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VERBS WITH AN ATTITUDE[1]

The aim of this presentation is to investigate some semantic and syntactic properties of verbs of propositional attitude, using data from English, German, Swedish, Italian and Gallipolino (a dialect from South Italy). The work is based on the distinction between situational and actional attitude as proposed by Ray Jackendoff (1985, 2007). Within this theoretical framework, two types of propositional attitude verbs will be distinguished: *believe-verbs*, which express a situational attitude; and *intend-verbs*, which express an actional attitude. It will be shown how syntax expresses the distinction between these verbs by means of different complement clauses. Furthermore, it will be pointed out that there are different syntactical behaviours for the respective complement systems with verbs of propositional attitude. Finally, I will offer some further development on Jackendoff's hypothesis that *believe* and *intend* express the same attitude as they share a common feature of 'commitment'.

TWO CATEGORIES OF VERBS OF PROPOSITIONAL ATTITUDE

This paper is about verbs of propositional attitude (VPA), i.e. those verbs that express the way in which a person is cognitively related to a proposition p:

(1) Anna *believes* that Susan ate three portions lasagna.
(2) Anna *doubts* that Susan ate three portions lasagna.
(3) Anna *knows* that Susan ate three portions lasagna.
(4) Anna *fears* that Susan ate three portions lasagna.
(5) Anna *hopes* that Susan ate three portions lasagna.

Believing, *doubting*, *knowing*, *fearing* and *hoping* in the sentences (1)-(5) are different *attitudes* (ascribed to Anna) towards the same proposition p[Susan ate

three portions lasagna.], namely different ways in which Anna is cognitively related towards the *truth* of the same proposition:

(6) Anna believes/doubts/knows/fears/hopes *that p is true*.

This definition seems to fail when we take into account other verbs of propositional attitude, like, for instance, *intend, want, plan, be willing*, etc.:

(7) Anna *intends* to buy some flowers.

In these case, differently from the cases seen in (1)-(5), the propositional attitude verb does not possibly express the way in which Anna is related to the *actual* truth of the proposition ("Anna buys/will buy some flowers"), but rather the way in which Anna is related to *some action* which is necessary for *p* to *become true*:

(8) a. *Anna intends that *p is true / it is true that p*.
     b. Anna intends *to bring about that p becomes true*.

Thus, verbs of propositional attitude can be distinguished at least into two categories:

   • VPA that express the way in which someone is cognitively related to the *actual truth* of a proposition, or more precisely *to the situation in which a proposition is true*. E.g.: *believe, doubt, imagine, claim, say, assume, presume, know, regret, fear, hope, etc.* I will call these verbs 'verbs of Believing'.
   • VPA that express the way in which someone is cognitively related not to the actual truth of a proposition, but to its *potential truth*, or more precisely *to the action that can bring about the becoming true of a proposition*. E.g.: *intend, want, be willing, plan, etc.* I will call these verbs 'verbs of Intending'.

Ray Jackendoff (2007) has proposed the distinction between verbs of situational attitude (verbs of Believing) and verbs of actional attitude (verbs of Intending). In his words (Jackendoff 2007: 247):

> A belief is an attitude one can adopt toward any situation (state or event), concrete or abstract, at any time, with any combination of characters in it. […] By contrast, one can hold an intention only with respect to an action in which one is oneself the Actor – that is a *self-initiated action*. [...]

'Situational attitude' would be the attitude towards <u>any situation</u> in which a proposition *p is true*; 'Actional attitude' would be the attitude towards <u>the action</u> that must be carried out by someone, in order for a proposition *p to become true*.[2]

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[2] Actional attitudes are distinguished from situational attitudes by their 'time-dependence': a belief, a hope, a fear, a claim can be directed toward a situation *at any time*, past, present or future; whereas an intention cannot be directed toward an action in the past (*non-past-directedness*):

Verbs of Propositional Attitude

Verbs of Believing

→ **situational attitude**
(attitude towards any *situation*
in which a proposition is true)

Verbs of Intending

→ **actional attitude**
(attitude towards the *action* that *must*
be carried out in order to bring about
the becoming true of a proposition)
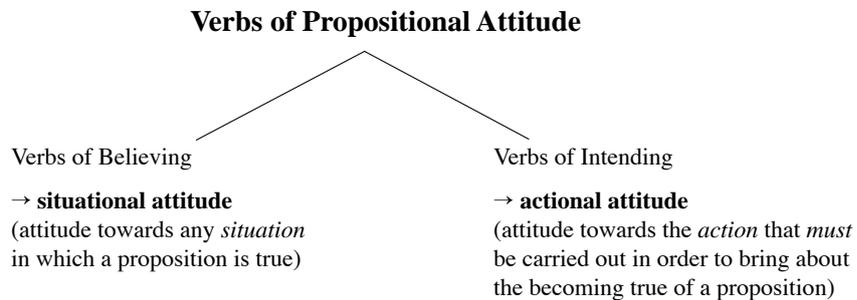
Figure 1: Distinction between *situational* and *actional* attitude (Jackendoff 2007)

