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ON THE NOTION OF THE SUBORDINATE CLAUSE IN GERMAN LINGUISTICS

Abstract

In traditional linguistic research on German syntax the term "subordinate clause" is defined on the basis of its two distinguishing features, namely its syntactic-functional integration into the matrix, as well as its formal exponents (the presence of introductory elements and the placement of the finite verb at the end of the clause). However, this classical approach to subordination is in fact a descriptive simplification which leads to the exclusion of all reference to the scalar character of this category from syntactic description. In this paper, an alternative approach to subordination is presented through defining the dependent clause as a scalar category, encompassing a wide range of representatives differing in the degree of prototypicality. The proposed model consists of four interrelated components: a precisely defined set of integration features, type-independent general principles, a description of the type-specific clusters of integration features and the differences in the degree of integration between representatives of the same syntactic class, as well as construction-specific restrictions.

0. Introductory remarks

The "subordinate clause" is one of the most ambiguously and imprecisely used terms in German linguistics. Traditionally it is defined on the basis of two independent criteria: the presence of formal indicators of syntactic dependency, as well as its syntactic-functional integration into the matrix clause. In this paper an alternative approach to subordination is presented, which enables its internal differentiation to be included within linguistic research. In this model the subordination is perceived

as a scalar category, encompassing a precisely defined set of prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features, indicating the degree of integration of the dependent clause into the structure of the matrix.

1. The traditional notion of subordination and its consequences for linguistic description

In traditional grammar as well as in many structuralist and functional approaches, the term "subordinate clause" refers to a syntactic construction that includes a finite verb, which is characterized by a formal and syntactic-functional dependency in relation to the matrix clause. The formal integration encompasses two distinctive features of German subordinate clauses: the presence of introductory elements, such as subjunctions, relative pronouns or interrogative pronouns, as well as the placement of the finite verb at the end of the clause. With regard to the aforementioned syntactic-functional dependency a subordinate is perceived as a part of a sentence or a part of a sentence component[1] within the matrix clause (cf. Sütterlin 1907: 390; Marillier 2000: 70; Valentin 2000: 13–14; Helbig 2003: 1).

This traditional notion of subordination causes numerous descriptive problems, which cannot be solved through models in which the analysis of the hypotaxis is based exclusively on the two assumptions mentioned above. The first problem results from the fact that the traditional notion of hypotaxis implies a tight interrelation between the occurrence of formal subordination markers and the syntactic-functional integration of the dependent clause. However, this leads to many descriptive inaccuracies, as the German language features both dependent clauses lacking the formal distinctive features of subordination (e.g. verb first conditionals, concessive and causal clauses or verb second complement clauses [1–4]) (cf. Zifonun et al. 1997: 2241, 2281, 2298–2299, 2313; Eisenberg 2006: 319), as well as syntactic constructions which, despite formal integration, do not have the status of a part of the sentence or a part of a sentence component within the matrix clause (e.g. continuative relative clauses or metacommunicative conditionals [5–6]) (cf. Marillier 2000: 78–79; Engel 2009: 185):

(1) *Wäre ich eine Nummer, wäre ich die Nummer eins!*
    Were I   a   number, were I   the number   one
    'If I were a number, I were the number one!' (*Hannoversche Allgemeine* 19.01.2009: 15)[2]

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[1]   The term "a part of a sentence component" (Ger. 'Satzgliedteil') refers in German linguistics to functional elements of the sentence which in simple declarative sentences cannot occupy the prefield before the finite verb.

[2]   All examples have been extracted from the electronic corpus Cosmas II: Das Deutsche Referenzkorpus DeReKo, Institut für Deutsche Sprache, Mannheim [available at: https://www.ids-mannheim.de/cosmas2/web-app/, accessed: 1 April – 10 October 2021]. Page numbers are indicated in the source references, if they are included in corpus entries.

