

How Mood Determines the Nature of Commitment Space Updates

Sebastian Buchczyk

1 Introduction¹

Verbs in Romance that are associated with a response move in discourse may typically permit both indicative and subjunctive in their clausal complements (forthwith abbreviated as CCs). To illustrate, take the examples for Catalan *admetre*² (to admit) or *acceptar* in (1) where both indicative and subjunctive are permissible in the CC.

(1) Catalan

- a. *Admeto/ Accepto que la carn contamina/*
 admit.1SG/ accept.1SG that the meat contaminate. SBJV.3SG/
contamina.
 contaminate.IND.3SG
 'I admit that eating meat pollutes the environment.'³

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2 It should be noted that the verb *admetre* displays considerable semantic flexibility, with mood choice depending on its specific interpretation. In particular, its declarative sense typically selects the indicative or infinitive, as an anonymous reviewer points out. The subjunctive is less common and tends to appear more often under negation. This contrasts with the behavior of *negar* 'deny', which generally selects the subjunctive unless negated, in which case it may take the indicative. In this paper, we focus exclusively on assertive and concessive uses in affirmative contexts, leaving a fuller treatment of the verb's polysemy and its interaction with mood to future research.

3 I would like to thank Josep Quer (p.c.) for this example.

- b. *Els estudiants admeten/ accepten que el degà té/*
 the students admit.3PL/ accept.3PL that the dean have.IND.3SG/
*tingui raó en aquest punt.*⁴
 have.SUBJ.3SG reason in this point
 'The students admit that the dean is right on this issue.' (Quer, 1998: 63)

It is well established that mood choice in complement clauses with verbs like *admetre* involves subtle but significant differences in sentence interpretation (see Cellard, 1983; Gsell & Wandruszka, 1986; Grevisse & Goosse, 1993; Kwapisz-Osadnik, 2002; Godard, 2012 for French; Quer, 1998, 2009 for Catalan; Gili y Gaya, 1961; Rivero, 1971, 1977; Sarmiento & Sánchez, 1989; Klein-Andreu, 1990; Haverkate, 2002; Laca, 2010 for Spanish). However, the precise discourse function of this mood alternation remains underexplored, and no fully streamlined analysis has yet been established. Nonetheless, several pre-theoretical accounts offer promising directions: (i) In performative uses (1a), the subjunctive mood conveys a concessive interpretation (Quer, 2009), often understood as a form of acquiescence (Laca, 2010) or weak affirmation (Klein-Andreu, 1990) toward a third-party suggestion. Here, the content of CC is neither asserted, nor presupposed. (ii) In third-person contexts (1b), the subjunctive similarly conveys a concessive stance where the speaker neither asserts nor presupposes the propositional content of the CC (Rivero, 1971, 1977; Quer, 1998). Crucially, this does not exclude the presupposition for a verb such as *admetre* that a third party introduced the propositional content of the CC content into the discourse—a subtle distinction from factive verbs, which presuppose their complement clauses (see Kastner, 2015). (iii) By contrast, in indicative contexts of (1b), the speaker is understood to presuppose the truth of the CC (Rivero, 1971) or report an assertion of the matrix subject. As for the former, indicative mood seems to signal speaker commitment to the propositional content of the CC, while subjunctive signals non-commitment (Rivero, 1971: 325). Overall, both presuppositions and assertions involve enjoining speaker commitments (see Searle & Vanderveken, 1985; Peters, 2016; Mazzarella et al., 2018), which

4 I would like to acknowledge an anonymous reviewer's objection to Quer's (1998) example (1b) concerning the acceptability of subjunctive CCs. As the reviewer points out, the acceptability of subjunctive CCs is degraded due to the PP *en aquest punt*, which (s)he interprets as referring to a specific event. This observation aligns with Quer's (1998, 2001) analysis of emotive predicates such as *agradar* 'like', where subjunctive CCs typically convey generic readings, while specific readings—often expressed in episodic tense—are conveyed by indicative CCs. While I acknowledge the challenges such cases bring, they would go beyond the scope of this paper and will not be discussed here.

may explain why the indicative mood surfaces in both performative (1a) and third-person (1b) uses when commitment is signalled.

In this paper, we will zoom in on the case of (1a). We will establish that *admetre* qualifies as a response stance verb (RSV) in the sense of Cattell (1978), i.e. a verb that “CAN [*sic!*] be used in reporting responses” and refers to a speech act (Kastner, 2015). Additionally, we will pinpoint the speech act that *admetre* is tied based on mood choice in the CC. What we propose is that subjunctive under an RSV such as *admetre* in (1a) is associated with the speech act of a GRANT (Cohen & Krifka, 2011, 2014), the refusal of an assertion with $\neg\phi$, while an indicative CC is associated with an assertion of ϕ (Quer, 2009). As a conclusion, the repertoire of speech act interpretations of *admetre* is double-sided and reflected through mood choice, as similarly observed for verbs of communication in Catalan such as *dir* (‘to say’) that allow for directive and assertive interpretations, where the former comes with the subjunctive and the latter with the indicative (see Quer, 1998, 2001, 2009). To formally capture this idea, we will resort to the Commitment Space (CS) framework in Krifka and Cohen (2011, 2014) to demonstrate that mood choice in CCs of RSVs have indeed different effects on discourse development. Such an analysis will further clarify mood choice for (1a) which, on the surface, is not as obvious. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first analysis for RSVs that attempts to capture mood choice in CCs of RSVs and their effect on development of Common Ground (CG).⁵

We will proceed as follows. § 2 looks at RSVs and their presuppositional status. § 3 focuses on the Catalan RSV *admetre* and its relation between mood and illocution. In § 4, we will lay out the Commitment Space framework by Cohen and Krifka (2011; 2014) and analyse how mood under *admetre* affects the update of a Commitment Space. § 5 concludes.

2 Response Stance Verbs and Their Presuppositional Status

This section looks at the crucial property of response stance verbs which display a temporal sequence or response reading on the one hand, and presupposing the existence of its CC, on the other hand. In § 2.1, we briefly introduce Cattell’s (1978) original categorization of response stance (RSVs) and vol-

5 Note that this is not the first account that relates mood to common ground development (see Giorgi & Pianesi 1997, Quer, 2001, Mari & Portner, 2021). However, none of these approaches have looked explicitly at the case of RSVs.

untary stance verbs (vsvs)—both falling into the category of assertive verbs (see Hooper, 1975)—and their distinction qua response readings. In § 2.2, we briefly discuss the presuppositional status in CCs of RSVs, as discussed in Kastner (2015).

2.1 *Response Readings and Their Implications*

Cattell (1978) proposes a categorization of clause-embedding verbs into RSVs and vsvs, where the former comprise verbs such as *deny*, *accept*, or *admit*, and the latter verbs such as *claim*, *say*, or *report* (see Cattell, 1978: 77, for an exhaustive list of vs and RS verbs). His motivation to distinguish these two categories departs from dual interpretations under *why*-questions which are only available for vsvs, but not for RSVs. Roughly speaking, the two interpretations are ‘why does x V that ϕ ?’, and ‘why ϕ , as x Vs?’. To illustrate, compare the *wh*-question with a vsv in (2) with that with an RSV in (3).

(2) Why do the police say (that) Sue killed Harry?

(3) Why do the police admit/deny that Sue killed Harry?

According to Cattell, the dual interpretation, i.e. ‘Why does the police say that Sue killed Harry?’ and ‘Why did Sue kill Harry, as the police say?’, is available to (2). A *why*-question with an RSV, however, can only yield the former, viz. ‘Why do they admit/deny that Sue killed Harry?’. Cattell corroborates the division between vsvs and RSVs with the further observation that RSVs, unlike vsvs, display what he calls “a temporal sequence”, i.e. that they are the consequences of a previous conversational move. An alternative that he suggests to ‘temporal sequence reading’ is ‘response reading’. Note that the RSV in (4) fits well into the conversational fragment as a reaction to Bill’s claim that Sue was guilty. If we substitute the RSV with a vsv in (5), the discourse fragment turns out to be odd, thus showing that vsvs lack such a temporal sequence of RSVs.

(4) Bill claimed that Sue was guilty, and then, in response, Harry denied it.

(5) *Bill denied that Sue was guilty and then, in response, Harry claimed it.

The same observation can be made for the RSV in (6a) and vsv in (6b)

- (6) a. Bill denied what Harry claimed.
b. Bill claimed what Harry denied.

where, according to Cattell, (6a) allows for “at least two interpretations” in (7), out of which the following two are relevant to him:

- (7) a. The thing that Bill denied was the same thing that Harry claimed.
 b. In response to Harry’s claiming X, Bill denied X.