This distinction is based on another distinction thoroughly sketched by Culicover & Jackendoff (2003, 2005, 2006): the distinction between *Situations* and *Actions*:[3]

Situations

Events
(What happened was..)

States

Actions
(What X did was…)

Non-actions

Animate

Inanimate

Intentional
(imperative,
adverbials like
'on purpose')

Unintentional
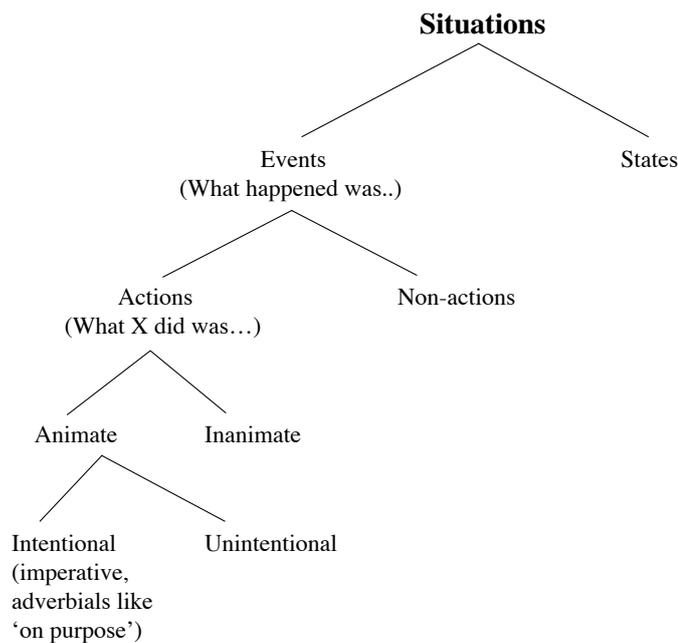
Figure 2: Hierarchy of Situations (Culicover & Jackendoff 2003, 2005, 2006)

(i) a. Susan believes that Jane came last week.
     b. Tim claimed that he would buy a car.
     c. John is hoping that they have already arrived.

(ii) a. Jane intends to come early.
     b. *Jane intends to have come early.

[3] It must be pointed out that Actions are also a subtype of Situations. The distinction holds between Situations that are Actions and Situations that are no Actions.

Situations can be States or Events. The test for distinguishing Events from States is that Events are *things that happen*, whereas States are not:

(9)   A. **Events**
        a. What happens is that John is eating a big pizza.
        b. What happened was that Susan received an SMS.
      B. **States**
        c. *What happens is that Susan is blonde.
        d. *What happens is that Tim has a Vespa.

Events can be Actions or Non-actions. The test for distinguishing Actions from Non-actions is that Actions answer the question "What did X do?", whereas Non-actions do not:

(10) A. **Actions**
        a. What John did was eat a big pizza.
      B. **Non-actions**
        b. *What Susan did was receive an SMS.

An Actor does not need to be acting intentionally (11a.) or even be capable of acting intentionally (11b.):

(11) a. What Tim accidentally did was see himself in a mirror.
       b. What the ship did was go down.

The test for distinguishing intentional from unintentional actions is that only intentional actions can be expressed in imperatives (12) or modified by adverbials like *intentionally*, *voluntarily* and *on purpose* (13):

(12) a. Open the window, please!
       b. *Realize that it's raining!
 (13) a. He closed his eyes on purpose.
       b. *She recognized him intentionally.

Actions that are capable of being intentional <u>must</u> have an animate Actor. This means that neither the word 'intentionally' nor 'unintentionally' may appear with states (14) or non-actions (15) or actions with an inanimate Actor (16):

(14) *John (un)intentionally likes pizza.
(15) *Susan (un)intentionally received an SMS.
(16) *The ship (un)intentionally went down.

