat gehabt	er habe gehabt	('he has had')
	er hatte gehabt	er hätte gehabt	('he had had')
	er wird haben	er werde haben	('he will have')
	er würde haben	er würde haben	('he would have')

The German mood system is semantically part of a much larger modal system which involves words from other parts of speech as well. Mood concentrates on assigning a basic epistemic value to the kernel state of affairs of the clause.

The paradigms of (1) and (2) are the normal paradigms on display in traditional grammars. The design is clearly based on the form of the verbs, but the backbone of the paradigms, i.e. their definition, is just as clearly semantic; otherwise there would not have been homonymic forms in the set up. The paradigms are pure grammatical abstractions; any participation in a syntagmatic construction is disregarded apart from the personal pronouns, which in the paradigms function as indicators of person and number. In this way some homonyms are

sorted into monosemantic items. Methodically the form paradigms, of course, are abstractions from distributions in actual speech acts; as such they belong to the grammatical metasystem. Actually, as Bache would say (2002: 73), the two paradigms, indicative and subjunctive, are two members of one superordinate category, the mood category as such. This holds especially for (1). In (2) the perspective is more on the tense category, here displaying six members. The members of the two categories are substitutionable, but mutually exclusive in that only one member can fill the same positions in a construction at a time. Generally, this "systematic alternation presupposes that the relevant elements alternate within well-defined semantic limits" (Jakobsen & Heltoft, forthcoming). The limit in this case, the semantic definition of paradigm (1), is the representation of reality in instantiated states of affairs in clauses. One member, the indicative, sets the reality level in the writer's text world, whereas the subjunctive indicates some deviance from this, as illustrated in (3). Tenses place the state of affairs of the clause at various points within the time continuum. In the following dialog, a man, Tornow, tells his interlocutor about his sister, who has had very bad luck:

(3) "Luise war das hübscheste Mädchen der Welt."
"War?"
"Sie ist nicht tot", sagte Tornow… "Vielleicht wäre es besser, sie wäre". (Kutscher: 473)

"Luise was the prettiest girl in the world
(war.IND.PRT.3P. SG.).
"Was?"
"She is not dead", Tornow said. "Maybe it would be better if she were" (wäre.SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.).

The aim of paradigmatic descriptions is to produce recurring, intersubjectively valid descriptions (Leisi 1971: 114). On the form

side, the "tangible" part of the linguistic sign, the construction of an inflectional paradigm is relatively uncomplicated; maybe this is the reason why traditional grammars take the form side and not the content side as the first perspective for the layout. Especially uncomplicated are instances such as paradigm (2) which lets tense and mood co-vary: there is a one-to-one distribution between form and content, one form – one combined content with four grammatical categories.

This seems to be rather simple, but this simplicity depends on the metalinguistic level of abstraction and the first perspective of the paradigm. A far more complicated pattern emerges, if, instead of the form, the content is chosen as the first perspective – and if the primary level for the abstractions is the bottom, the instantiated clauses, where the actual semantic functions of especially the subjunctive forms can be seen. It now appears that the form side of the subjunctive falls apart into three substitutionable content paradigms, with the same forms appearing in two different paradigms:

(4)

subjunctive I	subjunctive II	subjunctive III	indicative
er habe	er hätte	er habe/ hätte	er hat
(er habe gehabt)	er hätte gehabt	er habe/hätte gehabt	er hatte
(er werde haben)	er würde haben	er werde/ würde haben	er hat gehabt er hatte gehabt er wird haben er würde haben

The non-reality content level of (2) dissolves into three distinct ways of imagining non-real states of affairs (cf. section 3). This shows that the content ascribed to (2) is an abstraction of the contents of (4); (2) holds only for the superordinate category, mood as such, and is further away from actual semantic instantiations than (4). (2) is a bipartite paradigm, and its members are substi-

tutionable, but this only out of context. If you try substitutions in a context, they will be semantically rather unpredictable. (4) constitutes a paradigm with four members which are mutually substitutionable in a predictable way (cf. section 3). In his 2002 paper Carl Bache says that