(2) *Ist es auch Torheit,   so hat es doch Methode.*
     Is it part. foolishness, so has it part. method[3]
     'Though it's foolishness, it has a method.' (*Braunschweiger Zeitung* 13.03.2008)

(3) *Ein wichtiger Faktor allerdings, sind es doch gerade die*
     An important factor anyway,   are it part. part. the

     Akademikerinnen und Akademiker,   die keine Kinder   bekommen, (…)
     academics [fem.] and academics [m.], that neg. children get

     'Anyway, an important factor, as these are academics, who do not have children
     (…)' (*Braunschweiger Zeitung* 06.02.2006)

(4) *Sie sagte mir, sie sei   beim   Zahnarzt gewesen, (…)*
     She told me, she aux. at + the dentist be [perf. p.]
     'She told me, she was at the dentist, (…)' (*Burgenländische Volkszeitung* 27.05.2009: 9)

(5) *Dort ist er sehr bemüht und trainiert immer mit, was ihn auch*
     There is he very eager   and trains   always with, what him part.

     zum   Vorbild   macht (…)
     to + the example makes

     'He is very eager there and always trains with them, which is why he serves as an
     example (…)' (*Burgenländische Volkszeitung* 03.01.2007: 55)

(6) *Wenn er heute Bilanz ziehen müsste,   er würde im   nächsten*
     If   he today "take stock" must [cond.], he would in + the next

     Leben „unbedingt" noch einmal Unternehmer werden.
     life "necessarily" "once again" businessmen become

     'If he were to take stock today, he would "necessarily" become a businessman in
     the next life.' (*VDI Nachrichten* 26.01.2007: 11)

The second difficulty is connected with the fact that not all syntactic constructions
featuring formal indicators of subordination are a part of a compound sentence struc-
ture. For example, optative clauses [7] and so-called isolated subordinate clauses [8]
occur as independent simple sentences:

(7) *Wenn ich nur nicht immer so ungeduldig wäre!*
     If   I   part. not   always so impatient were
     'If I weren't always so impatient!' (*Nürnberger Nachrichten* 16.07.2009: 23)

(8) *Wie der Wein klingt*
     How the wine sounds
     'How wine sounds' (*Burgenländische Volkszeitung* 29.08.2007: 29)

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3   List of abbreviations: art. – article, aux. – auxiliary in compound tenses, aux. p. – auxiliary
    in passive voice, cond. – conditional, fem. – feminine, gen. – genitive, m. – masculine, neg. –
    negation, part. – particle, perf. p. – perfect participle, pers. – personal pronoun, refl. – reflex-
    ive pronoun, imp. – imperfect tense, p.f. – polite form of address, expl. – expletive pronoun,
    dem. – demonstrative pronoun, prep. – preposition.

The final issue is that models in which a subordinate is defined exclusively on the basis of its formal and syntactic-functional features do not take into account factors concerning the degree of integration of the dependent clauses into the matrix clause.

2. Alternative approaches to subordination in linguistic research

The inaccuracies created by the traditional approach have initiated the development of alternative proposals related to the analysis of subordinate clauses. Since the 1980s numerous grammarians have tried to accommodate the scalar character of the subordination category in their research. The first syntactic classification referring to the different degrees of integration of subordinate clauses into the matrix can be found in König and van der Auwera (1988), who focus on the topological characteristics of concessives, conditionals and concessive conditionals. The authors distinguish three types of dependent clauses, featuring different degrees of topological integration: fully integrated constructions, partially integrated clauses preceded by a correlate and unintegrated structures.

The first systematic description of subordination based on the prototype theory was presented by Fabricius-Hansen (1992), whose classification encompasses five types of dependent clauses differing with respect to the degree of their integration: fully integrated subordinate structures, prosodically, semantically, pragmatically and partially syntactically integrated clauses lacking features of topological integration, clauses accompanied by a correlate, as well as semantically or formally unintegrated constructions.

Another proposal regarding the classification of German subordinates connected with the degree of their integration was developed by Reis (1997). In her research on the status of dependent V2 clauses in German she distinguishes three types of dependent clauses: clauses licenced directly by the verbal head (complement and adjunct clauses), clauses licenced indirectly by the verbal head (clauses with the function of a part of a sentence component, e.g. attribute and comparative clauses), as well as clauses which are not licenced by the verbal head. Whereas the first two are examples of integrated clauses, the last category encompasses, according to Reis (1997: 128), unintegrated structures which can be divided into two subclasses: relatively unintegrated clauses (e.g. free *dass*-clauses, dependent V2 clauses) and absolutely unintegrated clauses (e.g. continuative relatives and non-restrictive relatives).