The temporal sequence or response reading is given only in (7b), but not in (7a). According to Cattell, if we were to apply the patterns in (7) to a vsv such as (6b), the response reading in (8b) turns out to be odd.

- (8) a. The thing that Bill claimed was the same thing that Harry denied.
 b. *In response to Harry’s denying X, Bill claimed X.

In sum, Cattell’s division into vsvs and rsvs is further evidenced by the fact that response readings/ temporal sequences are exclusive to rsvs, as their teleologically motivated label suggests. As we will see in § 2.2, an rsv also presupposes the third-party proposal of a proposition that the matrix subject reacts to.

2.2 *What Is Presupposed?*

We depart from the idea that presuppositions can be reliably treated as speaker commitments (Peters, 2016; see also Searle & Vanderveken, 1985; Cornillie, 2017; Mazzarella et al., 2018). Peters (2016) argues that presuppositions pattern with speaker commitments, drawing on the notion of deviance that arises when a speaker simultaneously presupposes and rejects a proposition, i.e., holds incompatible commitments to both ϕ and $\neg\phi$ (Peters, 2016: 1083). For instance, consider the following example from Peters (2016: 1086).

- (9) Was it Huck who dipped Becky’s pigtail in the inkwell? #Nobody did.

In (9), the question implies that someone dipped Becky’s pigtail in the inkwell. Denying that implication results in deviance, because the speaker would then be committed to both ϕ and $\neg\phi$. This inconsistency indicates that the implication qualifies as a presupposition. By contrast, conversational implicatures do not necessarily involve speaker commitments. Peters illustrates this with scalar implicatures:

- (10) Some students passed the course. In fact, all did.

Here, the implicature in (10), ‘not all students passed’, is easily canceled without infelicity, showing that the speaker is not committed to ‘not all students passed’.

(10) shows that not all content that is implicated carries the weight of a commitment,⁶ and presuppositions are among those implications that commit the speaker to its implicated content. We will adopt this idea of presuppositions being speaker commitments to further analyse RSVs. That is, if some expression (seemingly) presupposes some propositional content ϕ , it should follow that the speaker is also committed to the presupposed content ϕ . If the speaker utters a follow-up sentence that commits him or her to $\neg\phi$, we can safely assume that the content is indeed presupposed.

Let us now turn to VSVs. VSVs “involve the assignment to its subject of a claim about the truth of its complement” (Cattell, 1978: 71). That is, a VSV such as *say* does not presuppose the truth of its CC but rather introduces a new propositional content to the discourse. RSVs such as *agree* or *admit*, on the other hand, are presuppositional, albeit in a different way than factives are. Kastner (2015) adopted some of Cattell’s preliminary observations and explains the distinction between presuppositional verbs—to which he counts RSVs—and factive verbs:

[B]oth classes of verbs presuppose the existence of their complement, but only the former [= factives, the author] presuppose the truth of the clause embedded in their complement.⁷ [...] A presuppositional verb like *deny* can only refer to an already-existing notion. A factive (presuppositional) verb like *remember* can only refer to an alreadyexisting notion which is also true. (Kastner, 2015: 159)

On this view, only factives presuppose the truth of its CCs, whereas RSVs—of which *deny* is a member of—merely presuppose the existence of the propositional content, not the truth of ϕ .⁸ Put in different terms, we may rephrase this by stating that RSVs presuppose ‘someone claimed/proposed that ϕ ’, as we will see shortly.

6 Empirical evidence from Mazzarella et al. (2018) further supports this view by showing that presuppositions are speaker commitments, even on par with the commitments that assertions cause.

7 Karttunen labels verbs like ‘admit’ factives. However, his reasoning is similar to that of Cattell (1978) and Kastner (2015) that what is presupposed is not the CC but the fact that someone proposed the propositional content of the CC to the CG.

8 Kastner (2015), builds on Cattell’s (1978) taxonomy, saying that VSVs “introduce new, non-presupposed content, propositional discourse referents” (2015: 166), whereas RSVs presuppose the existence of a propositional discourse referent. RSVs, as Kastner stresses, are crucially different from factive verbs that presuppose the truth of their complement.

We will see that such a treatment of presupposition as speaker commitments further helps us to view Kastner's (2015) observations for RSVs and factives. That is, if these verbs (semantically) presuppose the truth of their CCs, then the speaker is committed to the propositional content of said CC. As for RSVs, which do not presuppose ϕ , the speaker would not be committed to its CC but rather to 'someone claimed that ϕ '. Since an individual's commitments must be consistent (Peters, 2016, Geurts, 2019, Krifka, 2022, i.a.), we test for presuppositions by directly contradicting the presupposed content and check whether the speaker of an utterance holds (in)consistent commitments. Let us begin with the assumption that RSVs merely presuppose 'someone claims that ϕ '. Taking Kastner's (2015) example in (11), its author—a term borrowed from Karttunen (2016) in lieu of speaker which we will use interchangeably—is committed to the presupposed content $\phi = \llbracket$ someone claimed that Bill stole the cookies \rrbracket . Because committing to $\neg\phi = \llbracket$ no one claimed that Bill stole the cookies \rrbracket results in inconsistent (author) commitments, we can conclude that the RSV *deny* presupposes and thus commits the author to ϕ .

- (11) Bill denied [that he stole the cookies]. (# No one claimed that he had stolen them.)¹¹

Additionally, we can rule out that *deny* presupposes and commits the author to the truth of the CC in (11), $\phi = \llbracket$ Bill stole the cookies \rrbracket . We can show that by contrasting (12) with (13), where the author commits to $\neg\phi = \llbracket$ Bill didn't steal the cookies \rrbracket in the follow-up. Here, no inconsistencies arise. We thus conclude that *deny* does not presuppose and commit the author to the CC in (11) and (12), i.e. ϕ . That RSVs behave different than true factives such as *know* can be seen in (13). Here, the author can only commit to $\neg\phi$ at the price of self-contradiction.⁹ This contrast demonstrates that factives, unlike RSVs, indeed presuppose and commit the author to their CCs.¹⁰

- (12) Bill₁ denies [that he₁ stole the cookies], and he₁ didn't steal the cookies.

- (13) Bill₁ knows that he₁ stole the cookies, #but he₁ didn't steal the cookies.

9 For a clearer judgment, it may help to imagine a context in which Bill was forced to make a confession, even if did not steal the cookies at all.

10 With RSVs, the author may be indifferent towards the truth of p and agree afterwards. One can also commit to 'Bill didn't steal the cookies' which shows us that the speaker cannot be committed to the complement and rule out a potential presupposition of the truth of p , as Kastner would put it.

As was pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, it is possible for a speaker to anticipate a reaction, as done in (14). Here, Bill denies that he stole the cookies before anyone has claimed it or accused him of having done so.

(14) Bill denied [that he stole the cookies], before anyone could accuse him.

This scenario where response moves are made in anticipation despite the lack of a previous claim has already been addressed by Cattell for *admit*. Just as in (14), the speaker uttering (15) makes use of an RSV that is not used to express a response to an actual claim. Let us imagine that nobody has claimed (yet) that democracy is difficult while the speaker still utters (15).

(15) CONTEXT: nobody has claimed before that democracy is difficult. I admit that democracy is difficult.

Cattell's explanation for (15) is that the speaker "is meeting a possible proposition, which I can imagine someone putting forth; and in this sense I am still making a response, but making it to an imagined, rather than actual stance", thus making RSVs those verbs "that can be used in reporting responses of the kind illustrative above [(15)]" (Cattell, 1978: 68). On this view, the speaker uttering (14) would imagine a prospective discourse move of a third party that (s)he would react to, just like Bill does in anticipation of a claim that he stole the cookies.¹¹

In sum, RSVs are presuppositional in the sense that someone proposed the propositional content of the CC in the discourse. However, they do not presuppose the propositional content of the CC which distinguishes RSVs from

11 Another interesting aspect pointed out by an anonymous reviewer is the case where a speaker may take a claim as it were part of a question under discussion, as illustrated in the following dialogue in Catalan:

(i) A: *El món se'n va en orris.*

the world REFL=PART go.3SG in cheesemongeries
'The world goes crazy.'

B: *Admeto que pot/ pugui semblar que s'en va en orris però ...*

in cheesemongeries but

'I admit that the world is going crazy, but ...'

Here, B does not admit that ϕ = [[the world goes crazy]], but rather admits that it may seem so. B's hedged response leaves it open whether (s)he commits to ϕ . In fact, it even allows the inferences of $\neg\phi$.

factives, as originally noted by Cattell (1978) and spelled out by Kastner (2015) in more detail. We will have good reasons to assume that a Catalan verb such as *admetre* behaves like an RSV, which we will discuss in § 3.