> … the first level [= my (4) paradigm] captures the *differences* between the members, and the second level [= my (1) paradigm] captures the *similarity*. The 'membership' level is the level of specialization, i.e. it is the level of *instantiation* of particular values, while the superordinate level is more general and abstract, serving as a *common denominator* of the individual members. (Bache 2002: 79)

Only a two-level description can account for the choice between, on the one hand, the indicative and the subjunctive within mood as such, and, on the other hand, between the members of the subjunctive subparadigm and their mutual relations. Thus the two levels of abstraction may cater for different practical applications within linguistic descriptions. As can be seen from section 3, the German subjunctive deviates quite a lot from e.g. the Romance languages in usage, and certainly from the other Germanic languages, in so far as they have kept subjunctive forms at all. Only the superordinate level, as it stands, is suitable for a broad interlinguistic typological point of departure, whereas the subordinate level is the basis for either intralinguistic descriptions or functional comparisons between two or three languages[3].

In this paper the three subjunctive paradigms are just called subjunctive I, II, and III. Note that subjunctive I has only forms with finites in the present tense, subjunctive II only forms with finites in the preterite tense, whereas subjunctive III has all forms but still only three temporal levels like the other two paradigms.

3. What is the content of the three subjunctive paradigms?

With its various tenses the indicative carries the burden of placing the described states of affairs of the clauses at various points within the time continuum in an absolute way. Obviously the content of the various tenses in the subjunctive cannot do the same when only half of the tense forms are available per paradigm. Note that especially in subjunctive III the present and past finite verbs place the state of affairs at the same time level. Although the subjunctive as such has a tense system, these tenses function only relatively to the instantiated indicative ones as simultaneous, previous, or prospective states of affairs seen from the indicative position on the time continuum. As demonstrated in (5), which is about certifying possible religious miracles, and in (6):

(5) Was Anna Schäffer angeht, so soll sie einen jungen Mann geheilt haben. […] Außerdem eine Frau, in deren Bauchhöhle sich literweise Wasser angesammelt hatte. Ärzte hätten die Wunder testiert, sagt Schwager. Bewiesene Wunder seien Zeichen Gottes und müssten all unseren Zweifeln ein Ende setzen. (ZM 27.3.2013: 31)

As for Anna Schäffer, it is said that she cured a young man. Also a woman in whose abdomen several litres of water had accumulated. Doctors have certified (hätten testiert.SUBJ.PRTPRF.3P.PL.) the miracles, Schwager says. Established miracles are (seien.SBJ.PRS.3P.PL.) signs from God, he says, and must (müssten.SBJ.PRT.3P.PL.) put and end to all our doubts.

(6) Und[4] [1]falls meine Film- und Musikkarriere doch irgendwann im Sand verlaufen sollte, würde ich gern eine Kochschule besuchen und ein kleines Restaurant eröffnen. Als Kind habe

ich oft meinem Vater beim Kochen geholfen […] [2]Meine Restaurants wären eher klein, intim und in meinen Lieblingsfarben eingerichtet, Gold und Lila. (ZM 27.3.2013: 25)

And if after all my film- and music career should (sollte. SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.) somehow peter out, I would like (würde besuchen/eröffnen.SBJ.FUTPRT.3P.SG.) to attend a cookery school and open a small restaurant. As a child I often helped my dad when cooking. […] My restaurants should be (wären.SBJ.PRT.3P.PL.) rather small, cosy, and furnished in my favourite colours, gold and violet.

The three subjunctive paradigms signal three different ways of deviating from the reality level in a text. Subjunctive I is used in directives; the imagined state of affairs is not real, but lies within the possibility of realisation, seen from the reality level of the speaker. In a way this state of affairs is directed towards a future situation, compared with the surrounding text (Jakobsen & Heltoft forthcoming). Normally only the present form is used; the other tenses are considered extremely academic or poetic.

(7) Dies ist eine Übung für die Pause am Arbeitsplatz. Man lehne sich zurück. Kopf in den Nacken, Nase nach oben. (Zeit 29.3.2012: 54)

This is an exercise for the pause at your workplace. You lean (= must lean) (lehne. SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) back. Head backwards. Nose upwards.