Innovative approaches regarding the scalar character of German subordinates were also presented by Holler in 2005 and 2008. In the earlier article (Holler 2005) three classes of dependent clauses are determined: the integrated, semi-integrated and unintegrated subordinates. The first type has all the features of subordination at the prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic level. The semi-integrated clauses differ in their degree of semantic integration, as they have an independent illocutionary force. The unintegrated clauses lack all the features of prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic integration. In the later article (Holler 2008) two main types

of dependent clauses are distinguished: the integrated and unintegrated constructions. Each can be further divided into two subclasses that show features of weak or strong integration/unintegration.

The scalar character of the subordination category is also discussed in Wöllstein (2008), with the author failing to agree with the widely accepted thesis that a greater degree of integration within subordinates correlates with their status as a part of the sentence. On the contrary, she claims that complement and adverbial clauses differ with respect to their degree of prototypicality. Whereas complement clauses are syntactically dependent, as well as they cannot occur as an isolated sentence without the matrix, adverbial clauses share the second feature with complement clauses, but are only semantically dependent on the host clause.

Important evidence highlighting the scalar character of the subordination category has also been provided by Antomo and Steinbach (2010). The research is devoted primarily to the weil-V2 clauses, however, it also contains descriptive details relevant for a syntactic analysis of dependent V2 clauses introduced by a relative pronoun, as well as V2 complement clauses. The authors argue that although all types of dependent V2 clauses share certain vital common characteristics, they differ with respect to their degree of integration. V2 complement clauses show significant features suggesting syntactic and prosodic integration: they allow the binding of variables from the matrix, they can be integrated into interrogative sentences, they form a single prosodic unit with the host clause and can occur within the scope of assertive particles in the matrix. V2 relatives are at least prosodically integrated, as they cannot form a separate prosodic unit. They also allow a wide scope reading of an assertive particle from the matrix. The last class of dependent V2 clauses, which is the main focus of the research presented by Antomo and Steinbach (2010), that is the weil-V2 clauses, shows significant features of prosodic, syntactic and pragmatic disintegration. According to the authors, the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic characteristics of weil-V2 subordinates can be explained by reference to two construction-independent factors: the syntax and structural meaning of dependent V2 clauses, as well as the paratactic structure of weil-V2 clauses.

Frey (2011), inspired by the research of Haegeman (2002, 2004, 2006), provides evidence for the relevance of the distinction between central and peripheral adverbial clauses for the syntactic description of German. He claims that the two types of adverbial clauses show significant differences with respect to their syntactic behaviour. Firstly, IP-internal licencing is possible only in the case of the central adverbial clauses, whereas the peripheral adverbial clauses are licenced by the Force projection of the matrix. Secondly, the peripheral adverbials share several characteristics with the non-integrated clauses, as they cannot occur with a coreferent correlate in the matrix, do not allow wide negation scope, cannot carry the main stress of the whole sentence, and additionally cannot be questioned or included in a question into which the matrix clause has been transformed.

Reis (2013) devotes her discussion on the integration status of subordinates to three types of weil-clauses: the integrated weil-VL clauses, the unintegrated weil-VL

clauses and the weil-V2 clauses. She provides evidence for the fact that, contrary to the conjectures of Antomo and Steinbach (2010), the typical features of weil-V2 clauses cannot be explained with reference to the V2 syntax and semantics combined with the paratactic structure of the weil-V2 construction, but instead can be contributed to two other construction-independent factors: syntactic disintegration and root status.

Reich and Reis (2013) in their article on the distinguishing features of coordination and subordination refer to the scalar character of the second category, which encompasses a wide variety of dependent clauses differing with respect to their degree of integration. They provide evidence for their thesis that subordination can be described as a continuum on a scale between two extreme poles, namely full integration and full disintegration.