HOW SYNTAX EXPRESSES THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN VERBS OF SITUATIONAL ATTITUDE AND VERBS OF ACTIONAL ATTITUDE

Syntax seems to express the distinction between verbs of situational attitude and verbs of actional attitude by means of different complement clauses. A situational attitude is typically expressed by a finite (= tensed) *that*-clause:

(17) Susan believed *that* she was taller than Jane.   [state]
(18) John hopes *that* Susan will bring a pizza to the party.   [event]

By contrast, the typical syntactic structure that goes with verbs of actional attitude is an infinitival (= untensed) verb phrase whose subject is understood to be the subject of the VPA (coreferential subjects):

(19) Susan wants to buy a car.   [action]
(20) *Susan intended to be taller than Jane.   [state]
(21) *John plans to receive an SMS.   [non-action]

A first-step-generalization would be:

(22) If verb of *situational attitude*, then finite *SUB-clause*;
        if verb of *actional attitude*, then *infinitival clause*.

This first generalization in (22) seems to be confirmed in other languages than English. First, I will take into account Italian, German and Swedish. Then, I will test the correctness of (22) considering data from an Italian dialect (Gallipolino).

In Italian, we can find that verbs of situational attitude are followed by finite clauses introduced by the subordinator '*che*' (23), whereas verbs of actional attitude are followed by infinitival clauses (24):

(23) Maria crede che domani pioverà.
        Maria believes that it will rain tomorrow.
(24) Marco intende uscire a pesca.
        Marco intends to go out fishing.

Similarly, in German, verbs of situational attitude select finite clauses introduced by the subordinator '*dass*' (25), while verbs of actional attitude select infinitival clauses (26):

(25) Suzanne glaubt, dass Stefan krank ist.
        Suzanne believes that Stefan is ill.
(26) Andreas will etwas essen.
        Andreas wants to eat something.

Same pattern in Swedish, where verbs of situational attitude are followed by finite clauses introduced by the subordinator '*att*' (27), whereas verbs of actional attitude are followed by infinitival clauses (28):

(27) Anna tror att det kommer att regna imorgon.
        Anna believes that it will be raining tomorrow.
(28) Ulf tänker gå på bio.
        Ulf intends to go to the movies.

The generalization in (22) is contradicted, in English, by *some* verbs of situational attitude that can be followed both by a *that*-clause and an infinitival clause. Jackendoff (2007: 250) shows how, for instance, *wish* and *claim*, which are verbs

of situational attitude, can appear with an infinitival clause. Here are his examples:

(29) John wished/claimed…
    a. … to be shorter than Bob.
    b. … to have been born 10 years earlier.
    c. … to be descended from royalty.

Other verbs of situational attitude that show this behaviour are *hope, fear* and *like*. In Swedish, verbs of situational attitude cannot typically occur with infinitival clauses:[4]

(30) a. Ingrid$_i$ tror att hon$_i$ är sen.
    b. *Ingrid tror att vara sen.
      Ingrid believes that she is late.

Gilla (Like), *hoppas* (Hope), *frukta* (Fear) and *önska* (Wish) seem to be the only verbs of situational attitude that can select an infinitival clause in Swedish in alternative to a tensed clause:

(31) a. Ingrid gillar att hon är längre än Anna.
    b. Ingrid gillar att vara längre än Anna
      Ingrid likes to be taller than Anna.
(32) a. Emil hoppas att han får många julkort.
    b. Emil hoppas att få många julkort.
      Emil hopes to receive many Christmas cards.
(33) a. Anna fruktar att hon får många julkort.
    b. Anna fruktar att få många julkort.
      Anna fears to receive many Christmas cards.
(34) a. Ulf önskar att han snart blir kallad.
    b. Ulf önskar att bli kallad snart.
      Ulf wishes to be called soon.

By contrast, the phenomenon is far more extended in Italian and in German, where *all* verbs of situational attitude can occur with infinitival clauses in alternative to the finite *SUB*-construction:

(35) a. Marco$_i$ crede che (lui$_i$) stia bene.   [ITA]
    b. Marco crede di stare bene.
    c. *Marco$_i$ believes that he$_i$ is fine.*
    d. **Marco believes to be fine.*

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[4] Still, both in English and in Swedish, some verbs of situational attitude, typically followed by finite clauses, can select an infinitival clause when used in reflexive form:
(i) a. Ingrid tror *sig* vara sen.
     Ingrid believes herself to be late.
   b. She believes *herself* to be a queen.
(ii) a. Emil tycker *sig* vara sjuk.
     Emil thinks himself to be ill.
   b. The fool thinks *himself* to be wise.

(36) a. Andreas$_i$ glaubt, dass er$_i$ krank ist.   [GER]
     b. Andreas glaubt, krank zu sein.
      Andreas$_i$ believes that he$_i$ is ill.