Subjunctive II places the state of affairs at an imaginary reality level which is further away from the reality level of the speaker. This imaginary reality has a relatively large span from clearly counterfactual utterances as in (3) and (6[1]) to utterances with a content which

actually lies within the reality level, but which are masked to be at a distance from reality in the disguise of the modest opinion of the speaker (Jakobsen & Heltoft, forthcoming), as in (8) and presumably in (6[2]). The rather large span in content must then be seen as usage variants in syntagmatic surroundings, as can be seen in (8), which is a conversation between two men – one is Gennat – about a certain Mr. Goldstein:

(8) "Goldstein hat die hiesige Tourismusbranche nach Kräften unterstützt, würde ich sagen."
"Vielleicht sollten Sie auch das tun", meinte Gennat. "Es wäre wohl besser, Sie verbringen das Wochenende nicht zuhause". (Kutscher: 565)

"Goldstein has supported the local tourist branch with all his might, I would say (würde.SBJ.FUT.PRT.3.PL.)."
"Maybe you should (sollten.SBJ.PRT.3.PL.) do that as well", Gennat said. "It might be (wäre.SBJ.PRT.3.SG.) better, I am sure, that you don't spend the weekend at home".

The structural difference in content between subjunctive I and II can be ascertained by substitution, as in (9 a-b). Subjunctive III cannot be tested against the two other paradigms, as it contains all forms on display in I and II:

(9a) Er sei hier pünktlich um drei Uhr.

He must (= has to) (sei.SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) be here at three o'clock sharp.

(9b) Er wäre hier pünktlich um drei Uhr.

He should (probably) (wäre.SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.) be here at three o'clock sharp.

Subjunctive III is used as an indication that there is another voice speaking in the text than the original text speaker. The quot**ing** voice is reduced to be the locutionary agent, and the quot**ed** voice is the original illocutionary agent. When using subjunctive I and II, the speaker is also the illocutionary agent (Jakobsen & Heltoft, forthcoming).

As shown in (4) all subjunctive forms are involved in this third paradigm. The normal procedure in usage here is to choose a form with the finite verb in the present tense. If, however, this form coincides with an indicative form, a preterite form is chosen. If this again coincides with an indicative form, it is unfortunate, but cannot be helped. No further options.

(10) Gestern erklärte mich Jack offiziell zu einem Familienmitglied. Er sagte, ich hätte nun eine zweite Familie in Tansania und sei sein Erstgeborener. (ZEIT: 16.8.2012:78).

Yesterday Jack officially declared me a member of the family. He said that I had (hätte.SBJ.PRT.1P.SG.) a second family in Tanzania now and was (sei.SBJ.PRS.1P.SG.) his first-born.

Normally the indirect quotation is subordinated an *inquit* expression as an introduction to the quotation, which makes the subjunctive III form semantically redundant[5]. But this introduction is not necessary; a non-introduced subjunctive III is able to carry the intended shift in reality level itself; this then is the proof of subjunctive III as an independent paradigm (11a):

(11a) Margot Kohn fiel aus allen Wolken. Ihr Neffe Abraham in Berlin? Davon wisse sie nichts! (Kutscher: 352).

Margot Kohn was dumbfounded. Her nephew Abraham in Berlin? Indeed, she did not know (wisse. SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) anything about it, she said.

(11b) Davon wusste sie nichts.

She did not know (wusste.IND.PRT.3P.SG.) anything about it.

Margot Kohn fiel aus allen Wolken is the voice of the narrator. After that the voice of Mrs. Kohn is introduced. If the subjunctive *wisse* is substituted by the indicative *wusste* as in (11b), it would be a continuation of the voice of the narrator.

What is said here is the strict semi-officially prescribed usage, which is demanded from e.g. quality newspapers and official documents. In daily usage normally only subjunctive II is used – in which case paradigm III disappears; or the speaker tries to use subjunctive III, but messes up the forms. Or gives up entirely and sticks to the indicative all the way. Thus, there are large differences in the competency[6], the individual competence of speakers. But use of the indicative presupposes that there is an *inquit*, indicating that an indirect quotation is coming. With subjunctive III there is actually no need for that, the subjunctive form does the job alone, as example (11a) shows.