3 *Admetre*: Verbal Mood Choice and Illocution

We give an overview of the mood distribution under *admetre* across person paradigms by looking at 1st and 3rd person cases. The reason we do so serves the chief purpose of ruling out the assumption that *admetre* qualifies as a factive verb. The presuppositions that arise with RSVs here will be subject to pragmatic presuppositions, i.e. presuppositions that are not triggered by lexical items (see discussion in § 3.1), following observations in Rivero (1972, 1977) and Quer (1998). We will first look at third person cases in § 3.1 which we will call reportative *admetre*. In § 3.2, we turn to explicit performative uses of *admetre*.

3.1 *Reportative Admetre*

Consider (16) from Quer (1998) which we will call an instantiation of reportative *admetre*. It is reportative in the sense that the author of (16) reports on Joan's concession of the propositional content in the CC, $\phi = \llbracket \text{the dean is right} \rrbracket$ without presupposing its truth (see Rivero, 1971, 1977 for Spanish). Following the arguments in § 2.1 and § 2.2, RSVs generally do not presuppose the truth but merely the existence of the propositional content and as such, do not commit the author to ϕ . That is, if *admetre* qualifies as an RSV, we will expect that deniability of the CC should not result in inconsistencies if the author commits to its negation. To drive this point home, we introduce the follow-up (16a) in which the author of (16) asserts the negation of the CC, $\neg\phi = \llbracket \text{the dean is not right} \rrbracket$. We observe that the author may contradict the propositional content of the CC in (16) without any inconsistencies, as the felicity of the follow-up (16a) reveals.

(16) *En Joan admet que la degana tingui raó.*
 the Joan admit.3SG that the dean have.SBJV.3SG reason.
 'Joan admits that the dean is right.'

a. *Però no en té gens, de raó.*
 but not CL.PART have.3SG any of reason
 'But she isn't right at all.'

- b. #*Però ningú ho va dir abans.*
 but nobody CL.NEUT go.3SG say before
 ‘But no one claimed that before.’

(16a) gives us a first reason to postulate already that *admetre* does not qualify as a factive verb but rather as an RSV; the truth of the CC is not presupposed in the CG (Cattell, 1978: 67). Since uttering (16a) prevents the implication in (16) that the dean is right, the author is not committed to the truth of its CC (see also Peters, 2016: § 1.2). To further corroborate this, compare (16) with a run-of-the-mill factive such as *saber* (16) that presupposes and thus commits the author to the truth of ϕ = ‘the earth is round’. Compared to (16), the implication—in fact, a presupposition—of ϕ in (17) cannot be felicitously prevented by the follow-up assertion committing the speaker to $\neg\phi$.¹² Hence, ϕ is a presupposition and thus a speaker commitment.

- (17) *En Joan sap que la terra és rodona, #però no*
 the Joan know.3SG that the Earth be.IND.3SG round, but not
ho és.
 CL.NEUT be.IND.3SG
 ‘Joan knows that the earth is round, but it is not.’

Further evidence that the CC in (17) is indeed presupposed comes from the refined P-family test proposed by Peters (2016)—as employed in (18)—which includes follow-ups that commit the speaker to $\neg\phi$, thereby creating contradictory commitments.

- (18) a. *En Joan no sap que la terra és rodona. #Però*
 the Joan not know.3SG that the Earth be.IND.3SG round. but
no és rodona.
 not be.3SG round
 intended: ‘Joan doesn’t know that the earth is round. But the earth isn’t round.’
- b. *Si en Joan sap que la terra és rodona ... #Però*
 if the Joan know.3SG that the Earth be.IND.3SG round ... but
no és rodona.
 not be.3SG round

¹² Note that interestingly, *saber* embeds the indicative and not the subjunctive in this case.

intended: 'If Joan knows that the earth is round ...; But the earth isn't round.'

- c. *En Joan sap que la terra és rodona? #O no*
 the Joan know.3SG that the Earth be.IND.3SG round or not
és rodona?
 be.3SG round

intended: 'Does Joan know that the earth is round? Or isn't the earth round?'

Let us now move on to the follow-up in (16b). With good reasons to assume that *admetre* is an RSV rather than a factive, we would expect that (16) presupposes $\psi = \llbracket$ someone claimed that the dean is right \rrbracket and the author of (16) committing to $\neg\psi$ would hold inconsistent commitments. This prediction turns out to be correct because the author committing to $\neg\psi = \llbracket$ (16b) \rrbracket is being inconsistent with the presupposition-induced commitment by (16), resulting in the infelicity of (16b). Thus, we have demonstrated that *admetre* with a subjunctive CC qualifies as an RSV, not a factive. We have yet to look at the cases with CCs carrying an indicative to state that the claim even applies across mood choice. Let us now look at third person cases in which *admetre* embeds an indicative CC (19).

- (19) *En Joan admet que la degana té raó:*
 the Joan admit.3SG that the dean have.IND.3SG reason

- a. *Però no en té gens, de raó.*
 but not CL.PART have.3SG any of reason
 'But she isn't right at all.'

- b. *#Però ningú ho va dir abans.*
 but nobody CL.NEUT go.3SG say before
 'But no one claimed that before.'

Note here that (19) now receives the interpretation of a reported assertion, as argued for vsvs—also called assertive verbs (Hooper & Thompson, 1973, Hooper, 1975)—such as *say* or *claim*. Thus, (19) suggests a report about Joan's previous assertion and acknowledgement of the deaing being right. Just as its subjunctive counterpart in (16), *admetre* with indicative CCs is again incompatible with the author contradicting by saying that nobody claimed that the dean is right (19b), thus further corroborating that *admetre* triggers the presupposition of a thirdparty claim, irrespective of mood choice.

The interpretation of (19) as a reported assertion and the felicity of (19a) would further support the claim that the CC, ‘the dean is right’, is not presupposed. Since we take *admetre* in (19) to carry the interpretation of a reported assertion, one assumption would be here that *admetre* may qualify for a reinterpretation of a vsv. However, such an *ad hoc* recategorisation misfires because *admetre* in (19) does not show the typical behavior of a vsv such as *dir* (‘say’) as seen in (20). Here, the author can easily contradict the CC as only Joan is committed to the CC. Compare (19) with (20) where we merely substitute *admetre* with *dir*.

(20) *En Joan diu que la degana té raó:*
 the Joan say.3SG that the dean have.IND.3SG reason
 ‘Joan said that the dean is right.’

a. *Però no en té gens, de raó.*
 but not CL.PART have.3SG any of reason
 ‘But she isn’t right at all.’

b. *Però ningú ho va dir abans.*
 but ningú CL.NEUT go.3SG say before
 ‘But no one claimed that before.’

Thus, we stick with the initial claim that rsvs only trigger the presupposition of a third-party claim, $\psi = \llbracket \text{someone claimed that the dean is right} \rrbracket$ but not the presupposition of the truth of the CC, $\phi = \llbracket \text{the dean is right} \rrbracket$. The contrast between (20b) and (19b) clearly shows that even when RSVs have the reading of reporting an assertion of a third party, they still do not qualify as vsvs. In other words, while RSVs allow for a reported assertive interpretation, it does not follow that they should be treated as vsv *if* they receive an assertive interpretation in the shape of a reported assertion. As we will see in § 3.2, explicit performative uses of RSVs also allow for an assertive interpretation. What we can still exclude is that even in the case of indicative in the CC of a RSV, it does not mean that the propositional content of the CC is presupposed, thus excluding a factive interpretation of *admetre* in (19).

However, the discussion of whether the CC of a RSV is presupposed or not does not end here. For instance, Rivero (1971) argues for the Spanish RSV *admitir* that the indicative CC is presupposed, albeit with the important caveat that this presupposition is not triggered by *admitir* itself but rather qualifies as a “presupposition on the part of the speaker that the complement is true” (Rivero, 1971: 324). How is this presupposition on the part of the speaker

established? Rivero offers an explanation: the presupposed content of the CC comes from a context that she provides, as seen in the following reconstructed example (21) from Rivero (1971) where *admitir* embeds an indicative CC.

- (21) Context: Suppose a prisoner is being interrogated and the interrogator knows that the inspector visited that prisoner, but the prisoner himself is unaware of the fact that the interrogator knows that the inspector visited the prisoner. After several hours, the prisoner admits that the inspector visited him. The interrogator then reports:

Admite que vino el inspector.
 admit.3SG that came.IND.3SG the inspector
 '(S)he admits that the inspector came.'