Thus, considering Italian and German, the generalization in (22) need to be re-formulated as following:

(37) If verbs of situational attitude, then finite *SUB*-clause *or* infinitival clause;
     If verbs of actional attitude, then (*only*) infinitival clause.

The occurrence of an infinitival clause after verbs expressing a situational attitude is limited, in all the considered languages, by a constraint: the subject of the embedded clause must be *coreferential* with the subject of the verb of propositional attitude:[5]

(38) a. John claimed to be taller than Laura.   [ENG]
     b. *John claimed Maria to be taller than Laura.
     c. John claimed that Maria was taller than Laura.
(39) a. Johan önskar att må bra.   [SWE]
      Johan wishes to be fine.
     b. *Johan önskar Ulf att må bra.
     c. Johan önskar att Ulf mår bra.
      Johan wishes that Ulf is fine.
(40) a. Marco crede di stare bene.   [ITA]
      Marco believes that he is fine.
     b. *Marco crede Maria di stare bene.
     c. Marco crede che Maria stia bene.
      Marco believes that Maria is fine.
(41) a. Maria wünscht, gesund zu sein.   [GER]
      Maria wishes to be healthy.
     b. *Maria wünscht, Andreas gesund zu sein.
     c. Maria wünscht, dass Andreas gesund ist.
      Maria wishes that Andreas is healthy.

Hence, we can take a further step and formulate a more precise version of the generalization in (37):

(42) If verbs of situational attitude, then *that*-clause or (*given coreferential subjects*) infinitival clause.
     If verbs of actional attitude, then (only) infinitival clause.

Insofar, we have assumed that verbs of situational attitude typically select finite *SUB*-clauses, while verbs of actional attitude typically select *infinitival* clauses. This assumption presupposes the existence in language of both finite *SUB*-structures and infinitival structures. What if the infinitive is not equally productive in some languages?

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[5] An exception to this constraint is represented by so called *raising* (subject-to-object) *constructions* in English:
 (i) I wanted/wished you to come earlier.
 (ii) I want/wish you to be happy.

There are some languages, like some dialects of south Italy, that are characterized by the limited occurrence of infinitival constructions. I will refer to the Italian dialect from Gallipoli (Lecce): Gallipolino.

Like the other dialects spoken in the Salentine peninsula (south of the Taranto-Ostuni line) of the Puglia region in south Italy, Gallipolino presents a limited use of infinitival clauses. Instead of several infinitival constructions occurring in standard Italian, we find, in Gallipolino, some finite constructions introduced by two different subordinators: *ka* and *ku*. Thus, with respect to Gallipolino, the generalization in (22) is to be formulated in other terms: verbs of situational attitude are followed by clauses introduced by the subordinator *ka* (43), whereas verbs of actional attitude are followed by clauses introduced by the subordinator *ku* (44):

(43) Lu 'Ntoni pensa ka stae bbonu.
       ART-ms 'Ntoni think-3s ka stay-3s good-ms
       (It.: Antonio pensa di stare bene.)
       Antonio_i believes that he_i is fine.
(44) 'A Cia ole ku bbascia alla kiazza.
       ART-fs Cia want-3s ku go-3sSUBJ to+ART-fs market
       (It.: Lucia vuole andare al mercato.)
       Lucia wants/intends to go to the market.

Hence:

(45) If verbs of situational attitude, then *ka*-clause;
       if verbs of actional attitude, then *ku*-clause.

If verbs of situational attitude in Italian can be followed by infinitival clauses, which are the typical complement clauses for verbs of actional attitude, the corresponding case in Gallipolino would be that verbs of situational attitude can be followed by *ku*-clauses.

Crucially, Gallipolino seems to offer, within its syntax, a more precise complement system than that in standard Italian: most verbs of situational attitude (except for '*piacere/like*', '*sparare /hope*', '*timire/fear*' and '*ulire/wish*'), in Gallipolino, can only select a *ka*-clause, whereas all verbs of situational attitude in standard Italian can select both a *che*-clause and an infinitival one. In this respect, Gallipolino is more similar to Swedish than to standard Italian, since even in Swedish most verbs of situational attitude (except for '*gilla/like*', '*hoppas/hope*', '*frukta/fear*' and '*önska/wish*') can only select an *att*-clause, without the alternative of selecting an infinitival construction:

(46) a. 'U Miminu tice ka stae bbonu.   [GAL]
           ART-ms Miminu say-3s ka stay-3s good-ms
           Cosimino_i says that he_i is fine.
       b. *'U Miminu tice ku stae bbonu.
(47) a. Iddha crite ka stae fiacca.
           She believe-3s ka stay-3s ill-fs
           She_i believes that she_i is ill.
       b. *Iddha crite ku stae fiacca.