Another problem is rare subjunctive forms like *böte* or *hälfe/hülfe* which are often considered affected and consequently avoided. They are replaced by periphrastic forms containing the verb *werden*, which is both a standard auxiliary and has distinct subjunctive forms, as in (6[1]) *würde besuchen*.

Subjunctive III, a rather new creation in German, has been subjected to several interpretations of the kind that the quoting voice expresses uncertainty or doubt about the truthfulness of the quotation. But this interpretation seems unrealistic because of cases where the author of the text is quoting himself in the subjunctive, and even sets himself as a quoted illocutionary agent on par with other quoted illocutionary agents as in (12), which reports a discussion among editors of a magazine about the authenticity of Hitler's diaries, manuscripts which the magazine might be going to publish:

(12) Über diese Wege wollten wir Chefredakteure nun doch etwas mehr wissen: auch darüber, seit wann Heidemann auf der Spur der "Tagebücher" sei, denn schließlich gebe es in der gesamten Literatur keinerlei Hinweise darauf, dass Hitler Tagebuch geführt habe. Er werde als ausgesprochen schreibscheu geschildert.
Der Vorstandsvorsitzende Fischer will Zweifel erst gar nicht aufkommen lassen. Er begegnet ihnen mit dem Argument, dass ja alles rasch und gründlich überprüft werde, dafür werde er schon sorgen. (Zeit: 4.4.2013: 15)

About these channels we editors in chief now wanted to know some more: also for how long Heidemann had been (sei.SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) onto the "Diaries", for after all there wasn't (gebe. SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) any indication at all in the literature that Hitler had kept (geführt habe.SBJ.PRF.3P.SG.) a diary. It was said (werde geschildert.SBJ.PRS.PAS.3P.SG.) that he rather shunned writing.
The chairman of the board, Fischer, would not allow any doubt. He countered with the argument that everything would *be* rapidly and thoroughly checked (überprüft werde. SBJ.PRS.PAS.3P.SG.) of course, he was sure to take care (werde sorgen.SBJ.FUT.3P.SG.) of that, he said.

4. Semantic variation in usage within the paradigms – or across the paradigms.

Seen from the content as the first perspective there can be no doubt that there are three functionally distinct subjunctive paradigms (4). But again, as to the content each of the three paradigms has a certain interpretational range. E.g. subjunctive II allows for interpretations going from the total counterfactual state of affairs

as in (3) over imagined, but maybe not quite impossible states of affairs as in (6[1]) to cautious, but in fact quite real statements as in (8). No substitutions can separate these differences in usage. Only the pragmatic knowledge of the reader can differentiate and reach a plausible interpretation. Plausible for the reader, but without any guarantee that the interpretation is what the author meant. In (6) the subjunctive form in (6[1]) clearly conveys that the lady's alternative career is far away from being of immediate importance. (6[2]) is either only a continuation of the far away non-real career, or within this stipulated alternative career world she depicts her real, but modest and self-effacing ideas about the furnishing of the restaurant.

When to this is added the fact that the subjunctive II forms are identical with half of the subjunctive III forms, and that the usage of subjunctive III may be rather messy, there is plenty of room for interpretations. In (13) the person, *er*, Goldstein, attends the burial of his grandfather:

(13) Er befühlte die Remington [eine Pistole] in seiner Jacke. Er wusste, [1]dass er sie nicht auf den Friedhof hätte mitnehmen dürfen, aber er glaubte, [2]dass sein Groβvater es ihm nicht übelnehmen würde, [3]dass er Verständnis hätte für die Situation seines Enkels, [4]könnte er ihn hier sehen. [5]Und vielleicht tat er es sogar. (Kutscher: 425).