Note crucially that the context anticipates that the speaker uttering the sentence in (21) presupposes and thus commits to ϕ , as Rivero's context explicitly states that the speaker knows $\phi = \llbracket$ the inspector came \rrbracket , which would in turn entail that the speaker is also committed to ϕ , given that *know* is a presupposition trigger. Put differently, it is the context in (21) that establishes the presupposed content on the part of the speaker—that the inspector came—and the sentence in (21). That the content is presupposed and thus commits the speaker to ϕ could be shown by the infelicity of a follow-up in (21) uttered by the speaker that corresponds to $\neg\phi = \llbracket$ the inspector didn't come \rrbracket .

We further observe that the speaker uttering the sentence in (21) and the interrogator coincide in Rivero's example, such that it allows for a specification of the actual presupposition triggered by *admitir*, namely 'someone claimed that ϕ '. On this view, it is plausible to assume that the interrogator/speaker (also) qualifies as *someone*. This assumption is highly plausible because the speaker—who also takes on the role of the interrogator—must have confronted the prisoner with the claim 'the inspector came' at some point during the interrogation, as otherwise the confession would not have taken place in the scenario of (21). Plausibly, the presupposition on the part of the speaker is confirmed through context, thus qualifying as a pragmatic presupposition (Stalnaker, 1974), that is, a presupposition that does not stem from the lexical meaning of the verb but instead arises from the background assumptions implied through the context. One might thus look at the speaker's utterance of the sentence in (21) in the following sense: The uttered sentence in (21) presupposes that ϕ just in case the utterance of the sentence in (21) is appropriate only in those contexts—such as the one established in (21)—where

ϕ is presupposed by the speaker. In any case, such a more complex scenario only further underlines that *admitir* itself does not trigger a presupposition of the propositional content ϕ of the CC, committing the speaker to ϕ . Rivero's example merely provides a plausible case for a pragmatic presupposition.

The observations so far let us conclude that *admettre* is not a factive verb in the sense that the propositional content ϕ of its CC is presupposed. Rather, sentences with *admettre* only trigger the presupposition that 'someone claimed that ϕ '. This aligns with cross-linguistic observations made in the literature for response stance verbs such as *admit*, *deny*, or *accept* (see Cattell, 1978 for English; Kastner, 2015 for English and Hebrew; Banerjee, 2023 for Bangla). Additional explanation were provided by Rivero (1971) for Spanish. Specifically, when *admitir* takes an indicative CC and a presupposition of the propositional content of the CC is present, the presupposition is not triggered by the RSV itself but instead arises pragmatically from the discourse context, as seen in example (21). Conversely, when *admettre* takes a subjunctive complement, the propositional content of the CC is not presupposed at all.

In other words, the presupposition of the CC observed in Rivero's example (19) is not a semantic presupposition but a pragmatic presupposition, arising from context.

3.2 *Explicit Performative Admettre*

Let us now turn to the explicit performative cases of *admettre*. We depart from Quer's (2009) remark on the performative use of French *admettre* which also allows for either indicative or subjunctive in its CC, (22).

- (22) *J'admets que vous ayez/ avez raison.*
 I=admit that you have.SBJV.3SG have.IND.3SG reason
 'I admit that you are right.' French (Quer, 2009: 1782; *apud* Grevisse & Goosse, 1993)

Quer (2009: 1782) explains the mood distribution pattern in (22) as follows:

[T]he embedded proposition expressed in subjunctive is presupposed, that is it gets interpreted as integrating the common ground of the conversational context [...] The obvious concessive¹³ nuance [...] can be

13 The concessive nuance can also be related to what Searle & Vanderveken (1985) would call the preparatory conditions for admit which differs from a run-of-the-mill assertion. Preparatory conditions are presuppositions that must hold to perform a felicitous speech act.

interpreted as conceding that the proposition under discussion [...] can be incorporated to the common ground, whereas the indicative version simply asserts the content of the concession.

His reasoning aligns well with our observations that ϕ must be under discussion or proposed by a third party, which we reformulated as the presupposition ‘someone claimed that ϕ ’. Quer’s statement that the propositional content is presupposed allows a benevolent interpretation in Kastner’s (2015) sense, namely that only the content, not the truth of the propositional content of the CC is presupposed. An interpretation in the latter sense, however, would forfeit its explanatory power, as we have argued previously. That is, the assumption of a quasi-factive interpretation of an RSV such as *admetre* would come at the cost of covering less empirical ground across person paradigms.

For now, let us dive deeper into Quer’s observation that the indicative in performative uses of *admetre* qualifies as an assertion. Next to its performative use which gives us good reasons to assume that the complement is not presupposed but rather asserted, we can employ the Hey wait a minute!-test (Shannon, 1976; von Stechow, 2004; Pearson, 2010) and observe that the question seems odd as a reaction to something that has been asserted as is the case in (23).

(23) A: *Admeto que la degana té raó.*
 admit.1SG that the dean have.IND.3SG reason
 ‘I admit that the dean is right.’

B: #*Ep! Para el carro! no sabia que la degana tingués raó.*
 INJ stop.IMP.2SG the cart not know.IMP.1SG that the dean
 have.3SG.SBJV.IMP reason
 ‘Hey, wait a minute! I didn’t know that the dean was right!’

Compare this with a performative *dir* in (24) where the outcome is as bad.

(24) A: *Dic que la degana té raó.*
 say.1SG that the dean have.IND.3SG reason
 ‘I say that the dean is right.’

A preparatory condition for a concession would thus be that the speaker takes for granted that somebody proposed something before. If not, the speaker would not be able to successfully launch the speech act of a GRANT.

B: #*Ep!* Para el carro! no sabia que la degana
 INJ stop.IMP.2SG the cart not know.IMP.1SG that the dean
tingués raó.
 have.SBJV.IMP.3SG reason
 ‘Hey, wait a minute! I didn’t know that the dean was right!’

Assigning an assertive reading to *admetre* without labelling it a vsv—it may and must remain an rsv for independent reasons, see § 2.1—is not a contradiction. In fact, Kastner (2015) underlines that rsvs “are speech acts, undertaken with regards to a certain proposition.” Note that such a statement does not specify the precise nature of this speech act, neither does it restrict the diversity of kinds of speech acts that may come with a performative use of *admetre*. Thus, we can still maintain that, following Kastner (2015), an rsv in its performative use enjoins an assertion. While (22) and (23) may be assertive, it is left open what speech act we are dealing with in cases with subjunctives. While it is undisputed that indicative mood is treated as the mood of assertion (Terrell & Hooper, 1974 among others), which the subjunctive never is, it does not rule out that illocutionary acts other than assertions may be associated with the subjunctive in general and performative cases in particular. In fact, while there are properties that are closer to assertive readings and others that rule it out, it is the mood choice that exhibits the respective readings of *admit* as an assertion or ‘something else’. The underlying assumption then is that verbal mood in CCs under *admetre* functions as a reflex of its illocutionary force. This assumption is not far-fetched. An illustrative example is that of *dir* (‘to say’) in (25), which gives us either a (report of) an assertive (25a) or directive (25b) speech act, depending on the respective mood (Quer, 1998: 54).

- (25) a. *Diu que t’enyora.*
 say.3SG that 2ACC=miss.IND.2SG
 ‘(S)he says that she misses you.’
- b. *Diu que li escriguis.*
 say.3SG that DAT.3SG write.SBJV.3SG
 ‘(S)he tells you to write her/him.’

We think that the illocutionary act linked to a subjunctive CC could be a more complex one. What it would need to capture is something along the lines of what Cohen and Krifka (2011, 2014) call a GRANT, namely that the author refuses to assert $\neg\phi$ and, thus amounting to assent, acknowledges ϕ to the CG

through non-objection without necessarily committing to it (see also Searle and Vanderveken, 1985). Such an illocutionary act would reflect Laca's (2010) acquiescence of a suggestion or Klein-Andreu's (1990) weak affirmation of *admitir* with subjunctive CCs in Spanish. We set the details of this speech act aside for now and come back to it in § 4.4.

Turning back to the performative uses of *admetre*, we start with (26), the indicative mood CC. Note that here that author and protagonist (= matrix subject) now coincide.¹⁴ As performative uses of verbs such as *admetre* are illocutionary acts (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1969), it fits into Quer's suggestion to interpret (26) as an assertion. Furthermore, assertions cause speaker commitments (MacFarlane, 2011, Geurts, 2019, Krifka, 2023 a.o.) which captures the infelicity of the follow-up assertion of (26a) because the speaker now displays commitment inconsistencies, given that (s)he uttered (26) before. (26b), on the other hand, is infelicitous for the same reasons as (16) and (19) in § 3.1, which aligns with Quer's (2009) idea of the proposition being under discussion.