(48) a. Emil säger att han mår bra. [SWE]
      Emil says that he is fine.
    b. *Emil säger att må bra.
(49) a. Hon tror att hon är sjuk.
      She$_i$ believes that she$_i$ is ill.
    b. *Anna tror att vara sjuk.
(50) a. Gianni dice che sta bene. [ITA]
      Gianni says that he is fine.
    b. Gianni dice di stare bene.
      Gianni say-3s PREP stay-INF well.
(51) a. Lei crede che è malata.
      She$_i$ believes that she$_i$ is ill.
    b. Lei crede di essere malata.
      She believe-3s PREP be-INF ill-fs

Hence, it seems confirmed that the distinction between situational and actional attitude has some significance with respect to the complementation system of languages like Swedish and Gallipolino[6] (more clearly than in languages like Italian and German). But then, why the exceptions of verbs like *hope, fear, like* and *wish*? In the next and last section of this paper, I will argue that the distinction between situational and actional attitude is not enough and that a new distinction is needed in order to describe the semantics of verbs of propositional attitude.

DO VERBS OF SITUATIONAL ATTITUDE AND VERBS OF ACTIONAL ATTITUDE HAVE A COMMON BASIC STRUCTURE? TOWARDS A NEW DISTINCTION?

Despite their more or less different syntactical behaviour, Jackendoff proposes an approach that treats verbs of situational attitude and verbs of actional attitude as having a *common basic conceptual structure*. This argument grows from the observation that some verbs in English can express both a situational attitude when followed by a *that*-clause, and an actional attitude when followed by an infinitival: *persuade/convince* and *decide*, for example.

(52) a. Susan convinced Andrew that she was taller than him. [SIT]
    b. *Susan convinced Andrew to be taller than him.
    c. Susan convinced Andrew to buy some flowers. [ACT]
(53) a. Susan decided that the water was too cold. [SIT]
    b. Susan decided to bake a cake. [ACT]

According to Jackendoff (2007: 253), this alternation between situational and actional attitudes, far from being a mere coincidence and far from showing that

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[6] We have seen that English is also similar to Swedish and Gallipolino, apart from the case of *claim* (verb of situational attitude that can select an infinitival clause in English, but not in Swedish, nor in Gallipolino).

these verbs happen to be ambiguous, would indicate that these verbs "express the very same attitude in either case and that the difference lies only in whether the attitude is taken toward a situation or an action."

More precisely, '*decide that*' would be the inchoative of *believe*, meaning 'come to believe', whereas '*decide to*' would be the inchoative of *intend*, meaning 'come to intend':

(54) Susan decided that the water was too cold.
       = 'Susan *came to believe that* the water was too cold'
(55) Susan decided to bake a cake.
       Susan *came to intend to* bake a cake.

Similarly, '*convince/persuade (someone) that*' would be the causative of *believe*, meaning 'cause (someone) to come to believe', whereas '*convince/persuade (someone) to*' would be the causative of *intend*, meaning 'cause (someone) to come to intend':

(56) Susan convinced Andrew that she was taller than him.
       = Susan *caused* Andrew *to come to believe that* she was taller than him.
(57) Susan convinced Andrew to buy some flowers.
       = Susan *caused* Andrew *to come to intend to* buy some flowers.

According to this hypothesis, *decide* and *convince* express the same attitude in both cases (*decide/convince that* and *decide/convince to*), which leads to the conclusion that "*believe* and *intend* also express exactly the same attitude, in one case directed toward a situation (or proposition) and in the other toward an action." (Jackendoff 2007: 253). The common element shared by *believe* and *intend* might be expressed as '<u>commitment</u>': to believe that a situation is the case is *to be committed to its existence*, and to intend to do something is *to be committed to doing so* (Jackendoff 2007: 260).

It seems to me that this concept of 'commitment' as used by Jackendoff needs some further explanation.

When we say that 'Believing/Knowing/Saying that some situation is the case is to be committed to its existence', we mean that these propositional attitudes of Belief/Knowledge/Claim are *presuppositional*, i.e. presuppose (in the mind of the subject who bears the attitude) the existence of the situation. When we believe/know/say that 'Bob is forty years old', we are presupposing that *there is someone called Bob who has the property of being forty years old*. In this sense, we are committed to the existence of some X who has some property Y.

