

Abstract

In Serbian, complements of directive and desiderative predicates can be finite clauses headed by DA. DA-clauses also serve as matrix clauses conveying directives or expressing wishes. Unlike subjunctive complements in Romance, Slovenian, or Hungarian, embedded DA-clauses do not show obviation effects, i.e., they allow for coreference between matrix and embedded subject. However, overt embedded pronominal subjects are banned in this case. We argue that this ban is a reflex of obviative modality in a particular complement type and disambiguation towards this type by an overt subject. The obviative construction also underlies the directive or desiderative matrix DA-clauses, where obviation surfaces as a restriction on what conversational participants the subject can refer to.

obviation complement clause modality mood

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1 Introduction

A variety of languages realize the complements of directive or desiderative attitude predicates with an alternation between infinitival and finite subjunctive complements. The latter can display obviation effects, that is, restrictions on coreference between matrix and embedded subjects (e.g. Romance, Hungarian; [Quer, 2006](#), for discussion). In Serbian, the complements of these verbs can all be realized as finite indicative clauses, headed by *da*. These are acceptable regardless of whether matrix and embedded subject co-refer. However, [Zec \(1987\)](#) and [Farkas \(1992\)](#) observe a restriction on whether embedded subject pronouns can be overt, which appears to follow the distinction between obviative and non-obviative constellations.

In this paper, we argue that the ban on overt pronouns in DA-complements in obviating constellations (i.e., when matrix subject and embedded subject corefer) results from disambiguation in favor of an obviating modal construction. To this point, we argue that Serbian finite complement DA-clauses come in three types: (a) those that cannot have an overt subject, instead containing PRO (optionally replaced by infinitivals); they are not obviative (b) those that encode prioritizing modality and are obviative similarly to Romance or Hungarian subjunctives, and (c) those that convey epistemic or reportative modality (making them suitable to appear under assertive, but not directive/desiderative matrix predicates); they are not obviative.¹ Our arguments for this account build on two sets of observations: (i) restrictions on the behavior of standalone *da*-clauses in directive use (Sect. 2.2), and (ii) the readings available for clauses embedded under verbs like *say* that can report both assertive and directive utterances (Sect. 3.2). We begin with a discussion of obviation effects elsewhere and in Serbian (Sect. 1.1), explore modally read *da*-clauses in the context of a notion of obviation that applies also to matrix clauses (*generalized subject obviation*) in Section 2, and develop

¹An anonymous reviewer suggests that the obviative complement type (b) could be considered a subjunctive. We follow [Portner \(2018\)](#) in reserving ‘subjunctive’ for a morphological category which constitutes one of many options of realizing the notional category of mood (including certain occurrences of modals in English or our obviative *da*-clauses).

the syntactic and the semantic side of our account in Sections 3 and 4, respectively. In Section 5, we discuss apparent exceptions to the obviation pattern in matrix clauses. Section 6 concludes.

1.1 Classical subject obviation and Serbian

Classical subject obviation (CSO), as familiar from Romance languages, is a constraint against sameness in reference of matrix subject and embedded subject in bi-clausal structures (Picallo, 1985; Ruwet, 1984):

- (1) [MATRIXSUBJECT_i {want, hope, insist,...} [EMBEDDEDSUBJECT_{j,*i} ...VERB_{Subjunctive...}]]

Typical instances involve subjunctive complements of directive or desiderative predicates.

Example (2) shows that the subjunctive is unacceptable when matrix subject and embedded subject are co-referential. This is independent of the person feature.

- (2) a. *Je veux que je parte.
I want that I leave.SUBJ
Intended: 'I want to leave.'
- b. Pierre_i veut qu'il_{*i,j} parte.
P. wants that=he leave.SUBJ
'Pierre wants that he (≠ Pierre) leave.' French, Ruwet 1984

Kempchinsky's (2009) Spanish example (3) emphasizes that the restriction involves the matrix subject. Coreference can occur between the matrix object and the embedded subject, as in (3-a). However, as soon as the matrix object and matrix subject co-refer (thereby making the matrix and the embedded subject co-refer), the example becomes ungrammatical (3-b).

- (3) a. Su padre le ordenó a Ana que dejara de hablar
Her father her.DAT order.PST to Ana that leave.3SG.IMPV.SUBJ of talk
del asunto.
about.the issue
'Her father ordered Ana that (she) stop talking about the matter.'
- b. *Ana se ordenó (a sí misma) que dejara de pensar
Ana REFL order.PST (to REFL.3SG same.FEM) that leave.3SG.IMPV.SUBJ of think
en el asunto.
in the issue
Intended: 'Ana ordered herself that (she) stop thinking about the matter.'

Spanish, Kempchinsky 2009

2 Serbian (the variety of BCMS spoken by two of the authors) realizes
 3 clausal complements of non-factive matrix predicates as finite clauses
 4 headed by an **element DA**:^{2,3}

- 5 (4) a. Ana je { mislila / rekla } da pada kiša.
 Ana be.3SG.PRES { thought / said } DA fall.3SG.PRES.IMPFV rain.
 6 'Ana {thought / said } that it was raining.'
- 7 b. Ana je pokušala da opere prozore.
 Ana be.3SG.PRES tried DA wash.3SG.PRES.PFV windows
 8 'Ana tried to wash the windows.'
- 9 c. Marija je naredila Petru da opere prozore.
 Marija be.3SG.PRES ordered Peter.DAT DA wash.3SG.PRES.PFV windows
 10 'Marija ordered Peter to wash the windows.'
- 11 d. Marija je zamolila Petra da opere prozore.
 Marija be.3SG.PRES asked Peter.ACC DA wash.3SG.PRES.PFV windows
 12 'Marija asked Peter to wash the windows.'

13 Note that Serbian is a subject *pro*-drop language: pronominal subjects
 14 need not be realized overtly, provided their referent is salient (see
 15 [Jovović 2020a,b](#) for detailed discussion).

- 16 (5) Petar nam je bio u poseti. Oprao nam je prozore.
 Petar we.DAT be.3SG.PRES been in visit washed we.DAT be.3SG.PRES windows.
 17 'Petar came to visit us. He washed our windows.'

18 In contrast to what is observed in Romance, DA-clauses under desider-
 19 ative (6-a) and directive (6-b) predicates do not appear to be subject
 20 to CSO:

- 21 (6) a. Želim da odem.
 want.1SG.PRES.IMPFV da leave.1SG.PRES.PFV
 22 'I want to leave.'
- 23 b. Ana je naredila sebi da prestane da misli
 Ana be.3SG.PRES ordered self da stop.3SG.PRES.PFV DA think.3SG.PRES.IMPFV
 24 o tome.
 about that
 25 'Ana ordered herself to stop thinking about that.'

26 Instead, they display sensitivity with respect to the realization of
 27 the embedded subject: if matrix and embedded subject co-refer, the
 1 embedded subject has to remain covert ([Zec, 1987](#); [Vrzić, 1996](#); [Farkas,](#)

²This variety also has infinitivals, which can replace *da*-clauses under some predicates; see Section 3.1 for discussion.

³While all Serbian present tense forms are marked for perfective or imperfective, we did not observe that obviation effects were sensitive to aspect. We indicate aspectual distinctions in our examples, but take them to be orthogonal to the phenomena under consideration.