(26) *Admeto que la degana té raó:*
 admit.1SG. that the dean have.IND.3SG reason
 'I admit that the dean is right.'

a. #*Però no en té gens, de raó.*
 but not CL.PART have.3SG any of reason
 'But she isn't right at all.'

b. #*Però ningú ho va dir abans.*
 but nobody CL.NEUT go.3SG say before
 'But no one claimed that before.'

Things become trickier with subjunctive complements as in (27). Here, we cannot explain the infelicity of (27a) in the same way we did before for (26) without claiming that we are not dealing with an assertion or presupposition.

(27) *Admeto que la degana tingui raó:*
 admit.1SG that the dean have.SBJV.3SG reason
 'I admit that the dean is right.'

14 A hallmark of performative uses is that the verb is in the first person and present tense.

- a. #*Però no en té gens, de raó.*
 but not CL.PART have.3SG any of reason
 ‘But she isn’t right at all.’
- b. #*Però ningú ho va dir abans.*
 but nobody CL.NEUT go.3SG say before
 ‘But no one claimed that before.’

While at first glance we could argue that (27) also carries an assertive value or that the propositional content of the CC is presupposed due to identical judgments in the a and b follow-ups as in (26), an inconsistency in our reasoning would emerge that does not tally with the conclusions we have drawn before in § 2. Aiming for consistency, we will provide further pointers to support the idea that indicative and subjunctive CCs in performative uses are indeed distinct from each other due to their distinct behaviour, giving further reasons to assume that we need to tease them apart and treat them what they are, viz. different speech acts that amount to a similar CG that for both cases prevents the speaker from committing to $\neg\phi$. Thus, while the outcome of ϕ being in the CG is the same, author commitments to ϕ are given for indicative CCs but not for subjunctive CCs. The inconsistencies that arise for subjunctives are caused by violation of consistency maxims (see Krifka, 2022) that may prevent the speaker from committing to $\neg\phi$ for reasons other than being committed to ϕ . We will lay this out in more detail in § 4.1.

The first pointer comes from the observation that indicative CCs under *admetre* allow for what Krifka (2023) calls commitment modifiers. (28) is an example with the commitment modifier *realment* (really). We see here that such a modifier is odd with a subjunctive CC (28a), but fine with indicative CC (28b), thus further underlining different properties of *admetre* under indicative and subjunctive.

- (28) a. ??*Admeto que, realment, la carn contamina.*
 admit.1SG that really the meat contaminate.SBJV.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat really pollutes the environment.’
- b. *Admeto que, realment, la carn contamina.*
 admit.1SG that really the meat contaminate.IND.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat really pollutes the environment.’

The second, and more prominent pointer concerns thematicity or old/new information which has often been associated with mood alternation in the context of RSVs (Gsell & Wandruszka, 1986; Quer, 2016; but see Becker, 2014 for arguments against this view). Quer (p.c.) remarks that in performative uses of *admetre* with indicative CCs, we do not necessarily need a preceding discourse where ϕ itself was overtly introduced as a discourse referent. Subjunctive CCs, on the other hand, turn out to be infelicitous, if the propositional content of the CC is not currently under discussion. (29) illustrates such a case.

- (29) Context: You have a discussion with your friend Joan on global warming and how to take individual measures to reduce your carbon footprint. The topic of eating meat has not been brought up throughout the conversation and you say ...
- a. #*Admeto que la carn contamini.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.SBJV.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat pollutes the environment.’
- b. *Admeto que la carn contamina.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat pollutes the environment.’

Assuming Quer (2009) that indicatives under *admetre* are assertions, (29b) would raise an (implicit) question under discussion (QUD; cf. Roberts, 1996; Ginzburg, 1996; Farkas & Bruce, 2009). This also captures Cattell’s (1978: 68) reasoning of why some out-of-the-blue uses of RSVs may turn out to be felicitous, as pointed out in § 2.1. (29a), on the other hand, which is not an assertion, turns out to be infelicitous if we encounter a discourse in which the propositional content of the CC was not previously introduced. In other words, the propositional content of the subjunctive CC does not raise a new QUD, nor can it plausibly address a QUD that could be derived from the context in (29). While both are performative, their illocutionary acts appear to be substantially different from each other as the assertive reading can get away with the lack of conversational context where ϕ , the propositional content of the CC, has been proposed or is currently under discussion.

Looking at the explanation in more detail, even though ϕ was claimed by someone, (29a) would still be bad because the propositional content of the CC is not the content that is on top of the question stack such that the CC would not address the current QUD, regardless of who introduced it, even if it were Joan. With the indicative, on the other hand, the author ‘hijacks’ the conversation in a way that (s)he introduced a new (implicit) QUD or puts the QUD

of ‘Does eating meat harm the environment?’ on top of the question stack. We would arrive at the following conclusion: the condition for a subjunctive CC of an RSV such as (29a) is that said CC must answer the current QUD. As we have seen in the context of (29) that this is not the case, (29a) turns out infelicitous. Indicative CCs of RSVs, on the other hand, are felicitous as they raise a QUD *qua* assertion, putting it on top of the question stack through the speech act. Thus, given that (29a) does not display the same properties that an assertion such as (29b) displays, the speech act of (29b) cannot be an assertion, nor can its CC be presupposed, as argued before. Mood choice appears to have a crucial impact on how discourse is modelled.

Since we postulated that subjunctive CCs must answer the current QUD, as they seemingly do not raise a new one, we would expect that in a context where a subjunctive CC answers the QUD of a given context, the turnout would be felicitous. Having modified the context where the topic of eating meat—the propositional content of both CCs in (30)—has been brought up and represents the current QUD that is on top of the question stack the subjunctive CC in (30a) is now as good as the indicative CC in (30b).

(30) Context: You have a discussion with your friend Joan on global warming and how to take individual measures to reduce your carbon footprint. Your friend Joan has brought up the topic of eating meat and after him producing some conclusive arguments, you then say ...

- a. *Admeto que la carn contamini.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.SBJV.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat pollutes the environment.’

- b. *Admeto que la carn contamina.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG
 ‘I admit that meat pollutes the environment.’

In (30), the relevant discourse referent is the complement of the CC, i.e. eating meat, which is explicitly given in the discussion. Therefore, the response stance reading that we associate with *admetre* and subjunctive is felicitous, next to the assertive reading.

In sum, we can say that mood alternation in the context of performative *admetre* creates as many differences in meaning as in reportative *admetre*. We will assume that in the case of performative uses this is subject to different speech acts as we will argue in the following section.

4 The Interplay between Mood and rsvs in Commitment Spaces

We will now focus on the performative use of *admetre* only. For our analysis, we will resort to the Commitment Space (CS) model which was first proposed by Krifka and Cohen (2011, 2014), and developed further in Krifka (2022, 2023). The idea we want to lay out is the following: In the context of performative uses of *admetre*, indicative and subjunctive mood are associated with two distinct illocutionary acts, respectively. As a result, they update the CS in distinct ways. While the indicative is associated with an assertion (following Quer, 2009), the subjunctive is associated with a GRANT (Cohen & Krifka, 2011, 2014). With this approach, the different performative uses of *admetre* with the associated mood fall neatly into place and reflect our pre-theoretical observations from previous sections.

4.1 Commitment Spaces

Before we dive into the notion of Commitment Spaces (henceforth CSS), we will briefly have to explain the notion of commitment, which we have only used loosely in the previous sections. We will follow the view that commitments are a normative and non-psychological notion (Hamblin, 1970, Lyons, 1995, Gunlogson, 2001, Clark, 2006, Geurts, 2019 i.a.) in that a speaker vouches for or acts on the truth of a proposition and may not undertake contradictory commitments to avoid social sanctions (Fricker, 2006, Tuzet, 2006, Geurts, 2019, Krifka, 2022).¹⁵ We will use the formal shorthand from Cohen and Krifka (2011, 2014), $S_1 \vdash \phi$, which expresses that S_1 (the author/speaker) is committed to and thus vouches for the truth of ϕ . Commitments play a crucial role within the CS framework and subsequent analysis. In the remainder of this subsection, we will sketch out the basics about CSS.