Freywald's (2013) research is devoted to the syntactic characteristics of dependent V1 and V2 clauses without an introductory element. She provides evidence for the fact that both types of clauses differ from prototypical subordinates with respect to their degree of integration. The first class, the V1 clauses without an introductory element, shows significant features of disintegration on several levels of linguistic description. They cannot be used as elliptic responses to questions, do not allow variable binding and rarely occur with a coreferent correlate in the matrix. They form a separate prosodic unit and have an independent topic-comment structure. As far as their topological behaviour is concerned, they tend to occur in the prefield of the matrix, although their placement in other syntactic positions (middle field and postfield) is often also possible. On the contrary, the V2 clauses without an introductory element do not show consistent behaviour as far as their integration status is concerned. Freywald (2013) distinguishes between four types of dependent V2 clauses which differ in their degree of prototypicality. The first class, the absolutely integrated V2 clauses, encompasses complements of nouns, which can be placed in all three syntactic positions within the matrix: the prefield, the middle field and the postfield. The second type, the relatively integrated V2 clauses, occurs exclusively in the postfield, but it can precede other subordinates with the status of a part of the sentence. The third group, the relatively unintegrated V2 clauses, shows significant features of pragmatic disintegration, as it has an independent illocutionary force. Finally, the last class, the absolutely unintegrated V2 clauses, is connected with the matrix exclusively on the discourse level and does not have a structural position within the host clause.

The aforementioned alternative classifications of dependent clauses, based on the prototype theory, allowed the inclusion of the scalar character of the category "subordination" in linguistic research. On the other hand, all these proposals unfortunately share a considerable flaw: they rely on an assumption, which appears to be incorrect, concerning the close interrelation between the type of subordinate clause, distinguished on formal and syntactic-functional grounds, and the degree of integration.

3. Subordination as a scalar category – introducing the model

In the previous section an overview of the linguistic literature on the internal differentiation of the category "dependent clause" with respect to the degree of integration was discussed. From this it can be concluded that earlier research on the subject includes references to the scalar character of subordination within a grammatical description. However, as it relies on the assumption that the degree of integration of the clause is closely connected with its formal and syntactic-functional characteristics, it is not able to capture type-independent generalizations which not only refer to the differences in the degree of integration of the distinct types of subordinate clauses, but also to the inconsistent characteristics of representatives of the same class. In this section an alternative approach to subordination is introduced, which aims to overcome the shortcomings of the previous proposals. The model consists of four components:

- a precisely defined set of integration features
- type-independent general principles
- a description of the type-specific clusters of integration features, as well as the differences in the degree of integration between representatives of the same syntactic class
- construction-specific restrictions.

In the following paragraphs a short description of the four components of the introduced approach is presented.

Integration features

The first component of the model is a set of precisely defined prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features. Each of these features has a positive as well as a negative value, and the differences in the degree of integration of the subordinate constructions are directly related to the unique feature specification of the given subtype of dependent clause or – in case of the type-internal differentiation – of the particular subset of its representatives.

In this approach to the analysis of dependent clauses the notion "subordination" encompasses the following components:

- prosodic features
  The positive value occurs in structures in which the subordinate clause and the matrix clause form a single prosodic unit, which is signalized by the occurrence of one main accent, as in prototypical verb last complement clauses:

  (9) (…) *nun erwartet er von   der Mannschaft, dass sie*
          now expects   he from the team,   that pers.

das IHRige   tut.
art. her [its] does

'(…) now he expects from the team that it will do its thing.' (*Nürnberger Nach-richten* 03.01.2009: 10)

On the contrary, the prosodic unintegration is signalized by the presence of two main accents and two intonation units, as illustrated below on the example of verb second *dass*-clauses:

(10) *Öffne deine AUgen, dass sie   sehen die WUNder*
      Open your eyes,   that they see   the wonders
      'Open your eyes, so that they see the wonders' (*St. Galler Tagblatt* 31.05.2000)