2 1992), as the contrast in (7-a) vs. (7-b) shows.^{4,5} We call this effect
3 *pronominal subject obviation* (PSO):

- 4 (7) a. Petar_i je želeo da dodje na vreme.
Petar be.3SG.PRES wanted DA come.3SG.PRES.PFV on time
5 'Peter wanted to come on time.' co-reference: OK
6 'Peter_i wanted him_j to come on time.'
- 7 b. Petar_i je želeo da on_{*i,j} dodje na vreme.
Petar be.3SG.PRES wanted DA he come.3SG.PRES.PFV on time
8 *'Peter wanted to come on time.' co-reference: *
9 'Peter_i wanted him_j to come on time.'

10 Crucially, complements of verbs of thinking or saying are not subject
11 to PSO. Overt and covert pronouns can corefer with the matrix subject
12 *i* or refer to another salient individual *j*:⁶

- 13 (9) Jovana_i misli da (ona_{i,j}) vodi na listi.
Jovana think.3SG.PRES.IMPFV DA she lead.3SG.PRES.IMPFV on list
14 'Jovana_i thinks she_{i,j} is leading in the competition.' co-reference: OK

15 The possibility of overtly realizing the embedded subject in (9) even
16 when the attitude is held *de se* (i.e., when the attitude holder is aware
17 the content is about them) suggests that PSO cannot be reduced to
18 the well-known preference for covertly realizing *de se*-pronouns in
19 attitude reports (Patel-Grosz 2020). The referential possibilities for
1 embedded subjects are summarized in Table 1.

	<i>want</i> -verbs		<i>think</i> -verbs	
	Matrix subject	Other individual	Matrix subject	Other individual
Covert subject	✓	✓	✓	✓
Overt subject	*	✓	✓	✓
	PSO no CSO detectable		(no obviation expected)	

Table 1: The referential possibilities for embedded subjects

⁴We will refine this generalization in Sect. 4.2: an embedded stressed pronominal is acceptable.

⁵Note also that Romance-style CSO arises regardless of whether the embedded subject is overt or covert, e.g., (3) with covert subjects.

⁶As in any Spanish-style pro-drop language, the realization of unstressed overt pronouns is restricted by information structural constraints: roughly, they cannot be topical (Jovović, 2020a,b). Consider (8-a) for a context in which the unstressed coreferential overt pronoun in (9) is felicitous, and (8-b) for a context in which it is not:

- (8) a. Who thinks they might stand a chance?
b. What about Jovana? Any chance she will win the competition?

Controlling for these information structural properties does not improve the examples with directive or desiderative predicates.

2 Modality and DA

2.1 Matrix DA-clauses conveying prioritizing modality

DA-clauses also appear in matrix position with directive or desiderative use (Browne & Alt, 2004; Vrzić, 1996), standing in for canonical imperatives used to express commands or wishes:⁷

- (10) a. Da čitaš ovu knjigu! / Čitaj ovu knjigu!
 DA read.2SG.PRES.IMPFV this book / read.IMP this book
 'Read this book (already)!' COMMAND
- b. Da brzo ozdraviš! / Ozdravi brzo!
 DA fast become.healthy.2SG.PRES.PFV / become.healthy.IMP fast
 'Get well soon!' WISH

In the directive matrix uses, DA-clauses are *strong directives* (von Fin-
 tel & Iatridou, 2017); they cannot replace canonical morphosyntactic
 imperatives in uses for disinterested advice, invitations, concessions,
 or acquiescence (cf. (11)–(14)):

- (11) A: Kako da stignem do Harlema?
 how DA arrive.1SG.PRES.PFV to Harlem
 'How do I get to Harlem?'
- B: { #Da ideš / Idi } A linijom.
 DA go.2SG.PRES.IMPFV / go.IMP A line.INSTR
 'Take the A-train.' ADVICE
- (12) { #Da sedneš. / Sedi. }
 DA sit.2SG.PRES.PFV / sit.IMP
 'Have a seat.' INVITATION
- (13) Onda { #da ideš / idi } na tu tupavu žurku.
 then { DA go.2SG.PRES.PFV / go.IMP } on that stupid party
 'Ok, then go to that stupid party.' CONCESSION
- (14) A: Can I open the window? – B: (Go ahead),...
 { #Da otvoriš. / Otvori. }
 DA open.2SG.PRES.PFV / open.IMP
 'Go ahead, open it.' ACQUIESCENCE

Matrix DA-clauses retain their prioritizing⁸ flavor in interrogatives

⁷For discussion of matrix uses of clauses bearing complement clause marking, see e.g., Truckenbrodt (2006) or Grosz (2011).

⁸Portner (2007) introduces *prioritizing modality* as a cover term for deontic, bouletic, and teleological modality.

(Vrzić, 1996):⁹

- (15) a. Da Vesna pročita ovu knjigu?
 DA Vesna read.3SG.PRES.PFV this book
 ‘Should Vesna read this book?’ Vrzić 1996: (2a)
- b. Da li da Vesna pročita ovu knjigu?
 QPART DA Vesna read.3SG.PRES.PFV this book
 ‘Should Vesna read this book?’ Vrzić 1996: (2b)
- c. Koju knjigu da Vesna pročita?
 which book DA Vesna read.3SG.PRES.PFV
 ‘Which book should Vesna read?’ Vrzić 1996:(fn. 8:i)

2.2 Person restriction in matrix DA-clauses

Directive main DA-clauses can contain second or third, but not first person subjects (shown for the singular; in the plural, only first person inclusive is blocked):¹⁰

- (16) a. Da pročitaš ovu knjigu!
 DA read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book
 ‘Read this book (already)!’
- b. Da Vesna pročita ovu knjigu.
 DA Vesna read.3SG.PRES.PFV this book
 roughly: ‘Vesna should really read this book!’,
 ‘See to it that Vesna reads this book.’
- c. *Da pročitam ovu knjigu!
 DA read.1SG.PRES.PFV this book
 Intended: ‘I really have to read this book.’,
 ‘See to it that I read this book.’

Regardless of the subject, standalone DA-clauses express prioritizing modality that has to be performative – they aim to influence the future course of events or express preferences; they cannot be used for truth-evaluable assertions of what the relevant agent (you, Vesna, I) is supposed to do, i.e., they cannot describe what the world is like in this respect.

In unmarked *information seeking interrogatives* (speaker unbiased, addressee presumed to know, answer expected) about what should happen, the person pattern shifts: first and third person subjects are available, while second person subjects are not.

⁹*Da li* in (15b) is a non-clitic counterpart of a question particle *li* (Browne 1975, i.a.). Focus of this paper is the lower DA.

¹⁰Desiderative main DA-clauses appear to follow the same pattern, but involve additional complications that we discuss in Section 5.

30 (17) Da { pročitam / pročitā / #pročitaš } ovu knjigu?
 DA read.1SG.PRES.PFV / read.3SG.PRES.PFV / read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book
 1 'Should { I / (s)he / #you } read this book?'

2 (18) Da { pročitamo / pročitaju / #pročitate } ovu knjigu?
 DA read.1PL.PRES.PFV / read.3PL.PRES.PFV / read.2PL.PRES.PFV this book
 3 'Should { we / they / #you } read this book?'

4 Second person is confined to suggestions (biased questions as used
 5 for tentative advice, cf. (19)) and echo-questions (cf. (20)).¹¹

6 (19) [Context for tentative advice:] *To a fellow student struggling in the class:*

7 A da (možda) pročitaš ovu knjigu?
 (but) DA (maybe) read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book
 8 'You should maybe read this book?'

9 (20) [Context for echo questions:] *To a fellow student who mentioned what book the professor
 10 wants him to read:*

11 a. Da pročitaš OVU KNJIGU?
 DA read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book?