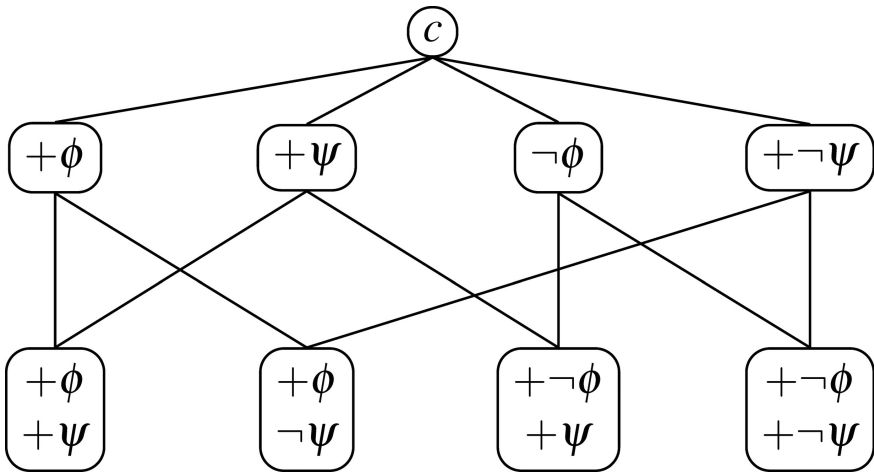
Roughly speaking, a CS—for which we use C_n to refer to a specific CS—is a set of so-called Commitment States, CSts in short, where a CSt represents the outcome of or departure for a legal development from one CSt to another CSt within a CS. A CSt assumes the role of what is the CG in alternative models of conversation (Stalnaker, 1978, et seq.). Just like CG, a CSt is a non-empty set

15 Note however, that Geurts' notion of commitment is more of a relational state between individuals, whereas that of Krifka is rather attributive. Since I will adopt my analysis based on Krifka & Cohen (2011) and subsequent work, commitments will be treated as attributive states. However, I currently remain agnostic towards whether to conclusively treat commitments as such.

that is not only defined as a set of propositions but also as a “representation of commitments” (Krifka, 2015, 365; see also García-Carpintero, 2015). Therefore, CSts represent an enriched structure of a CG which comprises both propositions and commitments to propositions such that they “also keep track of the participants that asserted a proposition” (Cohen & Krifka, 2011, 2014; see also García-Carpintero, 2015, Geurts, 2024 for similar views). Thus, in the further analysis, we will understand CSts as sets of commitments and propositions. In Krifka and Cohen (2011) and subsequent work, the shorthand c_n denotes a particular CSt within a cs.

Once we have clarified what CSts are, we need some more details about the overall buildup of a basic cs. One can display a cs in the shape of a Hasse diagram (Krifka & Cohen, 2011).

(31)



The single node on top of a cs is what Cohen and Krifka call the root of a cs. Every cs has a root. A root is the least informative CSt, the CSt with the least members, so to speak. Roughly speaking, the root is the point of departure for developments from one cs to another. Krifka and Cohen (2011, 2014) write $\sqrt{c_n}$ for ‘root of a csc_n ’. In the Hasse diagram in (31), the current root is the CSt c . During a conversation, a cs is permanently subject to updates. Within the course of conversation and updates of a cs that follow with them, the root thus changes as well and as such gradually contains more elements (i.e. propositions and commitments), while still being the least informative CSt within a newly established cs, such that after several updates, we obtain a root that corresponds to the CSt c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n .

It is important to point out that CSs must be consistent. That is, a CS is organised in such a way that developments from one CSt to another may not result in inconsistencies. For instance, there are no legal developments that result in a CSt c of which contradictory commitments or propositions are a member of. This is captured through integrity constraints (Krifka, 2022) for discourse participants that wish to update a CS. Two of them are relevant for our analysis, namely the claim consistency (32), on the one hand, and the claim/proposition consistency (33) on the other hand; see Krifka (2022) for an exhaustive list of integrity constraints.

(32) $*x \vdash \phi, x \vdash \neg\phi \in c$ (claim consistency)

(33) $*x \vdash \phi, \neg\phi \in c$ (claim/proposition consistency)

Take the claim/proposition consistency in (33). Assuming that c is a CSt of a given CS, (33) expresses that a discourse agent x cannot commit to ϕ , if $\neg\phi$ is a member of a CSt that x wishes to update. In other words, if it is CG that $\neg\phi$, x may not assert and thus commit to and propose an update with ϕ ; likewise, *mutatis mutandis*, for the claim consistency in (32).

4.2 Denegation and GRANT

Searle and Vanderveken (1985: 4) describe denegation¹⁶ as a complex illocutionary act that “involves negation of the illocutionary force” and “whose aim is to make it explicit that the speaker does not perform a certain illocutionary act” (see also Searle, 1969). An example of a denegation is (34), which must not be confused with illocutionary acts of a propositional negation (35).

(34) I do not promise to come

(35) I promise not to come.

A speaker uttering (34) refrains from making a promise, whereas uttering (35) is a (commissive) speech act of a propositional negation. (34) and (35) have different outcomes in terms of commitments. Looking at the speech act of assertion, Krifka and Cohen (2011) introduce the illocutionary act of GRANT, which is a

¹⁶ The term goes even further back to Searle (1969).

denegation of an assertion of $\neg\phi$. A speaker S that performs a GRANT wants to make explicit that S refuses to perform the illocutionary act of an assertion of $\neg\phi$. A GRANT can therefore be understood as in (36).

$$(36) \text{ GRANT}(\phi) = \sim\text{ASSERT}(\neg\phi)$$

The formal rendition of a GRANT is $\sim S_1 \vdash \neg\phi$, where ‘ \sim ’ represents negation on the illocutionary level, whereas ‘ \neg ’ corresponds to propositional negation.

Krifka (2022) suggests that an assent as performed with *okay* in its compliance reading (Krifka, 2013) represents such a case of a GRANT. Note that in such a case, an *okay*-sayer is not committed to ϕ (see Krifka, 2013, 2022; Schmitt, 2024) but merely refuses to perform an act of an assertion of $\neg\phi$. In the following subsection, we will lay out, how a GRANT differs from assertions of ϕ and $\neg\phi$ in the context of a CS framework when looking at CS updates.

4.3 *cs Updates*

Krifka (2022) provides a way how to display different reactions to a proposal to update a CS. Such proposals may be acquitted with confirmation (assertion of ϕ), denial (assertion of $\neg\phi$), or assent (non-objection of ϕ). Updates of a CS are formalised with ‘ \cdot ’, which is “an operator that turns a proposition into the correspond CS update function” (Krifka 2022: 95). *Qua* assertion, S_1 updates the CS with their commitment to ϕ , written as $\cdot S_1 \vdash \phi$. The intended primary perlocutionary act of an assertion, however, is the update with ϕ (Krifka, 2022: 97). Now, since updates of a CS do not just happen by brute force (see Lauer, 2012), Krifka reformulates the intended update with ϕ as a choice for the addressee S_2 to update the CS accordingly. Imagine a situation in which S_1 asserts ϕ such that (s)he now is committed to ϕ . In doing so, S_1 updates the CS with $S_1 \vdash \phi$ but not yet with ϕ as for ϕ to be part of the new CS is depending on S_2 ’s reaction. Call such a situation an update proposal with ϕ , as formalised by Krifka in (37).

$$(37) \text{ Speaker } S_1 \text{ asserts } \phi \text{ at } C_n: \\ C_n + S_1 \vdash \phi; [\phi \vee S_2 \neg \phi] = C_{n+1}$$

(37) displays an update with two possible options for S_2 , namely the update with ϕ , i.e. the “intended perlocutionary effect”, or S_2 voicing disagreement with ϕ , rendered as $S_2 \neg \phi$ to express ‘ S_2 announces doubt concerning ϕ ’. S_2 can of course react in other ways, but the notation in (37) is enough for our present purposes. In the following are three relevant options for S_2 to react to S_1 assert-

ing ϕ : Firstly, S_2 can confirm with *yes* which corresponds to a commitment to ϕ . The newly established CSt will then contain S_1 's and S_2 's commitment to ϕ , as well as ϕ on its own.¹⁷ Secondly, S_2 can say *no* and thus commit to $\neg\phi$ which results in S_1 being committed to ϕ and S_2 being committed to $\neg\phi$ to be part of the newly established CSt. Thirdly, the speaker may simply not object to ϕ through a GRANT with *okay* and thus lets only ϕ pass through such that the newly established CSt consists of $S_1 \vdash \phi$, and ϕ , but not of $S_2 \vdash \phi$. These post-update CSts—written here as c_2 —are summarised formally in (38a), (38b), and (38c).