- syntactic features
  a) formal indicators of subordination (the placement of the finite verb at the end of the clause and the presence of introductory elements)
     The positive value is characteristic of prototypical subordinate construc-tions with an introductory element in which the finite verb occurs at the end of the clause:

(11) *Aber ich musste   sehr lange üben,   bis ich es   konnte.*
      But I   must [imp.] very long exercise till I   that could
      'But I had to exercise for a long time, till I could do it.' (*Zeit Wissen* 14.04.2015: 16)

However, in German dependent clauses lacking one or both formal indicators of subordination also occur:

(12) *Wären sie   nicht entdeckt worden, hätten sie   den*
      aux.   they not   identified aux. p. had   they the

      Betroffenen vielleicht nie   gesundheitliche Probleme gemacht.
      concerned   maybe   never health   problems make [perf. p.]

      'If they had not been identified, they may never have caused health prob-lems for the person concerned.' (*Stern* 01.10.2018)

(13) *Auf der Light+Building entsteht der Eindruck,   als   wären*
      On the Light+Building arises   the impression as if were

      die drei Standards drei Welten.
      the three standards three worlds

      'On the Light+Building the impression arises, as if the three standards were three worlds.' (*VDI Nachrichten* 20.04.2012)

(14) *Er glaubt, sein Leben wäre   sinnlos, (…)*
      He thinks his life   be [cond.] pointless
      'He thinks that his life is pointless (…)' (*Braunschweiger Zeitung* 06.12.2005)

b) topological integration into the matrix clause
A prototypical subordinate clause is topologically integrated into the matrix and as a part of the sentence can be placed in the prefield or middle field of the host clause[4] or its topological behaviour is analogue to part of the sentence components:

(15) *Wenn ich mit ihr rausgehe, habe ich ein Lächeln auf dem Gesicht.*
When I   with her go out   have I   a   smile   on the face

Ich habe, wenn ich mit ihr rausgehe, ein Lächeln auf dem Gesicht.
I   have when I   with her go out   a   smile   on the face

'When I go out with her, I have a smile on my face.' (*NZZ Folio* 03.02.2020)

(16) *Es   sind immer die Gleichen, die   nicht öffnen.*
These are always the same   that not   open
'These are always the same people who do not open.' (*St. Galler Tagblatt* 03.01.2001)

On the contrary, topologically unintegrated clauses occur in the pre-prefield or post-postfield of the matrix clause. Placement in the pre-prefield is characteristic of a variety of clauses which precede a verb-second matrix, such as metacommunicative conditionals [17] and irrelevance conditionals [18]:

(17) *Wenn Sie zum Beispiel   den DJ Euro Stoxx Select Dividend 30EX*
When p.f. for   example the DJ Euro Stoxx Select Dividend 30EX

nehmen, der wird   mit 0,3% Managementgebühr
take   that aux. p. with 0.3% management fee

im Jahr berechnet.
in   year charge [perf. p.]

'If you take the DJ Euro Stoxx Select Dividend 30EX, for example, you are charged with a yearly management fee of 0.3%.' (*VDI Nachrichten* 13.04.2007: 32)

(18) *Mag ja   auf den ersten Blick nicht ungewöhnlich klingen,*
May part. on the first   sight not   extraordinary sound

im Fall von Petra Brantweiner ist es   das aber.
in case of   Petra Brantweiner is expl. it   however

'Although it may not sound extraordinary at first, as far as Petra Brantweiner is concerned, this is the case.' (*Burgenländische Volkszeitung* 23.10.2014)

Placement in the post-postfield can be observed in a limited number of clauses which obligatorily follow other subordinates with a higher degree of topological integration:

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4   Many prototypical subordinates may also occupy the postfield of the matrix clause; however, in linguistic literature there is no consensus with respect to the integration status of this syntactic position (cf. Haider 2010: 188–236; Reich and Reis 2013: 552).