He touched the Remington [a pistol] in his jacket. He knew that he had not been allowed (hätte dürfen. SBJ.PLUPRF.3P.SG.) to bring it to the churchyard, but he thought that his grandfather would not mind (übelnehmen würde.SBJ.FUTPRT.3P.SG.), that he would understand (hätte.SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.) the situation of his grandchild, if he could (könnte.SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.) see him here. And maybe he actually did (tat.IND.PRT.3P.SG.).

Example (13) demonstrates this range of interpretations in usage. The translation is my interpretation of the forms, but there may be other possibilities. *Er wusste* and *er glaubte* are *inquits* as an introduction to an indirect rendering of the person's thoughts. After the strict usage norm this would produce forms from the subjunctive III paradigm, here with the finite forms in the present tense. Which obviously they are not, as (13^{1}) shows. So the interpretation is that the locutionary agent, the narrator, either keeps to subjunctive II altogether within the indirect speech; this includes (13^{2-4}). An interpretation which might be contradicted by the indicative form *tat* in the last clause (13^{5}). Or in (13^{2-4}) he starts on a counterfactual state of affairs about what the grandfather might think of the situation. And counterfactual states of affairs are obligatorily represented in subjunctive II, also within an indirect speech rendering in subjunctive III. But again, are we to believe that the grandfather actually could see his grandchild in the churchyard, as the indicative *tat* in the last clause might lead us to understand as a comment from the narrator? Or is it still the thoughts of the man with the pistol? In the last case the author might have got himself into a mess by his exuberant use of subjunctive forms, in the end have given up on the subjunctive enterprise, and resorted to a plain indicative form. As can be seen, there is ample room for interpretation, and in a case like (13) the reader only has his understanding of the text world and his own pragmatic common sense to fall back on.

In his 1985 paper, Bache puts forward the idea that there are two levels of relevant grammatical meaning in some paradigms, thus rejecting the unilevel idea:

> The first level is a subjective DEFINITION level comprising the BASIC meanings of systems, that is, the meanings that pertain uniquely and pervasively to substitutional forms or constructions in a one-to-one relationship. […] My second level is an objective FUNCTION level. At this level we find

> composite meanings or variant meanings from different systems. This 'categorial interplay', as I call it, may be the result of one and the same word form or grammatical construction being a member of more than one system at the same time […] or it may be the result of two otherwise unrelated systems being instantiated in one syntactic construction […]. In both instances, basic meanings from different semantic categories may form distinctive functional variants. (Bache 1985: 63)

In the case of the German subjunctives, the content of paradigm (1) may be described as the subjective definition level; the three paradigms of (4) represent the objective function level. Subjunctive II often combines with other elements in constructions belonging to the pure semantic concept of 'irreality'; and subjunctive III combines with elements denoting 'indirect quotation'. Both contents are also parts of narrow grammatical categories, thus part of the categorical interplay.

However, there remains the question of how to describe the actual interpretation of a form within a broad content range in usage. It may be profitable to consider the different aspects of 'meaning'. As Happ (1985: 108) says, it is advisable to distinguish between *Bedeutung* (content), *Bezeichnung* (reference) and *Sinn* (purport):

> Die *Bezeichnung* ist der Bezug auf das Außersprachliche […], sei es als Tatbestand oder als Denkinhalt (gedachter Tatbestand). Die *Bedeutung* hingegen ist der einzelsprachlich gegebene Inhalt […]. Der *Sinn* schließlilch ist die texteigene Ebene des Semantischen, d.h. der besondere sprachliche Inhalt, der mittels der Bezeichnung und der Bedeutung und über Bezeichnung und Bedeutung hinaus in einem bestimmten Text ausgedrückt wird (Coseriu 1971, 81-82). (Happ 1985: 107)

> The *reference* is the connection with the extralinguistic world, be it as a state of affairs or as the content of thoughts (an im-

agined state of affairs). The *content*, however, is the content of one particular language. The *purport*, finally, is the level of semantics belonging to the text, i.e. the specific linguistic content which through reference and content and beyond reference and content is expressed in a specific text (Coseriu 1971, 81-82).