12 b. Jel OVU KNJIGU da pročitaš?
 QPART this book DA read.2SG.PRES.PFV
 13 'You have to read THIS BOOK?!' (...*Pa on nije normalan. 'He's crazy.'*)

14 Unbiased information seeking questions, which are infelicitous with
 15 second person subjects in DA-clauses, can be realized with a modal
 16 verb instead (e.g. *treba* in (21-b)):

17 (21) [Context for unbiased information seeking:] *Talking to a fellow student, wanting to
 18 find out about their reading list.*

19 a. #Da li da pročitaš ovu knjigu?
 QPART DA read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book

20 b. Da li treba da pročitaš ovu knjigu?
 QPART must DA read.2SG.PRES.PFV this book
 21 'Do you have to read this book?'/ 'Are you required to read this book?'

22 Setting aside non-information seeking questions, we thus obtain the
 23 paradigm in (22):

24 (22) Person restriction for matrix DA-clauses conveying prioritizing modality:

¹¹Whether these questions will be interpreted as biased or echo questions depends partly on the interrogative form type: rising intonation allows both (19-20a), but second person DA-interrogatives formed with question particle *jel* constitute echo questions (20b). We leave a more detailed investigation of different interrogative strategies in Serbian and their interaction with modal DA-clauses for future research.

Environment	Blocked subjects	
Commitment	Speaker (1pExcl)	(*‘I should...!’)
Information seeking question	Addressee (2p)	(*‘Should you...?’)

This is exactly the matrix part of *Generalized Subject Obviation* (GSO), a pattern that Stegovec (2019) establishes for imperatives and directive subjunctives in Slovenian. Slovenian has imperative forms for 2p, and 1pExcl inclusive. Stegovec notes that directive *naj* subjunctives can be used for directives with person values that lack imperative forms, see (23).¹²

(23) Directive *naj*-subjunctives and inflectionally marked imperatives:

Person	Sg	Pl
1(Excl)	naj pomaga-m I should help	naj pomaga-mo we.EXCL should help
1+2	–	pomaga-j-mo (we.INCL) let’s help
2	pomaga-j (you.SG) help!	pomaga-j-te (you.PL) help!
3	naj pomaga (s)he should help	naj pomag-jo they should help

He then shows that the felicitous use of the forms in (23) is subject to the GSO restriction displayed in (24): matrix directives are constrained against coreference with speaker and addressee, respectively, depending on clause type (the pattern familiar from Serbian, see (22)), while the subjects of embedded directives cannot co-refer with the matrix subject (the familiar CSO effect).¹³

(24) GSO restriction on Slovenian directives/imperatives:

¹²Where imperative forms exist, *naj* subjunctives appear to be blocked (Stegovec, 2019). Moreover, unlike Serbian, Slovenian marks dual forms, which for all purposes relevant to our investigation behave exactly like plurals and are thus omitted.

¹³The connection between the lack of canonical first person imperatives and CSO is noted by Quer (1998) and Kempchinsky (2009) (who proposes an account in terms of antilogophoric binding). They do not consider interrogatives.

	Environment	Blocked subject	
17	Matrix	Commitment	Speaker (1pExcl) (*'I...')
		Information seeking question	Addressee (2p) (*'you ...')
18	Embedded		Matrix subject (*' α_i says/orders/... that α_i ...')

19 As Stegovec points out, the GSO-effect's variation over Speaker/Ad-
 1 dressee/Matrix Subject reflects a pattern of *perspective sensitivity* fa-
 2 miliar from elsewhere in grammar. Similar variation is observed with
 3 epistemic modals, evidentials, 'speaker' adverbials, taste predicates,
 4 a. o. (Speas & Tenny, 2003); in this literature, the matrix switch from
 5 Speaker (in declarative/commitment case) to Addressee (in informa-
 6 tion seeking questions) is discussed as *Interrogative Flip*. Moreover,
 7 the pattern matches the one of conjunct-disjunct agreement in lan-
 8 guages like Newari, where the verbal agreement for *self*-referring
 9 subjects differs from the verbal agreement with other subjects (Hale,
 10 1980; Zu, 2018).

11 Serbian poses the following puzzle: while it has the matrix part
 12 of GSO (a.k.a. classical subject obviation, CSO), it appears to lack
 13 the embedded part of it. Instead, we find what looks like a language-
 14 specific effect, namely PSO (pronominal subject obviation).¹⁴

15 In the following, we will argue that Serbian displays the full
 16 GSO pattern after all, but that the embedded part (classical CSO)
 17 is masked by an ambiguity between two different *da*-clause comple-
 18 ments under directive or desiderative (i.e., non-reportative) predi-
 19 cates, only one of which is obviative. The parse as the non-obviating
 20 construction, however, is available only in the absence of an overt
 21 subject. Therefore, the presence of an overt subject disambiguates in
 22 favor of the obviating construction, which results in the pattern of
 23 pronominal subject obviation (PSO).

¹⁴An anonymous reviewer asks if CSO should not then be considered equally language specific to Romance languages. As we argue, PSO is an epiphenomenon of the combination of GSO with occurrence restrictions on overt subjects. Moreover, it remains to be seen which of the forms studied for CSO extend to a full GSO paradigm (see e.g., Szabolcsi 2021 for Hungarian, a non-Romance language originally studied for CSO).

3 The syntax-semantics interface in DA-clauses

3.1 Assumptions about the syntax of DA-clauses

We propose that Serbian DA-clauses, all realized with a verb that carries person agreement, come in three different structures. Matrix DA-clauses correspond to one of those structure, while all three structures appear as DA-complements. The standard assumption is that DA-complements fall into only two classes, *say*-type complements (da_1) and *want*-type complements (da_2).¹⁵ We follow Todorović & Wurmbrand (2015, 2020) in assuming a more fine-grained split into three types of DA-complements.

However, we assume that verbal predicates can be compatible with more than one type, under restrictions of (at least) semantic compatibility (a.o., Kratzer 2006; Moulton 2009; see Elliott 2020 for recent discussion).

The three different DA-clauses (DA_{Ctr} , DA_{Mod} , DA_{Dec}) can be characterized as follows:¹⁶

1. DA_{Ctr} -clauses are complement clauses embedded under verbs of wanting, deciding, trying, or planning. They do not allow for an overt subject. The covert subject receives an interpretation of obligatory control, which is why we propose that they contain PRO.¹⁷ DA_{Ctr} -clauses, with finite verbs in the present tense can always be replaced with infinitival clauses (INF-clauses). The choice has no impact on the meaning, but the possibility for this replacement can serve as an indicator that a DA_{Ctr} -clause can occur in a given environment.

$$(DA_{Ctr}) [MP DA+M [_{ASpP} Asp [_{vP} PRO v [_{VP} VERB_{present}]]]]]$$

$$(INF) [MP M [_{ASpP} Asp [_{vP} PRO v [_{VP} VERB_{infinitive}]]]]]$$

¹⁵Cf. Ivić (1970); Browne (1986); Zec (1987); Progovac (1993b,a, 1994); Vrzić (1996); Bošković (1997); Stepanović (2004); Todorović (2012); Veselinović (2019), a.o.

¹⁶Many of the details are orthogonal to the point we aim to make in this paper. We fill them in because there is no generally accepted three way classification that reflects the specific modal meanings encoded and the connection with the status of the subject (for instance, Todorović & Wurmbrand 2015, 2020 assume the presence of mood features but do not distinguish between interrogative mood and prioritizing modality). The crucial difference is a split into three complement types, only two of which can realize complements of directive or desiderative predicates. Of these two, the one containing an exponent of prioritizing modality (our DA_{Mod}) can contain an overt subject, the other cannot and yields a control interpretation; see Fn. 26 for a related idea from Stegovec 2019. Throughout, we remain silent about the lexical status of DA, but tentatively assume that it is the same functional element merged in different functional heads, see also Todorović & Wurmbrand (2015, 2020).