(38) CSts after S_2 's reaction with *yes*, *no*, and *okay*

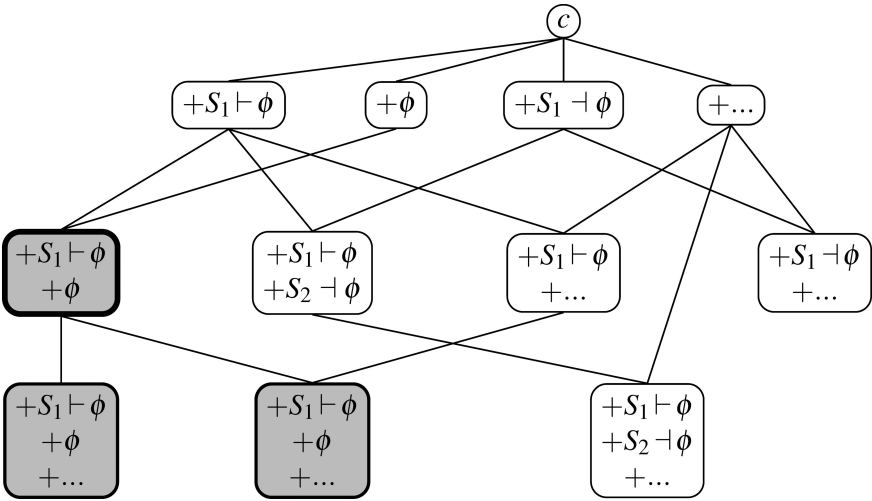
- a. *yes*: $c_2 = \{c_1 + S_1 \vdash \phi + \phi + S_2 \vdash \phi\}$
- b. *no*: $c_2 = \{c_1 + S_1 \vdash \phi + S_2 \vdash \neg\phi\}$
- c. *okay*: $c_2 = \{c_1 + S_1 \vdash \phi + \phi\}$

Looking at CSS, a speaker performing a GRANT does not do anything substantial to the CS itself except preventing an update with $\neg\phi$, thus only limiting the possible “legal developments” within a CS. GRANTS—to which we would count concessions—could thus be interpreted as what Hamblin calls “empty moves” (1970: 281) that would not enjoin any commitment. This is also why Cohen and Krifka (2011, 2014) call GRANTS meta-speech acts.¹⁸ Unlike assertions of either ϕ or $\neg\phi$, which reduce the CS to such an extent that its root is changed, a GRANT leaves the root intact, but instead reduces the possibilities of legal developments within a CS. As we do not look at GRANTS as ‘opening moves’ in conversations, we only look at GRANTS used as reactions, to which we count (38c). This would be a case of a GRANT as a reaction such that the CSt is updated but excludes a commitment to ϕ . To further visualise this, compare the two identical CSS in (39) and (40) of a scenario where S_1 has already proposed to add ϕ to the CSt by committing to ϕ . It is now for S_2 to react. In our scenario, we offer two possibilities to S_2 to either react with a GRANT, or an assertion. (39) represents an update with a GRANT, (40) an update with an assertion. Note that in (39), S_2 does not commit to ϕ , whereas in (40), (s)he does. This is what will be most relevant to us here.

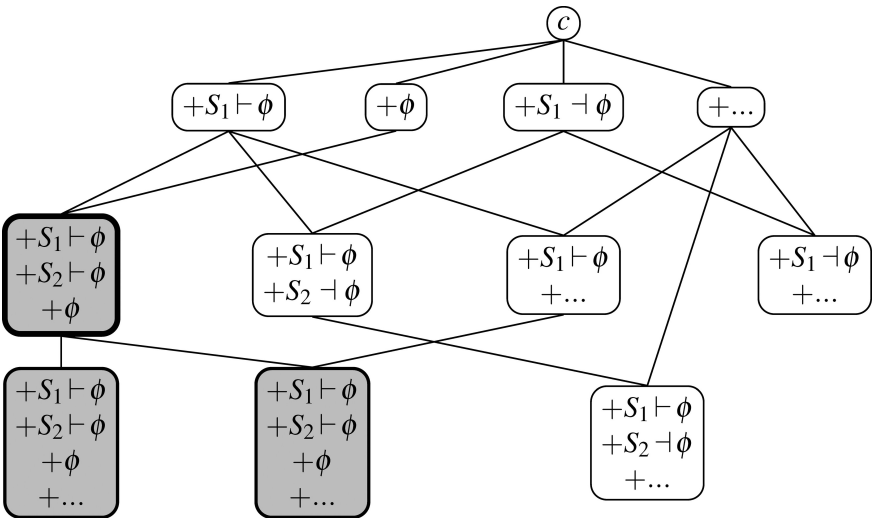
17 Such a mutual commitment would correspond with CG in the sense of Geurts (2019, 2024).

18 Note that it does not seem necessary that denegation must involve any explicit negation as Cohen & Krifka's case of denegation they discuss in their paper does not involve an explicit negation either.

(39) CS update with GRANT:



(40) CS update with assertion:



With these tools, we have enough to capture the different updates of a CS in the case of *admetre* and their two respective verbal mood choices in their CCS.

4.4 Mood and Kinds of Commitment Space Updates

In the following, we will argue that performative *admetre* allows the speaker to perform two different illocutionary acts, depending on the respective mood choice of indicative or subjunctive. Under such a premise, we also suggest that

mood choice is not subject to free alternation but rather dependent on how the speaker wants to steer through a CS. In both cases, the speaker reacts to a proposal to update the CS, albeit in different ways. With the case of a GRANT, we aim to capture the idea of acquiescence of a suggestion (Laca, 2010) or weak affirmation (Klein-Andreu, 1990) that is associated with the subjunctive. In what follows, we will analyze our previous examples of performative *admetre* and demonstrate that they properly capture the linguistic facts we discussed before. More so, we believe that the GRANT associated with subjunctive CCs behaves in a similar way as *okay* in its compliance reading does, namely that it is used to merely assent but not to commit to ϕ (Krifka, 2013, 2022; Schmitt, 2024).¹⁹ As for mood, this tallies with a more general assumption that non-assertive predicates²⁰ (Farkas, 1992) and the subjunctive signal a lack of commitment²¹ (Rivero, 1971; Giorgi & Pianesi, 1997; Farkas, 2003; Giannakidou & Mari, 2021; a.o.). Thus, our hypothesis for performative *admetre* is that subjunctive CCs are associated with a GRANT (41a), whereas indicative CCs are associated with an assertion (Quer, 2009), (41b).

- (41) a. (GRANT) *Admeto que la carn contamini.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.SBJV.3SG
 ‘I admit that eating meat pollutes the environment.’
- b. (ASSERT) *Admeto que la carn contamina.*
 admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG
 ‘I admit that eating meat pollutes the environment.’

The explicit performative use of *admetre* can be understood within Krifka’s (2023) proposal that illocutionary operators are hosted in a dedicated syntactic projection, namely an Act Phrase (ActP), whose purpose is to distinguish

19 In fact, Godard (2012: 140) gives an explanation for mood choices that fits very well into the current analysis: “[...] with the subjunctive, it is not clear that the subject is committed to the truth of the proposition, in fact, the construction gives the opposite impression: if the agent commits himself, it is only temporarily, as a step in the argumentation. [...] *Admetre* in the combination with the subjunctive often occurs as the first gesture in a concessive structure: ‘I grant you that *p*, but’ [...]”

20 In fact, we do not want to state that *admetre* is a non-assertive predicate but rather that it allows for a non-assertive interpretation in case of subjunctive CCs. Otherwise, *admetre* may obtain an assertive interpretation when embedding an indicative CC.

21 However, one must remark here that *commitment* as has been used in the previous mood literature is certainly not the same as used here. Either, the term *commitment* is not clearly defined or defined cognitively through beliefs and knowledge, thus turning commitment into a cognitive notion (e.g. Giannakidou & Mari, 2021). Here, we follow the

different speech acts. On this view, an ActP can house assertion or question operators, among others. It is therefore plausible to treat explicit performatives of *admettre* as the lexical spell-out of such operators, with the verb itself being merged in ActP. Krifka provides parallel analyses of performative verbs that are likewise interpreted as the spell-out of illocutionary force (Krifka, 2023: 144). Accordingly, I assume that *admettre* reflects such an act being performed: with the indicative mood, it spells out an assertion, while with the subjunctive, it spells out a GRANT. In this sense, the verb constitutes the speech act itself, with mood disambiguating its illocutionary force.²²

4.4.1 Performative *Admettre*: GRANT

As we have seen in § 3.2, for (41a) to be felicitously uttered, we must assume a context where the topic of eating meat has been brought up by someone the speaker is currently interacting with. Such a case would then be similar to our theoretical setup in (37). In the current scenario, let us assume that S_2 asserted ϕ and leaves S_1 with a choice to react to the intended update of the CS with ϕ .

$$(42) S_2 \text{ asserts } \phi \text{ at } C_0: C_0 + [S_2 \vdash \phi; [\phi \vee S_1 \dashv \phi]] = C_1$$

Assuming that S_1 merely wants to assent, then (s)he will react with the speech act of a GRANT and opt for the subjunctive, i.e. the prevention of an update with $\neg\phi$, written as $\sim \cdot S_1 \vdash \neg\phi$. A speaker uttering (41a) then updates the CS in the way of (43) such that ϕ gets integrated into the CS without S_1 being committed to ϕ .

$$(43) S_1 \text{ GRANTS } \phi \text{ at } C_1: C_1 + [\sim S_1 \vdash \neg\phi] = C_1 + S_2 \vdash \phi + \phi$$

After uttering (41a), the CS takes the shape of (39). The CSt c_2 in the updated CS after performing a GRANT, as done in (43), is (44).

$$(44) c_2 = \{c + S_3 \vdash \phi + \phi\}$$

tradition of treating commitments as something distinct from cognitive attitudes (cf. i.a. Hamblin 1970, Lyons 1995, Geurts, 2024).