(19) [MC *Sein Vater, Friedhof- und Hotelgärtner   in Davos, war*
          His father cemetery and hotel gardener in Davos   was

sechzig, [SC1D *als   Johannes auf die Welt   kam*],
sixty   when Johannes on   the world came

[SC1D *so dass das Einkommen* (…) *bald ganz von der*
          so   that the income   (…) soon fully on   the

Mutter   abhing,]] (…)[5]
mother   depended

#[MC *Sein Vater, Friedhof- und Hotelgärtner   in Davos, war*
         His father cemetery and hotel gardener in Davos   was

sechzig, [SC1D *so dass das Einkommen* (…) *bald ganz von*
sixty   so   that the income   (…) soon fully on

der Mutter abhing, [SC2D *als   Johannes auf die*
the mother depended   when Johannes on   the

Welt   kam,]]] (…)[6]
world   came

'His father, a cemetery and hotel gardener in Davos, was sixty when Jo-
hannes came to the world, so that the income (…) soon depended exclu-
sively on the mother' (*NZZ Folio* 06.05.2002: 55)

c) syntactic-functional integration
A prototypical subordinate is a part of the sentence or a part of a sentence
component within the matrix:

(20) *Nachdem Julian unseren Abend   ruinierte, habe ich ihn*
     After   Julian our   evening ruined   aux. I   him

übrigens nie   wieder getroffen.
btw.   never again   meet [perf. p.]

'By the way, after Julian ruined our evening, I have never met him again.'
(*Zeit Campus* 10.10.2017: 4)

However, in German there also occur subordinates lacking features of syn-
tactic-functional integration, which serve as a commentary and refer to the
whole proposition in the matrix:

(21) *Gemäss   der Seite blackfridaydeals.ch dürfte der Umsatz*
     According the site blackfridaydeals.ch may   the turnover

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5   List of abbreviations: MC – main clause, SC1D – first degree subordinate clause, SC2D – second
     degree subordinate clause.
6   The sentence is grammatically correct; however, the *so dass*-clause is not directly dependent
     on the main clause, but on the preceding subordinate. Grammatically correct examples which
     do not fulfil the criteria concerned are marked with the symbol '#'.

in   der   Schweiz   am   Black Friday um   das Dreifache
in   the   Switzerland on + the   Black Friday prep. art. three times

höher sein als   an   normalen Tagen, was   ihn   auch in der
higher be   than on   usual   days   which   it   also in the

Schweiz   zum   wichtigsten   Shoppingevent des
Switzerland to + the   most important   shopping event the [gen.]

Jahres macht.
year   makes

'According to the site blackfridaydeals.ch in Switzerland the turnover on Black Friday may be three times higher than on usual days, which makes this day the most important shopping event of the year.' (*Galler Tagblatt* 22.11.2018)

d) other indicators of syntactic integration
   A fully integrated dependent clause shows a variety of further syntactic characteristics which can be proved by syntactic tests. In this model three such characteristics are taken into account: the variable binding (i), the wide negation scope (ii) and the potential occurrence of a coreferent correlate in the matrix (iii).

   i) variable binding
      A prototypical subordinate is able to bind variables from the matrix:

      (22) [*Jeder fünfte Hypertoniker*]$_i$ *weiß   nicht, dass er$_i$ krank ist.*
            Every fifth hypertensive knows not   that he ill   is
            'Every fifth hypertensive does not know that he/she is ill.' (*FOCUS* 13.02.2016)

      On the contrary, the impossibility to bind variables from the matrix serves as an indicator of a lower degree of integration:

      (23) **Es   gibt jede Sache, die würde er nie   machen.*
            There is   every thing that would he never make
            **'There is every thing which he would never do'[7]

   ii) wide negation scope
      A fully integrated subordinate allows a wide negation scope [24] which is not acceptable in the case of dependent clauses with a lower degree of syntactic integration [25]:

      (24) *Mich stört   es   nicht, dass es   das SJ Heim gibt,*
            Me   disturbs expl. not   that there the SJ Heim is

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[7] A grammatically incorrect paraphrase of an example from *Hannoversche Allgemeine* (19.02.2008: 18).

sondern dass es   keine Alternative gibt.
but   that there neg.   alternative exists

'It does not disturb me that there exists the SJ Heim, but that there is no alternative.' (*Burgenländische Volkszeitung* 14.06.2012)

(25) *Gäumann schaffte es nicht, was   ihn fast   die*
Gäumann managed it not   which him almost the

Führung   im   Zwischenklassement   gekostet hätte.[8]
leadership in + the intermediate standings cost   [perf. p.] aux.