¹⁷Note that PRO is merged within the vP, but it might very well be the case that it is located in a higher position in syntax. Nothing in our analysis hinges on this choice. Moreover, while we assume the subject to be realized as PRO, any account that captures that a control interpretation is obligatory and an overt subject cannot be realized will serve equally well for our purposes.

18 2. DA_{Mod} -clauses can also appear as the complements of verbs of wanting, deciding
 19 or planning, but differ from DA_{Ctr} -clauses in that they themselves contain a covert
 20 exponent of prioritizing modality, represented by $\overset{Mod}{\text{---}}$ (covert prioritizing modal,
 21 “ghost modal”).¹⁸ They allow for covert or overt subjects and are obviative in nature
 22 (following the paradigm of generalized obviation, Sect. 2.2). As the only type of
 23 DA -clause that contains an exponent of prioritizing modality, DA_{Mod} -clauses can
 24 be detected by their interpretation in environments that do not already encode
 25 prioritizing modality, that is, in matrix clauses or under illocutionarily underspecified
 1 *say*-predicates.

2 $(DA_{Mod}) [TP \{ DP / pro \} T [MP \overset{Mod}{\text{---}} [_{ASP} Asp [_{VP} v [VP VERB_{present}]]]]]$

3 3. DA_{Dec} -clauses are complement clauses embedded under verbs of thinking and saying.
 4 They contain covert or overt subjects, which are not subject to referential restrictions
 5 (they can, but need not, corefer with the matrix subject).

6 $(DA_{Dec}) [CP DA [MP M^{epi/rep} [TP \{ DP / pro \} T [_{ASP} Asp [_{VP} v [VP VERB_{present}]]]]]]$

7 Syntactic and semantic properties can allow us to detect specific
 8 DA -clauses. Overt subjects can occur only in DA_{Mod} - and DA_{Dec} -
 9 clauses. The appearance of overt subjects thus rules out a parse of a
 10 DA -clause as DA_{Ctr} . Consider first desiderative and directive pred-
 11 icates, such as *want*-verbs. Assuming that these predicates cannot
 12 combine with DA_{Dec} -complements (e.g. Todorović & Wurmbrand
 13 2015, 2020), they either combine with DA_{Mod} or DA_{Ctr} . When their
 14 complements contain an overt subject, these can only instantiate a
 15 DA_{Mod} -clause. These structures are correctly predicted to show obvi-
 16 ation effects. Next, only DA_{Mod} -clauses express prioritizing modality
 17 themselves. The standalone matrix occurrences of DA -clauses dis-
 18 cussed in Section 2 can thus only be instances of DA_{Mod} and are
 19 thereby also correctly predicted to show obviation effects (in this
 20 case as restrictions on what conversational participant the subject
 21 can refer to, see Sect. 2.2). Finally, complements of verbs of saying
 22 can convey prioritizing modality, which also indicates a construal as
 23 DA_{Mod} , and these cases are thus also predicted to be obviative (see
 24 Sect. 3.2).

¹⁸The covert prioritizing modal is represented as a ghost because it is the culprit for the phenomena discussed without surfacing overtly. Note that our ghost modal has nothing to do with Kaplanian monsters (Kaplan 1989) as commonly blamed for indexical shifting (Deal 2020 for discussion).

Note that, on the syntactic side, the classification raises a couple of important questions which we set aside as orthogonal to our current investigation. First, PRO occurs in a finite and smaller than CP complement (see Terzi 1992; Bošković 1997; Sundaresan & McFadden 2009; Sundaresan 2014 for supporting arguments). Second, NPI-types, clitic climbing, and topicalization (Progovac 1993a; Stjepanović 2004) identify DA_{Ctr} as smaller than DA_{Mod} and DA_{Dec} ; without deep commitment, we treat the former as M(od)P and both DA_{Mod} and DA_{Dec} as CPs. Third, our representation assumes that all three clause-types contain modality. DA_{Ctr} expresses temporal forward shift in connection with e.g., a metaphysical modal, cf. Abusch 1985; Condoravdi 2002; Abusch 2004; Wurmbrand 2014, DA_{Dec} contains an epistemic or reportative modal (anchoring to an attitude of belief or knowledge or an assertive speech event in the matrix clause), Kratzer 2016.¹⁹ Crucially, only $\overset{Mod}{\text{---}}$ in DA_{Mod} is an obviate prioritizing modal.²⁰ These syntactic choices relate back to our analysis with one specific prediction: if a structure without a subject on the surface can be shown to be larger than DA_{Ctr} by independent tests, we would predict it to be an instantiation of DA_{Mod} and thus display an obviation effect even with a covert subject. We leave it to further research to evaluate this prediction.

3.2 Tracking $\overset{Mod}{\text{---}}$ in the interpretation

We assume that $\overset{Mod}{\text{---}}$ expresses prioritizing necessity. In clauses under desiderative and directive matrix verbs it behaves as a *harmonic modal* (Kratzer, 2016; Moltmann, 2020), which means that it feels semantically invisible as it just picks up the modality expressed by the matrix verb. The effect is shown for English in (26-a), in which omitting an overt modal *should* does not result in a change in meaning (Palmer 2001:7.6; Portner 1992). The resulting interpretation

¹⁹If DA_{Dec} contains reportative or epistemic modality, we might expect standalone usages of this type of DA-clause as reportative subjunctives. This seems borne out, compare (25):

- (25) Rekao je svašta nešto. Da je Marija u Nemačkoj, Petar
said be.3SG.PRES everything something. DA be.3SG.PRES Marija in Germany, Petar
živi u Sloveniji...
live.3SG.PRES.IMPFV in Slovenia...
'He said a lot of things. Mary is in Germany, Peter lives in Slovenia...'

²⁰We follow a standard approach to locating epistemic modals above and root modals below TP (Hacquard 2006, i.a.).

23 for an utterance in context c is sketched in terms of event-relative
24 modality in (26-b) (Hacquard 2006; Oikonomou 2021).

- 25 (26) a. Mary requested that I (should) clean up.
26 b. $\exists e[\text{request}(e) \ \& \ \text{agent}(e) = \text{mary} \ \& \ \text{patient}(e) = \text{speaker}(c) \ \& \ \text{content}(e) =$
27 $\wedge \Box^{R(e)}(\text{speaker}(c)\text{-clean-up})]$

28 where $R(e)$: the accessibility relation determined by event e

29 Following a.o. Kratzer (2006) and Moulton (2009), the matrix pred-
30 icate is interpreted as a property of events and the proposition ex-
31 pressed by the complement clause is related to it through a content
1 function represented by ‘content’ (analogously to the theta roles of
2 the verb). As shown in (26-b), the modal flavor of the embedded
3 necessity modal (technically, its accessibility relation R) depends on
4 the matrix event e . As this is an event of Mary issuing a request, the
5 modal flavor of the embedded *should* is deontic (specifically, Mary’s
6 request). Crucially, what is requested by Mary is that I clean up, not
7 the modal state of me being under an obligation to clean up. By that,
8 the prioritizing modality contributed in the embedded clause seems
9 semantically invisible as it just repeats what is encoded by the matrix
10 verb.²¹

11 While $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\text{Necessity}}$ is harmonic and hence impossible to detect in the
12 interpretation of DA_{Mod} -clauses under directive or desiderative pred-
13 icates, it becomes semantically visible in two contexts: (i) in matrix
14 DA -clauses, and (ii) in the complements of *say*-verbs. We have exam-
15 ined the prioritizing readings and the person restrictions in matrix
16 DA -clauses in Sections 2.1 and 2.2. We now examine complements
17 of *say*-verbs. Such verbs are illocutionarily underspecified and can
18 report assertions (R1) or directive utterances (R2). These result in
19 a reading without, and a reading with prioritizing modality in the
20 embedded clause, R1 and R2, respectively (Browne 1987; Vrzić 1996):

- 21 (27) Vesna kaže da Jovana čita ovu knjigu.
22 Vesna say.3SG.PRES DA Jovana read.3SG.PRES.IMPFV this book
23 R1: ‘Vesna says that Jovana is reading this book.’
R2: ‘Vesna says that Jovana should read this book.’