When we say that 'Intending to do something is to be committed to doing so', we must mean something else, *something more than simply presuppose the existence of some future action*. I will argue that Intending to do something, as being committed to doing so, means that Intending to do something implies a *judgment on values*, i.e. *presupposes the existence of a situation in which there are reasons for action*.

Now, we can point out the similarity and the difference between the two types of 'commitment':

(58) Verbs of Situational attitude → Commitment <u>to the *existence* of a</u> **situation**;
(59) Verbs of Actional attitude   → Commitment <u>to the *existence*</u> of a **situation in which there are reasons for action**.

Thus, redefining the proposal presented by Jackendoff, my suggestion is that all verbs of propositional attitude imply the very same attitude of *believing*[7] and that what distinguishes some propositional attitudes from others is not only – as Jackendoff claims - the kind of situation towards which the attitude is addressed (*Situation* or *Action*), but, at first, the *kind of evaluative feature* involved: some attitudes are attitudes towards the *truth of a proposition p*; other attitudes are attitudes towards the *desirability of the truth of a proposition p*. Hence, I will propose a new distinction between *merely propositional attitudes* and *desiderative propositional attitudes*:

• *Merely propositional attitude* is the attitude of evaluating the *truth* of p, i.e. the attitude towards the situation in which <u>p is true</u>:
(60) *Merely propositional attitude*:
        PA (believe) [S[p is true]]

• *Desiderative propositional attitude* is the attitude of evaluating the *desirability of the truth* of p, i.e. the attitude towards the situation in which <u>if p is/becomes true, then this has value</u> (for someone in particular or in general):
(61) *Desiderative propositional attitude*:
        PA (believe) [S[if P[p is true] → ±Val]]

If the truth of p has positive value [+Val], this means that the bearer of the propositional attitude commits herself to the *existence of such reasons that justify the situation in which p is or becomes true*. Otherwise, if the truth of p has negative value [-Val], this means that the bearer of the propositional attitude commits herself to the *existence of such reasons that justify the situation in which p is <u>not</u> or does <u>not</u> become true*.[8]

This distinction seems to offer a possible explanation to the fact that verbs as *like, hope, fear, wish* exhibit in some languages – like Swedish and Gallipolino – a particular syntactic behaviour, as they are the only verbs of situational attitude that select respectively an infinitival clause or a clause introduced by the subordinator *ku* (exclusively or in alternative to the finite construction):[9] these

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[7] Following Humberstone (1987: 50), I am suggesting that a desire is to be intended as a belief of a certain sort, namely the belief *that it is desiderable that p*.

[8] We can think about different kinds of Values. In this work, I refer to the classification proposed by Jackendoff (2006: 378 ff.; 2007: 280): Affective value (A-value), Utility value (U-value), Resource value (R-value), Quality value (Q-value), Prowess (P-value), Normative value (N-value), Personal normative value (PN-value), Esteem (E-value).

[9] See Colonna Dahlman (to be published).

verbs show that it is possible for verbs of situational attitude to express a commitment to the existence of a situation in which there are reasons for action. Which means that they are verbs of desiderative propositional attitude.

Now, let's turn back to *decide* and *convince*. Relying on the new distinction between merely and desiderative propositional attitudes, I will try to explain the syntactic behaviour of these verbs.

Differently from Jackendoff, according to whom *decide* can be both a verb of actional and situational attitude, I will argue that *decide* always has to be interpreted as a verb of desiderative propositional attitude, as 'COME TO *believe* that something is *preferable*', and that its occurrence in constructions that are not typical for the kind of attitude it expresses ('*decide that*') is a case of *coercion*.[10]

Decide is to *choose among alternatives* and therefore the semantic structure of this verb cannot get rid of the intentional constituent.

(62) DECIDE (to do something (x)):
      → X$_i$PA(COME TO believe) [S [if P [*p* [X$_i$ doing x instead of y, z, etc.] is true] →
      +A/U-value]]

'Decide that *p*' is a *coerced* construction and has to be interpreted not as 'come to believe that *p*', but as 'decide (= come to intend) to believe that *p*':

(63) Susan decided that the water was too cold.
      ≠ Susan came to believe that the water was too cold.
      But
      = Susan *decided* (= came to intend) *to believe that* the water was too cold.
(64) DECIDE (that something (s) is the case):
      → X$_i$PA(COME TO believe) [S [if P [*p* [X$_i$PA(believe) [S [*p* [s is the case, instead of
      y, z, etc.] is true]]] is true] → +A/U-value]]