To find the *Sinn*, the purport, of a clause – or one should say **a** *Sinn* – is the final task of the reader. The reader makes a choice where there is more than one functional possibility and may overrule the content of the grammatical markers and thus skew the normal reference of the clause. This can be seen from especially example (13). Where content and standard reference are parts of the language system, sense is part of the specific communication situation. The *Sinn* is to be considered beyond intersubjective validity, thus outside grammatical descriptions.

5. Redundancy in the modal component of the clause.

Mood is only one element in the semantics of modality. It may be combined with other semantically related modal elements in the clause construction. A star example is the combination with a subjunction 'as if': *als ob* or *als* + an unusual position of the finite verb form just after the *als*[7]. Both possibilities are unequivocal signals of counterfactual states of affair, which in itself should qualify a choice of subjunctive II:

(14) Als Kirch bald nach seiner Pleite im Jahr 2002 zu klagen begann, sah es nicht so aus, als <u>hätte</u> er eine Chance. (Zeit 16.2.2012: 21)

When Kirch started to lodge complaints after his bankruptcy 2002, it did not seem as if he <u>had</u> (hätte.SBJ.PRT.3P.SG.) a chance.

(15) Am Nebentisch sitzen die Kollegen Björn Sänger und Otto Fricke von der FDP, schmale Krawatten, randlose Brillen, vertieft in ein Gespräch, es sieht aus, als <u>drehe</u> das ZDF eine Feature über moderne Hauptstadt-Netzwerker. (Zeit 2.2.2012: 53)

At the next table the colleagues Björn Sänger und Otto Fricke from the FDP [a political party], narrow ties, rimless spectacles, are sitting absorbed in a discussion, it looks as if ZDF [a television channel] <u>is making</u> (drehe.SBJ.PRS.3P.SG.) a feature about modern urban net workers.

In this case the use of the otherwise obligatory subjunctive II for counterfactuals is relaxed; both subjunctive II (14) and I (15) are found. A grammatical description must see this as a kind of reversal to the superordinate paradigm in (1), where the subjunctive forms only signal an unspecified deviance from the reality level. This could lead to an abandonment of the two-level paradigms, thus reverting to a more "non-monadic" concept of the semantics of a form.[8]

A combination with the indicative is possible as well, but, as it seems, only in constructions with *als ob* as the more distinct marker. Thus subjunctive is the more marked member of the mood paradigm and can be dispensed with if the reality value of the state of affairs is secured by other elements in the clause. In (16) we get a fictitious twitter from the Second World War:

(16) Es sieht aus, als ob Zebras durch die Wälder <u>streifen</u>. (Ponys werden angemalt, damit sie von Fahrern während der Verdunkelung gesehen werden). (www.freitag.de/kultur/1203-medientagebuch)

It looks as if zebras <u>are roaming</u> (streifen.IND.PRS.3P.PL.) through the forests. (Ponies are painted in order to be seen by drivers throughout the blackout).

6. Conclusion.

Carl Bache is a great champion of a consistent metalanguage across linguistic theories – and rightfully so.

> There is no consistent use of the term 'category' in studies of morphology, but what is worse, there is no generally accepted terminology or consistent definitions of many of the notions to which this term potentially applies. Tense is one such notion which continues to pose serious metalinguistic problems. (Bache 2002: 76)

Indeed, we need not go very far to see this, one look at the relation between categorical notions and one object language as e.g. German will be sufficient. When viewed from the form perspective the German tense system is quite symmetrical with the mood system, with which it coexists inflexionally, as seen in (2). Seen from the content side, however, there is a great difference; the six indicative tense forms are used to plot states of affairs on to a time continuum with the text speaker's deictic stand as the fixed point. Compared to this, the subjunctive system is lacking in specificity, as seen in (4); moreover, the actual point on the continuum can only be decided relatively to the indicative tense usage in texts. Thus tense forms are not really substitutionable in the tense dimension between the indicative and the subjunctive. So what is meant when we talk about e.g. the preterite tense in German? Is it the form or the semantics?