²¹An anonymous reviewer asks about the syntax of Serbian overt prioritizing modals, such as the necessity modal *treba*. While interesting in its own right, we cannot pursue the issue in this paper. We note, however, that independently of the complement type they occur in, we do not expect obviation effects; these result from the semantics of the covert $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\text{Necessity}}$.

24 As observed before, DA_{Mod} -clauses can contain overt subjects, but do
 25 not have to. If, as we claim, $\overset{Mod}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ is subject to obviation effects inde-
 26 pendently of the covert/overt subject distinction, we predict that *even*
 27 *in the absence of an overt subject*, DA_{Mod} -clauses should be banned from
 28 obviating constellations. This is borne out: if the embedded subject
 29 is co-referential with the matrix subject, R2 becomes unavailable, as
 30 in (28).

- 1 (28) Vesna kaže da čita ovu knjigu.
 2 Vesna say.3SG.PRES DA read.3SG.PRES.IMPFV this book
 3 R1: 'Vesna_i says that she_{j,i} is reading this book'
 R2: 'Vesna_i says that she_{j,*i} should read this book.'

4 To account for this ambiguity, we assume that complements of *say*-verbs
 5 can realize a structure with DA_{Dec} , as in (29-a), associated with the
 6 reading R2, or a structure with DA_{Mod} , as in (29-b), associated with
 7 the reading R1 (see also Vrzić 1996):²²

- 8 (29) [TP SUBJECT_i T... [VP say/think
 9 a. [CP DA [MP M^{epi/rep} [TP { DP_{i,j} / pro_{i,j} } T [ASP Asp [vP v [VP VERB_{present}]]]]]]]]
 10
 11 b. [CP DA [TP { DP_{*i,j} / pro_{*i,j} } T [MODP $\overset{Mod}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ [ASP Asp [vP v [VP VERB_{present}]]]]]]]]

12 Under the assumption that DA_{Ctr} cannot encode R2 (as it would fail
 13 to contribute prioritizing modality), overt and covert subjects are
 14 predicted to be constrained under R2: the modal reading can only
 15 arise from the obviative complement clause, i.e., DA_{Mod} . The assump-
 16 tion that DA -complements of predicates like *kazati* 'say' cannot be
 17 DA_{Ctr} -clauses receives support from the finding that they can never
 18 be replaced by infinitivals (Progovac, 1993a, a.o.).

19 4 The semantics of the obviating prioritizing

20 modal $\overset{Mod}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$

21 In Section 2.2 and 3.2 we have established that DA_{Mod} -clauses are
 22 subject to generalized obviation. In the following, we aim to develop
 23 a theory that applies both in matrix and in embedded clauses.

²²Relatedly, interpretative effects result from indicative/subjunctive contrasts under *advise*-predicates in Greek (Oikonomou, 2021).

4.1 Existing theories for obviating subjunctive complements

Existing accounts for CSO fall into three main categories. First, (*Semantic*) *Blocking* accounts (Farkas, 1988; Schlenker, 2005) assume that a competing construction (typically: infinitival control construction) encodes aspects of directive or desiderative attitude ascriptions. In particular, it encodes that the attitude is held *de se*²³ and/or that the attitude subject has control over the action described by the embedded clause. If this meaning can be conveyed, the competitor has to be chosen over the semantically underspecified subjunctive clause (making the subjunctive the elsewhere case). CSO is predicted to be alleviated when the attitude subject fails to self-identify or is taken to not have control over the course of events described by the embedded clause (Ruwet 1984; Farkas 1988).²⁴ Endowed with suitable meaning, $D_{A_{Ctr}}$ could be considered the relevant competitor for embedded occurrences of $D_{A_{Mod}}$. Yet, it is unclear how to extend the blocking account to matrix cases (as Stegovec, 2019, argues for Slovenian directive subjunctives) or to the absence of the prioritizing reading (R2) under *say*-complements in the obviative constellation. Neither of these constructions can be realized with an infinitival, the presumed competitor.

Second, CSO can be explained syntactically, as an *anti-locality* violation (a.o. Picallo, 1985; Kempchinsky, 1986). But any account that establishes the conflict as holding between subjects struggles when trying to capture the subject restrictions in matrix clauses, as well as to the sensitivity to *de se*. Stegovec (2019) proposes an alternative by establishing the antilocality violation between a left-peripheral perspectival center and the subject of the obviating subjunctive:^{25,26}

²³An attitude is held *de se* if the attitude holder themselves would phrase it involving a first person pronoun, i.e., they are aware that the respective property applies to them (Castañeda, 1963; Lewis, 1979).

²⁴But see Feldhausen & Buchczyk 2021 for an experimental study that fails to confirm Ruwet's intuitions for French.

²⁵Kempchinsky's (2009) account in terms of antilogophoric binding of the subject seems related in spirit, but lacks a fully fleshed out syntax-semantics interface. Moreover, she stops short of fully identifying the modal operators appearing in matrix and in embedded contexts.

²⁶Stegovec's account also allows for an alternative explanation of non-obviating subjunctives (as occurring in Greek). He assumes that the individual referring expression PERSPOP that reflects the perspective holder is really PRO (abstracted over and bound by the matrix predicate). Finite complement clauses that receive an obligatory control interpretation but lack an overt subject involve a defective T-head. PRO is merged as the subject and raises to the specifier of the obviating modal operator (i.e., the position occupied by PERSPOP in (30)). Extending an account along these lines to Serbian would predict that $D_{A_{Mod}}$ and $D_{A_{Ctr}}$ differ only in the nature of the T head, and it would fail to explain why focus allows overt subjects to escape obviation effects.

22 (30) [[PERSPOP_{*i*} MODOP] SUBJECT_{*j,*i*}...VERB_{Subjunctive}...]

23 His account faces challenges in determining the correct binding do-
 24 main for the subject to the exclusion of e.g., object clitics. In addition,
 25 while sensitivity to *de se* can be explained through the dependence
 26 on the perspectival operator, sensitivity to presumed control over the
 27 course of action remains unexpected as it is for the original syntactic
 28 accounts (see discussion in Sect. 4.2).

29 Third, CSO can be explained semantically. Kaufmann (2019b)
 1 observes that an account for a perspective sensitive, non-descriptive
 2 modal operator is required independently, and that the assumptions
 3 made in Kaufmann (2012); Stegovec & Kaufmann (2015) to address
 4 this go a long way towards predicting conflicting presuppositions in
 5 obviative contexts. Kaufmann maintains the idea of a perspectival
 6 operator (set to speaker, addressee, and matrix subject reference ac-
 7 cording to the familiar clause-type sensitive alternation, see Sect. 2.2),
 8 but treats obviation effects as instances of inherently conflicting mean-
 9 ings (Szabolcsi 2021 calls them ‘mind-boggling meanings’; see Con-
 10 stantini 2016 for similar intuitions about knowledge ascriptions in
 11 Italian). In the spirit of the semantic approach, we now aim to devise
 12 a meaning for $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ as an obviating modal.