'Gäumann did not manage it, which would have almost cost him the leadership in the intermediate standings.' (*Tages-Anzeiger* 16.05.2002: 19)

iii) the potential occurrence of a coreferent correlate within the matrix
Prototypical subordinates can occur with a coreferent correlate within the matrix [26], which is not possible in dependent clauses with a lower degree of syntactic integration [27]:

(26) *Aber ich verstehe   es, dass er seiner Gesundheit*
But I   understand it that he his   health

zuliebe   kürzertreten will.
[for its sake] retreat   wants

'But I understand that he wants to resign for his health's sake.' (*St. Galler Tagblatt* 14.01.2013: 43)

(27) **In   einer Woche können es   diese Gänse mehr als*
Within a   week can   corr. these geese more than

3000 Kilometer zurücklegen, was   sie   auch für die
3000 kilometre cover   which them also for the

Wissenschaft sehr interessant macht.
science   very interesting makes

'These geese can cover over 3000 km within a week, which makes them an interesting subject for scientific research'[9] (*Falter* 18.09.2002: 78)

- semantic features

A prototypical subordinate clause is semantically integrated into the matrix and does not have the status of an independent proposition.

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[8] The sentence is grammatically correct; however, the subordinate is not within the negation scope of the matrix.

[9] A grammatically incorrect paraphrase of an example from *Falter* (18.09.2002: 78).

- pragmatic features
  a) thematic integration
     A prototypical subordinate clause is integrated into the topic-comment structure of the matrix:

     (28) *Ich wusste längst, dass er KOMMT.*
          I knew since long that he comes
          'I've already known that for a long time that he is coming.' (*St. Galler Tagblatt* 29.09.2016)

     Unintegrated dependent clauses can have their own topic-comment structure:

     (29) *Das reizt sie nur noch ZUsätzlich, so dass der*
          That irritates them only part. additionally, so that the

          Frosch im HALS bleibt.
          frog in + the throat stays

          'That irritates them additionally, so that the frog stays in the throat.' (*Stern* 01.04.2019)

  b) lack of independent illocutionary force
     A prototypical subordinate does not have an independent illocutionary force.

Type-independent generalizations

The model presented is based on the assumption that the majority of the phenomena related to the internal differentiation of the "subordination" category with respect to the degree of integration of its representatives can be explained with reference to type-independent generalizations. The impact of type-independent generalizations on the process of value setting may be illustrated on the example of the metacommunicative conditionals and verb first concessive conditionals with the modal verb *mögen*. Both constructions are topologically unintegrated and occur in the pre-prefield of the matrix clause, as illustrated below:[10]

(30) *Wenn jemand ihn haben möchte, er ist später in meinem Zimmer.*
     If someone him have wanted, he is later in my room
     'If someone wanted to have him, he will be later in my room.' (*Hamburger Morgenpost* 16.07.2008: 48)

(31) *Mag der Mozartsaal des Rosengartens noch so voll sein,*
     May the Mozart room the [gen.] Rosengarten still so full be,

     auf dem rechten vorderen Balkon herrscht eine familiäre, fast
     on the right front balcony prevails a familiar, almost

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[10] The metacommunicative conditionals may also sporadically occur in the topologically unintegrated position in the post-postfield, in which they follow the matrix.

intime   Atmosphäre.
intimate   atmosphere

'Even if the Mozart room at the Rosengarten Congress Centre is still so full, on the right front balcony a familiar, almost intimate atmosphere prevails.' (*Mannheimer Morgen* 07.11.2008: 32)

In both cases the topological unintegration correlates with prosodic unintegration, which can be perceived as a direct consequence of the placement of the clause in the left periphery.