22 Looking at our cases of reportative, Krifka's (2023) model would also open the possibility to assume that they could be considered as embedded speech acts, such that they can "contribute to the current conversation, or report on some other conversation" (Krifka, 2023: 166; but see Frey, 2023 for a discussion against embedded speech acts). The latter view would fit our case in (12) and even allow for a plausible explanation of subjunctive CCs such that they would be conceived as reported GRANTS.

Treating performative *admetre* with subjunctive CCs as a GRANT captures the previous observations well: First, it would restrict its performance to those contexts in which S_2 in (39) wants to update the CS with ϕ and wait for a reaction from S_2 . Second, it would capture S_1 's acknowledgement of ϕ without S_1 's commitment to ϕ , which is what is reflected in using the subjunctive, in contrast to the assertive interpretation of performative *admetre* where the CC is in the indicative. Third, even though S_1 is not committed to ϕ , (s)he cannot commit to $\neg\phi$ due to the violation of the claim/proposition consistency in (33). This constraint precludes an author's commitment to ϕ , if $\neg\phi$ is an element of a CSt c . In our case example where the speaker utters (41a), the result would be that ϕ (= \llbracket meat is bad for the environment \rrbracket) $\in c_2$ and the author may not commit to $\neg\phi$ (= \llbracket meat isn't bad for the environment \rrbracket). Thus, with the current analysis of treating performative cases of *admetre* with subjunctive CCs as a GRANT, we have managed to capture the data in (41a) while at the same time, we potentially will set them apart from assertive interpretations of *admetre* to which we will turn to now.²³

4.4.2 Performative Admetre: Assertion

Let us now turn to (41b). As demonstrated in § 3.2, indicative CCs are both permissible choices with situation where ϕ is under discussion and those where it is not. We repeat the cases in condensed form once again for the sake of convenience.

23 As initially pointed out in § 2.1, we may have cases where the issue has not been on the table but the speaker bringing forth an imagined stance. One anonymous reviewer has pointed out the interesting case of a suppositional use of *admetre*, as seen in (i).

(i) *Admetem que la carn contamina/ contamina ...*
 admit.1PL.IMP that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG contaminate.SBJV.3SG
 'Let us assume that meat is bad for the environment ...'

Given its suppositional character, it would be plausible to assume that the author of (i) is talking about a possible world in which certain things hold that agents may or may not be committed to. If we take this to be true, then it would be sensible to say that the speaker using the subjunctive in (i) performs a GRANT in a possible world w^1 that is not the actual world w^* , simply stating that in this possible world w^1 that ϕ = \llbracket meat is bad for the environment \rrbracket holds. Put differently, we might say that ϕ is in the CS in w^1 (see also Krifka, 2019 for the similar idea of hypothetical CSS). Note that the speaker is not committed to ϕ in w^1 , just as (s)he would not be in w^* after a GRANT. As for the indicative, we would assume a possible world w^1 in which the speaker would be committed to ϕ . Thus, the suppositional uses of *admetre* in (i) would have the character of constructing a hypothetical scenario in a possible world w^1 , in which commitments can be made without making commitments in the actual world w^* . Given the complexity of such cases, we can only speculate and leave the details of this matter open.

- (45) The topic of eating meat has NOT been brought up by one participant in the conversation.

Admeto que la carn contamina.

admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG

'I admit that eating meat pollutes the environment.'

- (46) The topic of eating meat has been brought up by one participant in the conversation.

Admeto que la carn contamina.

admit.1SG that the meat contaminate.IND.3SG

'I admit that eating meat pollutes the environment.'

With this, we obtain two different points of departure of which (45) roughly corresponds with the case from Cattell (1978: 68) that the speaker is "making a response [...] to an imagined, rather than an actual, stance." We can reformulate this complex scenario in terms of CSs: Within an imagined CS, the speaker reacts to a proposal of a third party (that is not S_2). However, in the current CS between S_1 and S_2 that we find ourselves in, this is to be understood as a mere assertion by S_1 such that, in principle, S_1 brings ϕ to the table after the utterance of (45) which S_2 will understand as a proposal to update the current CS with ϕ . In other words, the roles between S_1 and S_2 are swapped such that it is not S_2 but S_1 who asserts and thus wants to update the current CS with ϕ . Ignoring the imagined CS for now and focusing on the current one between S_1 and S_2 , we obtain (47).

$$(47) C_0 + [S_1 \vdash \phi; [\phi \vee S_2 \dashv \phi]] = C_1$$

Thus, in (47), S_2 will have to react to S_1 's proposal instead such that with an assertion out of the blue where ϕ has not been brought up, we (only) arrive at the CSt in (48) at the time where S_2 has not reacted to S_1 's proposal but merely uttered (46).

$$(48) C_0 + \{S_1 \vdash \phi\}.$$

Note that since S_1 asserted and is thus committed to ϕ , (s)he may not entertain contradictory commitments as it would result in a violation of a claim consistency, resulting in infelicity.

Let us turn to the more common case of (46) now. Here, the point of departure is identical to our case in (41a) with a subjunctive CC such that it displays the same point of departure where S_2 proposes an update with ϕ . The crucial

difference here in comparison to the context in (45) is that ϕ is already under discussion before the utterance of the (same) assertion in (46). Accordingly, this changes the point of departure such that, say, S_2 has already proposed an update with ϕ , as reflected in (49).

$$(49) C_0 + [S_2 \vdash \phi; [\phi \vee S_1 \neg \phi]] = C_1$$

Since S_2 has brought up ϕ in the current conversation, S_1 must react accordingly. Here, S_1 does not resort to a GRANT but to an assertion instead, as is the intended reading of an indicative CCS embedded under a performative *admetre* (Quer, 2009). This commits S_1 to ϕ such that C_1 is not only updated with ϕ but also with $S_1 \vdash \phi$, giving the new CSt in (50); the corresponding CS as a diagram is that in (40).

$$(50) C_2 = \{ S_2 \vdash \phi, S_1 \vdash \phi, \phi \}.$$

Note that in this scenario, both S_1 and S_2 are mutually committed to ϕ and they have a CG with respect to their commitment to ϕ (see also Geurts, 2019, 2024). This outcome is different from a reaction with a GRANT where only S_2 will be committed to ϕ . Note that as well S_1 may not commit to ϕ as this would result in a violation of even two consistency maxims, namely that of claim/proposition (33) and claim inconsistency (32). This again falls neatly into the facts we observed earlier.

5 Conclusion

In this paper, we have argued that mood alternation under response stance verbs (RSVs) is not a matter of free alternation. Our primary focus has been on performative uses of *admetre* in Catalan, where we demonstrated that the verb presupposes that the proposition ϕ was presented to the common ground (CG), but not the truth of ϕ itself. This idea builds on previous observations by Cattell (1978) and Kastner (2015) and helps dispel doubts about whether RSVs are factive and thus presuppose ϕ , which would enjoin a speaker commitment to ϕ . More specifically, we have argued that performative uses allow the speaker to perform two distinct illocutionary acts, each linked to a different mood, i.e., assertion with the indicative, and GRANT with the subjunctive. We have formalised these two speech acts within a Commitment Space (CS) model, carefully mapping the mood distinctions to the respective illocutionary force. The difference between these speech acts is crucial: when the subjunctive is used with a

GRANT, the speaker prevents updates with $\neg\phi$ without committing to ϕ , leading to ϕ being added to a newly established Commitment State (CSt). In contrast, when the indicative is employed, the speaker not only accepts ϕ to the CSt but also has a commitment to ϕ . By adopting this analysis, we have provided a unified explanation that both accounts for the linguistic data and reveals the nuanced functions of mood alternation under RSVs in Catalan.

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