13 4.2 Assigning obviative semantics to $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$

14 The semantic/pragmatic account of obviation in directives proposed
 15 by Kaufmann (2019b)²⁷ can be sketched as follows. In contexts of
 16 felicitous use, morphological imperatives/directive subjunctives $\phi!$
 17 combine at-issue and propositional meaning in the following way:²⁸

- 18 • A *director* (= the perspectival center), who is taken to know what is necessary
 19 according to the kind of criteria the participants to the conversation agree to rely on
 20 (*decisive modality*, Kaufmann 2012), but not whether ϕ or $\neg\phi$ will happen, commits
 21 that ϕ is necessary, for
- 22 • an *instigator*, who is committed to bring about ϕ in case they learn it is necessary.

23 If one individual *D* is *both director and instigator*, and *D* is presumed

²⁷Kaufmann (2020) suggests an extension to desideratives, see also Szabolcsi (2021).

²⁸Mutual acceptance is supposed to be understood in terms of pragmatic presuppositions Stalnaker (2002), i.e., assumptions that are mutually shared by the interlocutors in the actual context or in the context described by the matrix clause of a speech report. Speakers using modality of this kind commit to these requirements being fulfilled and can be challenged by their interlocutors for having taken them for granted (e.g., von Stechow 2004).

24 to be able to bring about ϕ (*presumed control*), then D is subject to
 25 the conflicting requirement that they know that ϕ will come about
 26 but also don't know whether ϕ will come about. In the interroga-
 27 tives, the director D is asked to commit to whether ϕ is necessary
 28 in the relevant sense, again giving rise to a conflicting requirement
 29 that D is both taken to know and not know whether the prejacent
 30 will come about. Obviating constellations thus result in inherently
 1 contradictory discourse requirements for the utterance speaker/pre-
 2 suppositions that cannot be resolved felicitously.

3 However, this account does not straightforwardly apply to Serbian
 4 DA -clauses as they differ from imperatives/directive subjunctives
 5 in two ways. First, DA -clauses are strong directives (see Sect. 2.1).
 6 Unlike imperatives, they can only be used for commands, but not
 7 for advice, invitations, to express acquiescence, and the like. Second,
 8 directive subjunctives, like Romance and Hungarian subjunctives
 9 (Szabolcsi 2021 for recent discussion), are sensitive to presumed
 10 (lack of) control. Oikonomou 2016 shows this for Greek *na*, see (31),
 11 Adrian Stegovec, p.c., confirms the effect also for Slovenian *naj*. In
 12 contrast, $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\text{D}}{=}$ appears to be insensitive to presumed control, see
 13 (32).²⁹

14 (31) [context presumed lack of control:] *You have the alarm, I need you to wake me up:*

15 Avrio na ksipniso stis 6:00 a.m.
 Tomorrow NA wake.1SG at 6:00 a.m.
 16 'Tomorrow I should wake up at 6:00 a.m.' Greek; Oikonomou 2016

17 (32) [context presumed lack of control:] *You have the alarm, I need you to wake me up:*

- 18 a. *Da se probudim sutra u 6!
 DA REFL wake.1SG.PRES.PFV tomorrow at 6
 19 intended: 'Tomorrow I should wake up at 6am.'
- 20 b. *Da stignem na vrijeme!
 DA arrive.1SG.PRES.PFV on time
 21 intended: 'See to it that I am there on time.'

22 Similarly, no improvement is recorded for embedded *da*-clauses in
 23 obviating constellations (detectable as PSO, the impossibility of real-
 24 izing an overt subject) when the agent is known to have no control
 25 over the relevant course of events:

²⁹An anonymous reviewer asks if Serbian *da*-clauses can appear on shopping lists, a case of 'self-instructions' that is felicitous with Greek *na*-subjunctives and Slovenian *naj*-subjunctives. Here, too, no improvement occurs in Serbian. As the effect is ill-understood in principle, we set it aside for the moment.

- 26 (33) Jovan želi da (*on) bude izabran.
 27 Jovan want.3SG.PRES.IMPFV DA he be elected
 'Jovan wants for himself to be elected.'

28 At the same time, $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega_{\text{---}}}$ shares two properties with obviation sub-
 29 junctives in Romance or Hungarian. First, stress on subject pronouns
 30 (indicating contrastive focus) alleviates obviation effects:

- 31 (34) Vesna_i želi da { *ona_i / ONA_i } dobije nazad pare.
 1 Vesna want.3SG.PRES.IMPFV DA she get.3SG.PRES.PFV back money
 'Vesna wants that SHE gets the money back.'

2 Second, attitudes held only *de re* (i.e., in context where the attitude
 3 subject fails to identify themselves) diminish obviation effects in
 4 the embedded case (tested on 'Kako biste VI rekli?', Facebook). All
 5 17 speakers who responded disprefer an overt pronoun in a *de se*-
 6 context as in (35), but 13 speakers prefer the overt pronoun in a *de*
 7 *re*-context in a CSO constellation as in (36) (note, however, that one
 8 person still prefers the covert pronoun and four people find both
 9 versions unacceptable).

- 10 (35) [context *de se*] *Petar is a proud politician and he's very sure of himself. He is a candidate*
 11 *on the upcoming election and he recently said for the media: 'I want to win the election.'*

- 12 a. Petar želi da on pobedi na izborima. (0 speakers)
 13 b. Peter želi da pobedi na izborima. (17 speakers)

- 14 (36) [context *de re*] *Petar is so drunk that he forgot that he was the candidate for president in*
 15 *the upcoming election. In such a state, he's watching TV and sees someone who he thinks*
 16 *is a great candidate and should win. What Peter doesn't realize is that the candidate he*
 17 *sees on TV is actually him.*

- 18 a. Petar želi da on pobedi. (13 speakers)
 19 b. Peter želi da pobedi. (1 speaker)
 20 (both bad: 4 speakers)

21 To take stock, $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega_{\text{---}}}$ shows a familiar pattern of clause type depen-
 22 dence in the setting of the parameter that determines what subjects
 23 count as obviating. Obviation effects are avoided in attitude ascrip-
 24 tions when the attitude is held about the attitude subject only *de re*
 25 and they are sensitive to stress on the embedded subject. Unlike
 26 the previously studied cases, obviation effects in Serbian seem in-
 27 sensitive to presumed lack of control. Moreover, matrix *da*-clauses

are strong directives, thus serving a more restricted range of speech acts than canonical imperatives or Greek and Slovenian directive subjunctives. Taking into account the similarities and differences between Serbian DA-clauses and obviative subjunctives as studied for other languages, we now proceed to develop a modified version of the semantic-pragmatic account that covers the Serbian data.

First of all, the speech acts carried out by strong directives are exactly the ones that can intuitively be considered as resting on the speaker's wishes. An interpretation along these lines has been proposed for canonical morphosyntactic imperatives (e.g. Bierwisch 1980; Condoravdi & Lauer 2012; Oikonomou 2016), where it is problematic in light of their use to dispense advice or extend invitations. However, it seems accurate for strong directives like Serbian DA-clauses which lack precisely the functions that do not intuitively rest on speaker preferences. Moreover, like other obviating constructions, Serbian prioritizing DA-clauses indicate 'discontinuity between the will and the actions of a person'; (Ruwet, 1984; Szabolcsi, 2021). We therefore propose that $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ expresses the perspectival center's wishes (or goals) regarding the actions of (presumed) others (possibly in coordination with their own actions):

- (37) a. $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ is sensitive to the *perspectival center*, set to speaker (committing move), addressee (information seeking interrogative), SELF of speech or attitude report (embedded sentence).³⁰ (Stegovec 2019; Kaufmann 2019b)
- b. $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\Omega} \equiv \equiv$ combines with an individual denoting expression (subject) and a property (i.e., it is an 'ought-to-do' operator, Schroeder 2011).
- c. The grammatical subject has to *evoke* 'others' (= alternative(s) to the perspectival center).