Type-specific features and differences in the degree of integration between representatives of the same syntactic class

As explained above, type-independent generalizations are responsible for the majority of the differences with respect to the degree of integration of particular subtypes of subordinate clauses, as well as the internal differentiation of feature settings within the same syntactic class. The interrelations between the two apparently independent phenomena mentioned above can be explained using the pragmatic integration of *da*-clauses as an example, as well as preposed and postposed conditional clauses.

Causal constructions introduced by the subjunction *da* tend to occur in the prefield of the matrix clause:

(32) *Da sich sein Zustand stabiliSIERT, soll   er bald nach ERfurt*
     As refl. his   state   stabilises,   shall he soon to   Erfurt

gebracht   werden.
bring [perf. p.]   aux p.

'As his condition is stabilising, he shall soon be brought to Erfurt' (*Nürnberger Nachrichten* 05.01.2009: 4)

As far as their pragmatic function is concerned, in contrast to the *weil*-clauses, they usually provide background information concerning the reasons for a previously unknown event introduced in the matrix. At the same time, *da*-clauses are one of the few subtypes of adverbial clauses with an independent focus-background-structure.[11] Considering the cooccurrence of three independent integration features, a hypothesis may be formulated that the type-specific characteristics of *da*-clauses imply the existence of a close interrelation between three apparently unrelated topological and pragmatic features: the placement of the subordinated construction in the prefield of the matrix clause, its pragmatic function and the distinct focus-background structure.

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[11]   According to Reis and Wöllstein (2010: 155–156), the causal clauses introduced by *da* obligatorily show features of prosodic integration and have their own topic-comment structure. However, Frey (2011: 51–52) provides evidence for the occurrence of prosodically and pragmatically integrated *da*-clauses with a rhematic character in the prefield.

A similar correlation between the placement of the dependent clause in the prefield and the presence of independent focus-background-structure has been observed with reference to the internal differentiation of the degree of integration of conditional clauses, esp. the lack of integration features in verb first conditionals (cf. Freywald 2013: 323):

(33) *Hätte er früher davon geWUSST, hätte er viel   Zeit und Geld   geSPART.*
     Had he before it   known, had he much time and money saved.
     'If he had known it before, he would have saved much time and money' (*spektrum-direkt* 28.02.2005)

As according to Haiman (1985: 34–36), the frequent usage of preposed conditionals can be seen as an indicator of their pragmatic function, the data presented provides evidence for the fact that the same general principle determining the three independent feature values of *da*-clauses, also has an impact on the internal differentiation of the conditional clauses with respect to their degree of integration.

Construction-specific restrictions

Although the main task of the research into the scalar character of subordination lies in identifying type-independent generalizations determining the degree of integration of dependent clauses, several exceptions can be explained exclusively through reference to the unique characteristics of particular constructions, specified in lexicon entries. A clear example of the influence of construction-specific restrictions on the degree of integration is the contrast between the formally integrated verb last hypothetical comparative clauses with the subjunction *als ob* and their unintegrated verb first counterparts introduced by *als*:

(34) *Das klingt   so, als ob das ein guter, ja   eben ein super*
     It   sounds so, as if it   a   good, part. even a   perfect

     Zustand wäre, (…)
     state   were

     'It sounds, as if it were a good, even a perfect state, (…)' (*Nürnberger Nachrichten* 17.01.2009: 2)

(35) *Es scheint ihm, als   hätten sich alle gegen   ihn verschworen: (…)*
     It seems him, as [as if] had   refl. all against him conspired
     'It seems to him, as if everyone were plotting against him: (…)' (*St. Galler Tagblatt* 08.01.2009: 27)

4. Conclusion

Adopting the traditional notion of the subordinate clause that is referring exclusively to its formal and syntactic-functional characteristics meant that the scalar character of the integration of the components of a compound sentence in German

has largely been ignored in linguistic research for many years. In this article an alternative approach to subordination is presented through defining it as a scalar category, encompassing a set of prosodic, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic features determining the degree of integration of its representatives. It is argued that a descriptively adequate model of subordination consists of four interrelated components: a precisely defined set of features, type-independent generalisations, a detailed description of the type-specific clusters of integration features and the differences in the degree of integration between representatives of the same syntactic class, as well as construction-specific restrictions.

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