A related, but more complicated problem is mood. Again, seen from the form perspective mood is symmetrical with the tense system. And one – rather abstract – content can be ascribed to the subjunctive member of the paradigm as well: an unspecified non-reality. But this only holds for a type paradigm which is abstracted well away from actual token usage. As a token-near paradigm it falls apart in into three subparadigms (4). The temptation to skip the very

abstract content paradigm of (1) in grammatical descriptions and stay with the three subparadigms alone – at least in more normative grammars – is certainly there. But it is not feasible. One reason lies within correct usage: when the verb is combined with a semantically related modal element in the same construction the sharp distinction between the three subparadigms may be relaxed; it is possible to resort to some content form of the abstract paradigm of (1).

Another reason lies within the general confusion in usage of subjunctive III; many users have a very relaxed way of using the forms, which somehow also leads us back to the paradigm in (1). As long as some deviation from the reality level of the text is signalled, it seems good enough for many users here. Another possibility for the user is to skip the subjunctive altogether in many constructions. This, of course has to do with the rich selection of categories from other parts of speech and constructions, which makes it possible to convey more or less the same content in a construction as a strict adhesion to the normative subjunctive systems of II and III would do.

In his appeal for a consistent metalanguage Bache says that "depending on the amount of language-specific variation, such a metalanguage will always provide a too regular theoretical basis" (2002: 103). It certainly will, if you look at a language such as modern German. An unequivocal grammatical metalanguage raises many problems about its construction. Which is the level of abstraction in the stipulated categories? If the metalanguage keeps to superordinate categories with a one-to-one relationship between form and content, it may miss some of the intricacies of inflectional languages. A rough sketch of the one-form-one-content of the superordinate mood system of German will miss many points about its actual function. It will make German more like the other Germanic languages than is reasonable. But it would not say much about what inflections can actually do in a language. This might be the aim of course, e.g. in typology, which presumably would stop being typology, if the descriptions get too near actual usage. And, again, one-form-one-

content may miss many ways in various languages of conveying the same semantic grammatical category.

An unequivocal metalanguage is of course a must. But the premises for its construction will be crucial for what you can do with it, crucial for the correct labelling of categories in the object languages. Metacategories are paradigmatic in essence; therefore a careful study of paradigmatics as such is necessary.

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Notes

1. In British and continental grammar paradigms have been less neglected, although there is still much to be done in fundamental understanding (Happ 1985). As a starting point he says that

   > Wenn man unter 'Paradigma' ein Etwas versteht, bei dem sich 'innerhalb eines gegebenen festen Rahmens bestimmte Änderungen vollziehen', kann man darunter sowohl 'Paradigma' = 'Flexionsschema' […] wie auch 'Paradigma' = 'Substitutionsklasse'. (1985: 94)
   >
   > If by 'paradigm' you understand a something, where certain changes happen within a given fixed frame, you can include both 'paradigm' = 'inflexionial pattern' and 'paradigm' = 'substitutional class'.

   This is my understanding of paradigms as well.
2. The last two possible tenses are extremely rare in texts; in fact they have only academic interest.
3. Carl Bache polemicizes against modern American linguistics with a strong syntagmatic point of departure which takes the first level [= my (4)] as the unilevel. "What is lacking in their analysis is a synchronic functional component which ties the grammaticization to actual usage", (Bache 2002: 82)
4. The numerals within the examples are a way to facilitate references to individual clauses in the examples.
5. In fact, subjunctive III is redundant in another way as well: in indirect quotations the deictic forms are changed from the point of view of the illocutionary agent to that of the locutionary agent. In direct quotes the original point of view of the illocutionary agent is maintained.
6. 'Competency' is a newly coined concept, indicating the individual competence in a language (Harder 2010).
7. *Als* combined with an end position of the finite indicative verb is a temporal subjunctor and has no counterfactual value.
8. "A non-monadic form is a form whose semantic contribution to a sentence cannot be described exhaustively with reference to just one superordinate category (or simply, one semantic domain) […]. Non-monadic forms are thus semantically and cognitively complex" (Bache 2002: 99). Here I make take "monadic" in a narrower sense than Bache, as I understand a semantic domain as e.g. one of the subparadigms of the subjunctive.

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