More formally, we assume that expressions α are interpreted with respect to a context c and a centered world of evaluation $\langle x, w \rangle$ (the speaker and world of the context in the matrix commitment case, shifted in interrogatives or embedded clauses). An expression α is assigned both an ordinary and a focus semantic value (Rooth, 1985, 1992), indicated as in (38).

³⁰As we are deriving the obviation effect semantically, nothing hinges on whether the perspectival center is represented in the syntax. This choice will, however, impact the possibilities for implementing the changes in perspective as determined by clause type or matrix clause, a challenge not specific to the phenomenon under discussion here (e.g., Speas & Tenny 2003; Pearson 2013; Zu 2018).

- 26 (38) a. $[[\cdot]]^{c,\langle x,w \rangle}$: ordinary value
 27 b. $[[\cdot]]_f^{c,\langle x,w \rangle}$: focus semantic value

28 The focus semantic value of an unfocused expression is just the set
 29 containing its ordinary value, the focus semantic value of a focused
 30 expression consists in the set of alternatives to α 's ordinary semantic
 31 value, see (39).

- 1 (39) $[[\alpha]]_f^{c,\langle x,w \rangle} = \{ [[\alpha]]^{c,\langle x,w \rangle} \}$ if α is unfocused, else:
 2 $[[\alpha]]_f^{c,\langle x,w \rangle} = D_a$, the domain associated with a , the semantic type of α .

3 We assume that \boxminus^{Mod} is interpreted as an event-relative necessity
 4 modal, where R has to pick out the wishes or goals of the perspec-
 5 tival center x . Moreover, it introduces the presupposition that the
 6 focus semantic value of its subject is not identical to the singleton set
 7 containing the perspectival center. This presupposition reflects the
 8 intuition that $D_{A\text{Mod}}$ expresses wishes that concern the actions not
 9 (only) of the perspectival center itself.

- 10 (40) a. $[[\boxminus^{\text{Mod}}]]^{c,\langle x,w \rangle} = \lambda e.\lambda P.\lambda x.\forall w'[R(e)(w)(w') \rightarrow P(w')(x)]$
 11 b. $[[[\alpha [\boxminus^{\text{Mod}} e \phi]]]]^{c,\langle x,w \rangle}$ presupposes that
 12 (i) modal flavor R (as determined by event argument) reflects wishes/goals
 13 of x , and (ii) $[[\alpha]]_f^{c,\langle x,w \rangle} \neq \{x\}$.

14 The requirement that the focus value of the subject is different from
 15 the singleton set containing the perspectival center is met if the
 16 subject does not refer to the perspectival center. It is also met if the
 17 subject refers to the perspectival center but is focused, in which case
 18 its focus semantic value will be a non-singleton set containing also
 19 alternatives to the perspectival center.

20 By these assumptions, obviation effects are predicted to appear in
 21 both matrix and embedded contexts, but will vanish with focus on
 22 the subject or when an embedded clause characterizes an attitude
 23 that is not held *de se* (leading to non-identity between subject ref-
 24 erent and perspectival center). We derive that DA-clauses express
 25 the wishes or goals of the perspectival center, rendering matrix DA-
 26 clauses strong directives or expressives (desiderative readings). In
 27 contrast to the semantic-pragmatic accounts for obviation effects in
 28 Kaufmann (2019b) and Szabolcsi (2021) for canonical imperatives

and directive subjunctives in Slovenian and Hungarian, presumed control over the course of events is predicted to be orthogonal.

As it stands, this interpretation is tailor-made for Serbian DA_{Mod} . It remains to be seen to what extent desiderative and directive modals in other languages display the same patterns. Moreover, it is worth noting that we are proposing a modal operator that directly imposes conditions on the focus semantic value of an expression it combines with, a situation Rooth (1992) aimed to avoid in his strong theory of focus-association. We will leave it to future research to determine if this is indeed a case that undermines the strong theory of focus association.

5 Comments on apparent exceptions to matrix GSO

In Section 2.2, we argued that matrix DA -clauses instantiate the pattern of generalized subject obviation. Specifically, first person subjects are unacceptable in the commitment case, i.e. matrix da -clauses cannot be used to tell oneself to act in a particular way. However, we note two types of exceptions to this constraint.

5.1 Threats

Matrix DA -clauses can be used with a first person subject to threaten the addressee into realizing courses of events that are entirely under the addressee's control. *Jel vam jasno* 'is that clear?' can be added to disambiguate in favor of such a threat.

(41) *Da (*ja) dobijem pare nazad (jel vam jasno?)*
 DA (I) get.1SG.PRES.PFV money back (QPART YOU.DAT.PL clear)
 'Make it such that I get my money back!'

(42) *Da pobedim na izborima, jel vam jasno?*
 DA win.1SG.PRES.PFV in race, QPART YOU.DAT.PL clear
 '(Make sure that) I win in the race, is that clear?',
 'You will make sure that I win that race, is that clear?'

Note that the felicity of the first person forms relies crucially on the fact that the speaker takes the addressee to have full control over the course of events. For instance, (42) can only express that the

29 speaker expects the addressee to fix the race so that the speaker
 30 wins. This contrasts with the data considered in 4: cases like (32),
 31 where the speaker lacks full control but things are not entirely in the
 32 hands of the addressee either, do not escape the obviation restriction.
 1 To capture this, we could modify the semantics of DA_{Mod} , so that
 2 an obviation restriction is voided if an individual other than the
 3 subject has full control over the relevant course of events. We are
 4 hesitant, however, because of what seems to be a formal difference:
 5 in threats, overt (unstressed) subjects seem impossible, making it
 6 look like a genuine case of PSO after all (i.e., unfocused subjects
 7 coreferential with the perspectival center are acceptable as long as
 8 they are not overt). However, in contrast to all other cases that fit the
 9 PSO pattern (which we explained away as disambiguation in favor of
 10 DA_{Mod}), focused overt subjects are also excluded from the embedded
 11 clause in (42). We tentatively suggest that threats are realized with
 12 DA_{Ctr} , which is licensed pragmatically or by a modal or illocutionary
 13 operator different from both DA_{Mod} or the imperative operator (e.g.
 14 Han, 2000; Kaufmann, 2012; Stegovec, 2019). As DA_{Ctr} cannot host a
 15 subject (independently of stress), the failure to improve subjects by
 16 stressing them is expected.³¹ Independent evidence for the idea that
 17 threats can involve a particular kind of modality different from the
 18 one participating in the regular pattern of GSO comes from Slovenian.
 19 Slovenian *naj*-subjunctives, which in contrast to Serbian *da*-clauses
 20 can escape the obviation restriction in cases of shared control over
 21 the course of events (see Section 4), are not used naturally for threats
 22 in which full control rests with the addressee. Instead, Slovenian
 23 resorts to directive DA-clauses as in (46) (Adrian Stegovec, p.c.).

