

On Embedded Verb Second Clauses and Ergativity in German

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Introduction

In what follows, I will try to substantiate the claim that embedded Verb second clauses in German are, despite some apparent evidence to the contrary, only possible as complements of the major lexical categories V,N,A (cf. Reis (1985), Haider (1986)).¹

In particular, I will try to substantiate the following statement about the distribution of Verb second clauses:

- (1) Verb second clauses are either in a position selected by X° ($X=V,A,N$) at S-structure, or must be able to 'reconstruct' into an (empty) A-position selected by X° at LF (or the level, if different from LF, which is the output of Reconstruction).²

In the course of the discussion, it will also become apparent that the distribution of embedded Verb second clauses provides a particularly clear diagnostic in German to distinguish between 'ergative' and 'unergative' configurations both in the case of verbs and in that of adjectives.

1. Verb second clauses as complements of V, N, A

(2)-(4) illustrate the basic contexts of embedded Verb second in German. The sentence is selected by a V in (2), an A in (3), a N in (4) (examples from Helbig-Kempton (1981), Helbig-Buscha (1984)):

- (2)a. Er behauptet, er habe die Aufgabe noch nicht verstanden
He claimed he had not yet understood the task
- b. Er überzeugt sie, sie brauchte nicht zu kommen
He convinced her she need not come

- (3)a. Ich bin gewiß, er schließt die Arbeit pünktlich ab
I am certain he will finish his work punctually
- b. Ich bin sicher, er wird die Prüfung bestehen
I am sure he will pass the exam
- (4)a. Die Hoffnung, sie werde die Prüfung sehr gut bestehen, hat sich erfüllt
The hope she would pass the exam well came true
- b. Die Ueberzeugung, sie müsse sich qualifizieren, ist immer stärker geworden
The conviction she had to qualify has become stronger and stronger

2. Verb second clauses as complements of P

As the ungrammaticality of (5) below illustrates, verb second clauses cannot occur as complements of non-subcategorized prepositions, which can otherwise take a Verb final sentence introduced by *daß*:³

- (5)a. * [PP Ohne [CP er kommt persönlich]], können wir keine Entscheidung treffen
- b. [PP Ohne [CP daß er persönlich kommt]], können wir keine Entscheidung treffen
Without him coming in person, we cannot make any decision
- (6)a. * [PP Anstatt [er hat mich um Hilfe gebeten] hat er alles allein gemacht
- b. [PP Anstatt [CP daß er mich um Hilfe gebeten hat] hat er alles allein gemacht
Instead of asking my help, he did everything on his own

3. Verb second clauses in base and extraposed position

If we consider now the S-structure position of the embedded Verb second clauses in (2)-(4), we find that only the Verb second CPs selected by Ns are in complement position at S-structure, not those selected by Vs or As. That only the former *can*, in fact, is shown by the grammaticality of (4), as opposed to the ungrammaticality of (7)-(8), where the CP has remained at S-structure, where it was presumably generated at D-structure:⁴

- (7)a. * Weil ich, [_{CP} er sei krank], sagte, ...
 Because I said he was ill, ...
- b. * Weil ich, [_{CP} er sei krank], sicher bin, ...
 Because I am sure he is ill, ...

This is particularly clear if we compare the Verb second clauses in (7) with the corresponding *daß* clauses, which can remain in situ with varying degrees of marginality depending on the relative 'heaviness' of the clause and the material following it:

- (8)a. (?) Weil ich, [*daß* er krank sei], schon ein andermal sagte, ...
 Because I said already another time that he was ill, ...
- b. (?) ? Weil ich, [*daß* er krank ist], ganz sicher bin, ...
 Because I am quite sure that he is ill, ...

The N vs. V/A contrast suggests a contrast between [-V] and [+V] categories. If CPs headed by V (Verb second clauses) count as [+V] categories, and those headed by *daß* or an infinitival empty complementizer (cf. Giusti (1985)) count as [-V], then the contrast between (4) and (7)/(8) follows from Kayne's (1982) "Unlike Category Constraint" whereby an [α V] category cannot govern an [α V] category.

4. Extraposed verb second clauses must be in a CHAIN with an internal θ -position

4.1 Anticipatory object "es"

Apparently the verb second complements of Vs and As must necessarily be extraposed. Whatever the condition responsible for this asymmetry may be, it must be an S-structure condition, as the CP can, by hypothesis, be in the position selected by an X^0 at D-structure or, at least, must be in such a position at the post-reconstruction level.

One piece of evidence for the latter claim is provided by contrasts such as the following:

- (9)a. Weil ich glaube, er sei krank, ...
As I think he is ill ...
- b. * Weil ich es glaube, er sei krank, ...
As I think it he is ill ...
- c. Weil ich es glaube, daß er krank ist, ...
As I think it that he is ill

The difference between (9a) and (9b) appears to reside in the fact that in the latter, though not in the former, the A-position into which the extraposed CP should be able to reconstruct is lexically filled by *es*. If we take the presence of lexical material in a certain position to prevent reconstruction into that position, then the observed contrast follows. In (9b), the Verb second CP fails to meet condition (1).

Neither at S-structure nor at the post-reconstruction level is the Verb second CP in a position selected by the V. The well-known fact that 'factive' verbs never take Verb second complements can possibly be seen as another manifestation of the same property (cf. sect. 5.2.).