Considering *convince*, and following my line of reasoning, the hypothesis is that this verb is always interpretable as 'CAUSE someone TO COME TO *believe*' and that the difference between *convince that* and *convince to* lies in the content of the caused belief: 'convince someone that *p*' means 'cause someone to come to *believe that p is true*', whereas 'convince someone to do x' means 'cause someone to come to *believe that doing x has a positive value*':

(65) Susan convinced Andrew that she was taller than him.
      = Susan *caused* Andrew *to come to believe that* she was taller than him.
(66) Susan convinced Andrew to buy some flowers.
      ≠ Susan caused Andrew to come to intend to buy some flowers.
      But
      = Susan *caused* Andrew *to come to believe* his buying some flowers was *good.*

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[10] On semantic coercion, see Culicover & Jackendoff (2005: 227 ff.); Jackendoff (2007: 250-251); Pustejovsky (1995: 106 ff.).

Jackendoff (1985: 446) seems to exclude the validity of this argument when he claims that the following (67a.) and (67b.) cannot be considered as synonymous, as can be seen from the absence of contradiction in (68):

(67) a. Sue convinced Jim *to leave*.
      b. Sue convinced Jim *that he <u>should</u> leave*.
(68) a. Although Sue convinced Jim that he *should leave*, she still didn't manage
          to convince him to *leave*.
      b. Although Sue convinced Jim to *leave*, she still didn't manage to convince him
          that he *should leave*.

But this argument does not take into account the *right type of value* involved.

The argument proposed by Jackendoff, based on the examples in (67) and (68), shows that 'convince someone to do x' means something else than 'cause someone to come to believe that doing x has a *positive <u>normative</u> value*'[11]:

(69) Sue convinced Jim that he *should* leave.
      = Sue convinced Jim that leaving was *N-good* of him.
      ≠ Sue convinced Jim to leave.

Jackendoff fails to ask what kind of value is involved in the semantic structure of *convince*, and seems to take into account the only type of *normative value*. I argue that the value involved in the structure of *convince* is not a normative, but an *affective/utility* one. According to this hypothesis, (70a.) would be synonymous with (70b.):

(70) a. Sue convinced Jim to leave.
      b. Sue convinced Jim that his leaving was *A/U-good*.

Furthermore, according to this hypothesis, negating (71/72a.) by means of (71/72b.) would be contradictory. However, this seems still not the case:

(71) a. Sue convinced Jim to leave;
      b. still she didn't manage to convince him that his leaving was *A/U-good*.
(72) a. Sue convinced Jim that his leaving was *A/U-good*;
      b. still she didn't manage to convince him to leave.

Thus, we need to reformulate our definition in more precise terms.

That some action x is *A/U-good* implies that there are *reasons* for x to be carried out. But this does not mean that x *will be* carried out, since it can be the case that the reasons for x are not enough and are overwhelmed by other reasons for acting in a different way.

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[11] According to Jackendoff (2007: 280), normative value (N-value) "concerns conformity to social norms, including moral/ethical norms, religious norms, and cultural norms such as customs, manners, and etiquette. A person's action has N-value to the extent that it conforms to norms. We say it was good/ right *of* X to do such-and-such or bad/wrong *of* X to do such-and-such."

'Drinking milk' is A/U-good since it affects positively our health. Hence I may have a reason for drinking milk. However, if I am allergic to milk, then I may have a *stronger reason* for not drinking it.

Turning back to *convince*, my proposal is that 'convince to do x' is not simply 'cause someone to come to believe that doing x is A/U-good, i.e. that there are reasons for doing x', but more precisely '*cause* someone *to come to believe that* there are reasons for doing x and that these reasons are *strong enough* for him/her to do x'. Now, we can see that claiming (73/74a.) and (73/74b.) at the same time (in the same sentence) would lead to a contradiction:

(73) a. Sue convinced Jim to leave;
     b. #still she didn't manage to convince him that there were reasons strong enough for him to leave.
(74) a. Sue didn't manage to convince Jim that there were reasons strong enough for him to leave;
     b. #still she convinced him to leave.