24 (44) ??Naj dobim denar nazaj do jutri!
 naj get.1SG.PRES money back by tomorrow.
 25 Intended: 'Make sure that I really get my money back by tomorrow!' Slovenian

³¹We may appear to predict that threats with *jel vam jasno* should not tolerate overt subjects even in non-obviating constellations. This, however is not borne out, consider (43):

(43) Da Marija dobije pare nazad, jel vam jasno?!
 DA Marija get.3SG.PRES.PFV money back, QPART YOU.DAT.PL clear
 'Marija has to get her money back, is that clear?'

We assume that DA_{Mod} -clauses, as strong directives, are always available to express threats when not blocked because of an obviation restriction (consider a variety of pragmatically similar options in English: *I will win that race, do you understand?*, *I want to win that race, do you understand?*, *I have to win that race, do you understand?*, etc.).

26 (45) ?Naj sem jutri prvi na seznamu!
 naj be.1SG.PRES tomorrow first on list
 27 'I better be the first one on the list tomorrow'
 28 (when dissatisfied with my position on the waiting list) Slovenian

1 (46) Da sem jutri prvi na seznamu!
 DA be.1SG.PRES tomorrow first on list
 2 'I better be the first one on the list tomorrow.' Slovenian

3 We conclude that a comprehensive understanding of the matrix
 4 form types involved in various types of directive utterances will
 5 require more careful characterizations of what at first glance seem
 6 to be closely related directive speech acts, as well as reliable tests to
 7 distinguish between them.

8 5.2 Re-examining matrix desideratives: well-wishes, 9 optatives, and toasts

10 Matrix DA-clauses used for wishes also merit closer inspection. It
 11 seems that they belong to two at least pragmatically different cate-
 12 gories. First, we find that true *well-wishes* are as limited as they are
 13 with canonical morphological imperatives. They can appear only
 14 when at least the addressee clearly lacks control over the course of
 15 events, compare (47) to cases like English (48) (Condoravdi & Lauer
 16 2012; Kaufmann 2019a). Matrix DA-clauses for true well-wishes dis-
 17 play the obviating behavior discussed in Section 2.2.

18 (47) Da brzo ozdraviš!
 DA quickly get-well.2SG.PRES.PFV
 19 'Get well soon!'

20 (48) a. #Get work done on the train! (from Condoravdi & Lauer 2012)
 21 b. #Get tenure! (from Kaufmann 2019a)

22 While reduced control for the speaker proved insufficient to render
 23 felicitous (32-b) (string identical to (49) without *samo*), it does have
 24 a felicitous use as an optative:

25 (49) (Samo) da stignem na vrijeme!
 (only) DA arrive.1SG.PRES.PFV on time
 26 'If only I'm there on time...!'

27 As indicated by the option of adding *samo* 'only' without a signif-

28 icant change in meaning, we take these to constitute cases of stan-
 1 dalone conditional antecedents. In addition to the usages as comple-
 2 ment clauses and directive and desiderative matrix clauses discussed
 3 above, Serbian *da*-clauses can serve as conditional antecedents; Grosz
 4 (2011).³² No obviation effects are expected for optatives of this kind
 5 (or any other optatives, to the best of our knowledge), this use of
 6 (49) is thus not in conflict with the account developed in this paper.

7 Finally, *DA*-clauses can be used for *toasts* (preferably marked by
 8 an ethical dative *nama* ‘for us’ (which then requires an overt subject):

9 (50) Da (#ja nama) brzo ozdravim!
 10 DA (I we.DAT) quickly recover.1SG.PRES.PFV
 ‘May I recover quickly (for us)’

11 (51) Da ti nama brzo ozdraviš!
 12 DA you we.DAT quickly recover.2SG.PRES.PFV
 ‘May you recover quickly (for us)’

13 It is again interesting to consider these data in a crosslinguistic con-
 14 text. German has a designated toasting-clause,³³ which resembles an
 15 embedded purpose clause and can also be realized with an ethical
 16 dative in first person plural (understood as inclusive).

17 (52) a. Auf dass ich (uns) die Wahl gewinne!
 18 to that I (us.DAT) the election win
 ‘To me winning the election!’
 19 b. Auf dass du (uns) schnell gesund wirst!
 20 to that you (us.DAT) quickly healthy become
 ‘To you recovering quickly!’

21 We can imagine two explanations for Serbian toast-clauses: (i) they
 22 contain $\overset{\text{Mod}}{\text{---}}$ and are thus obviating, but the perspectival center is
 23 set to a plurality comprising speaker and addressee (‘joint wishes’),
 24 or (ii) they are stand-alone purpose clauses that are anchored to the
 25 concomitant non-verbal action of raising one’s glass (see Arsenijević
 26 2020 for purpose *da*-clauses). More careful evaluation of the behavior
 27 of plural subjects will be needed to evaluate (i), but the appearance
 28 of ethical datives as well as the crosslinguistic data provide tentative
 29 support for option (ii).

³²Grosz (2011) argues that such uses require any one of several markers to disambiguate towards an optative use (for Serbian, he lists *samo* ‘only’, *makar* ‘at least’, and interjection *e(h)*). While we agree with the data he considers in this respect (Grosz 2011:281), *samo* can be dropped without a significant change in meaning in our (49). A more detailed investigation of optatives and conditionals has to be left for future research.

³³We are indebted to Stefan Kaufmann (p.c.) for pointing out this construction to us.

6 Conclusions

In this paper, we have argued that Serbian displays a full pattern of generalized subject obviation, where the embedded part (classical subject obviation, CSO) is masked as a constraint against the realization of overt pronominal subjects (PSO). We analyze PSO in terms of a structural ambiguity between two types of (finite) DA-complements that can occur under *want/tell/...-type* verbs, namely DA_{Ctr} , a non-obviating variant with an obligatorily controlled subject that does not allow for an overt subject to be realized, and DA_{Mod} , an obviating structure that expresses prioritizing modality and can contain overt subjects. The presence of an overt subject under a *want/tell/...-type* verbs thus disambiguates in favor of the obviating DA_{Mod} -structure.

Obviating prioritizing covert modal $\overset{Mod}{\text{X}}_{\text{Mod}}$ (as appearing in DA_{Mod} -clauses) is insensitive to presumed control, but is sensitive to *de se*-identification and stress, which we capture by letting it express the perspectival center's wishes/goals about the actions (also) of (presumed) others. The data considered in Section 5 show that the spectrum of directive and desiderative clauses (minor clause types in the sense of Sadock & Zwicky 1985) deserve more attention in future research. Our first attempt at drawing more fine-grained distinctions confirms, however, the paradigm of generalized subject obviation for examples that realize DA_{Mod} -clauses as hypothesized in Section 3.

Finally, this study of Serbian *da*-clauses adds masking as PSO as a pattern of obviation effects in complements of directive and desiderative predicates. In the larger cross-linguistic picture, this poses the question of why masking happens in Serbian, but not, for instance, in Slovenian, a closely related Balkan (Slavic) language (Stegovec 2019). Two differences come to mind as potentially relevant. First, pronominal systems of the two languages might be different. Stegovec (2020) observes that PCC with clitics is more restricted in Slovenian than in Serbian, which he argues is due to Slovenian clitics being more complex than Serbian clitics. To the extent that those differences also apply to full pronouns / covert pronouns, this might be a potential reason why Serbian and Slovenian obviation effects

do not exactly match. Second, the availability of finite clauses to replace infinitival complements with all types of matrix predicates. As our account heavily leans on the disambiguation between inherently subjectless DA_{ctr} -clauses and obviative modal DA_{mod} -clauses through overt subjects, we lean towards an explanation that relies on a different status of infinitival complements in the two languages. However, further investigations of microvariation will be required to fully understand the differences.

(Acknowledgments to be added)

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