Hence, we can describe *convince* as following:

(75) CONVINCE (that something (s) is the case):
    → XPA(CAUSE) [ZPA (COME TO believe) [S [*p(s is the case)* is true]]]

(76) CONVINCE (to do something (x)):
    → XPA(CAUSE) [ZiPA (COME TO believe) [S [if P[*p(Zi doing x)* is true] → +A/U-value]]

CONCLUSION

In summary, these are the most crucial points of this paper:
1. verbs of propositional attitude can be distinguished at least into two categories:
   • 'Verbs of Believing', i.e. VPA that express the way in which someone is cognitively related to the *actual truth* of a proposition, or more precisely *to the situation in which a proposition is true*. E.g.: *believe, doubt, imagine, claim, say, assume, presume, know, regret, fear, hope, etc.*
   • 'Verbs of Intending', i.e. VPA that express the way in which someone is cognitively related not to the actual truth of a proposition, but to its *potential truth*, or more precisely *to the action that can bring about the becoming true of a proposition*. E.g.: *intend, want, be willing, plan, etc.*

2. Ray Jackendoff (2007) has proposed the distinction between verbs of situational attitude (verbs of Believing) and verbs of actional attitude (verbs of Intending): 'Situational attitude' would be the attitude towards <u>any situation</u> in which a proposition *p is true*; 'Actional attitude' would be the attitude towards

<u>the action</u> that must be carried out by someone, in order for a proposition *p to become true*.

3. Syntax seems to express the distinction between verbs of situational attitude and verbs of actional attitude by means of different complement clauses. A situational attitude is typically expressed by a finite (= tensed) *that*-clause; by contrast, the typical syntactic structure that goes with verbs of actional attitude is an infinitival (= untensed) verb phrase whose subject is understood to be the subject of the VPA (coreferential subjects).

4. We have seen that this tendency seems to be confirmed in other languages than English. In particular, we have looked at data from Italian, German, Swedish, and a Southern Italian dialect (Gallipolino).

5. We have spotted some irregularities in the tendency under point 3.: in some languages, like Italian and German, *all* verbs of situational attitude can select an infinitival construction, given the coreferentiality of the subjects; other languages, like Swedish and Gallipolino, mostly confirm the tendency under point 3. and exhibit a common peculiarity: *like, hope, fear, wish* are the only verbs of situational attitude that constitute an exception to the general tendency. Why?

6. We have raised the questions: Do the different VPA have a common basic structure? Which would be their common feature? According to Jackendoff, verbs of situational attitude and verbs of actional attitude have a *common basic conceptual structure*. This argument grows from the observation that some verbs in English can express both a situational attitude, when followed by a *that*-clause, and an actional attitude, when followed by an infinitival: *persuade/convince* and *decide*, for example. According to Jackendoff (2007: 253), this alternation between situational and actional attitudes, far from being a mere coincidence and far from showing that these verbs happen to be ambiguous, would indicate that these verbs "express the very same attitude in either case and that the difference lies only in whether the attitude is taken toward a situation or an action." The common element shared by *believe* and *intend* might be expressed as 'commitment': to believe that a situation is the case is *to be committed to its existence*, and to intend to do something is *to be committed to doing so* (Jackendoff 2007: 260).

7. I have tried to offer some further explanation to the concept of 'commitment' as used by Jackendoff. I have argued that verbs of situational attitude imply a commitment to the *existence of a situation*, whereas verbs of actional attitude imply a commitment towards the *existence of a situation in which there are reasons for action*.

8. Following this line of reasoning, I have suggested that all verbs of propositional attitude imply the very same attitude of *believing* and that what distinguishes some propositional attitudes from others is not only – as Jackendoff claims - the kind of situation towards which the attitude is addressed (*Situation* or *Action*), but also the *kind of evaluative feature* involved: some attitudes are attitudes towards the *truth of a proposition p*; other attitudes are attitudes towards the *desirability of the truth of a proposition p*. Hence, I have proposed a new distinction between *merely propositional attitudes* and *desiderative propositional attitudes.*

9. Relying on this new distinction, I have sketched a new analysis of *decide* and *convince*. Differently from Jackendoff, according to whom *decide* can be both a verb of actional and situational attitude, I have argued that *decide* always has to be interpreted as a verb of desiderative propositional attitude, as 'COME TO believe that something is *preferable*', and that its occurrence in constructions that are not typical for the kind of attitude it expresses ('*decide that*') is a case of *coercion*. Considering *convince*, I have proposed that this verb is always interpretable as 'CAUSE someone TO COME TO *believe*' and that the difference between *convince that* and *convince to* lies in the content of the caused belief: 'convince someone that *p*' means 'cause someone to come to *believe that p is true*' (i.e. 'CAUSE someone TO COME TO hold a merely propositional attitude'), whereas 'convince someone to do x' means 'cause someone to come to *believe that doing x has a positive value,* meaning that there are reasons *strong enough for doing it*' (i.e. 'CAUSE someone TO COME TO hold a desiderative propositional attitude').

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