4.2 Factive predicates

Concerning factive verbs (i.e. verbs which presuppose the truth of their complement (cf. Kiparsky-Kiparsky (1970)) Pütz (1986:77), as pointed out to me by Anna Cardinaletti, observes the following correlation: verb second complements are impossible with those verbs that allow for *es* with their extraposed sentential objects (e.g. *bedauern*, *bereuen* 'regret', *beklagen*, etc.) whether *es* is present or not:⁵

- (10) * Weil Peter (es) bereut, er ist nicht da gewesen, ...
As P. regrets (it) he has not been there, ...

Following traditional lines, we may assume that the CP complement of factive Vs is not generated, at D-structure, as the A-position selected by the V. Kiparsky-Kiparsky (1971) suggested that it be considered a constituent of a NP selected by the V ($[_{NP} N CP]$, where N is optionally realizable with *the fact*). But German appears to provide direct evidence against this proposal. See

As noted in Reis (1985:291 and fn.15), where cases like (14b) and (14c) are cited, when the overt pro-form *da* fills the complement position of the P, even a Verb second complement is apparently possible in extraposed position:

- (14)a. Weil ich mich darauf verlasse, [er wird kommen],...
As I count on him coming
- b. Er bestand darauf, Shakespeare sei unser Zeitgenosse
He insisted that S. is our contemporary
- c. Meier hatte natürlich sehr stark darauf gehofft, man würde ihn wählen
M. had of course strongly hoped they would choose him

This appears in fact to be true for every other subcategorized preposition. See (15a-c) kindly provided to me by Martin Prinzhorn:

- (15)a. Er hat darum gebeten, man möge ihn in Ruhe lassen
He asked that one leave him in peace
- b. Wir waren uns darüber einig, man solle die Aufgabe anders lösen
We agreed on that one should solve the exercise differently
- c. Ich habe ihn davon überzeugt, er solle die Aufgabe noch anders lösen
I have convinced him to that he should solve the exercise differently

Now, the wellformedness of (14) and (15) would seem to be in contrast with condition (1). The CP is neither in a position selected by the V at S-structure, nor is it in such a position at the post-reconstruction level, at least if *da* occupies it.

There is thus a principled difference between *es* and *da*. The former, but not the latter, is incompatible with an extraposed Verb second complement. A possible solution may lie in the following observation. First, note that *da* is found on the *non* canonical side of the P, if Ps in German are, in the unmarked case, prepositional rather than postpositional. This suggests that *da* may not actually fill the complement position of the P, but merely bind it from the SPEC position of the PP, much as Dutch *er* (cf. van Riemsdijk (1978)):

$[_{PP} da_i [_{P'} P [_{NP} e_i]]]$.⁶

This implies that there is an empty position (the NP complement of the P to the right) into which the extraposed CP may reconstruct. This further implies that *da* may optionally count as a non argument. Otherwise, two arguments, *da* and the CP, would compete for the same θ -position. This possibility recalls, in fact, the situation found with Clitic Left Dislocation in Italian, in which a dislocated object CP must analogously reconstruct into the empty object NP position locally bound by a (non argumental) clitic (Cinque (forthcoming, Chapter 1)). See:

- (16) Se [_{CP} di essere scontenti] loro non lo_i ammettono [_{NP} e], una ragione c'è

If to be unhappy they do not admit it, there is a reason

vs.

- (17) * Se [_{CP} di essere scontenti] loro non lo_i ammettono ciò, una ragione c'è

where the object NP position is filled by *ciò*.⁷

5. Verb second clauses in subject position

5.1 The case of transitive and unergative Vs

Besides being excluded from the extraposed positions related to object *es* (cf.(9b)), Verb second clauses are excluded (as expected under (1)) from the preverbal or extraposed subject position of transitive and unergative Vs (cf. (19)-(20), respectively):⁸

- (18) * [Hans ist nicht hier] bedeutet, er hat kein Interesse
H. is not here means that he has no interest
(Cf. daß Hans nicht hier ist, bedeutet, er hat kein Interesse)
- (19) * [Er is nicht gekommen] macht nichts
He has not come does not matter
(cf. Daß er nicht gekommen ist, macht nichts)
- (20)a. * Es macht nichts, [er ist nicht gekommen]
It does not matter he has not come
(cf. Es macht nichts, daß er nicht gekommen ist)
- b. * Es bedeutet, er hat kein Interesse, Hans ist nicht hier
It means he has no interest that H. is not here
(cf. ?? Es bedeutet, er hat kein Interesse, daß Hans nicht hier ist)

In none of these cases is the CP in a position selected by V at S-Structure. Nor can it reconstruct into such a position at the appropriate level.

5.2 The case of passive and ergative Vs

If the subject sentence of passive and ergative verbs, differently from that of transitive and unergative verbs, is generated in a position selected by the V at D-structure, we expect the Verb second option to be available here. Furthermore, given Kayne's Unlike Category Constraint, mentioned above, we expect to find the Verb second clause, at S-structure, not in situ, under V', but only in extraposed position. And this is indeed what we find. Cf.:

- (21)a. * Es wurde, [er stehe zur Verfügung], geglaubt
 b. Es wurde geglaubt, [er stehe zur Verfügung]
 It was thought he would be at one's disposal
- (22)a. * Es ist mir, [er sei auf mich böse], vorgekommen
 b. Es ist mir vorgekommen, [er sei auf mich böse]
 It appeared to me he was angry with me

The ungrammaticality of (21a)-(22a) is to be assimilated to that of the object sentences (7) and (8). The grammaticality of (21b)-(22b), as opposed to the ungrammaticality of (18a)-(19a), is instead due to the fact that in the former, though not in the latter, there is at least one level of representation (namely, the post-reconstruction level) where the verb second clause is in a position selected by the V.

The availability of verb second subject clauses thus provides a clear test to distinguish 'ergative' configurations (i.e., passive and ergative verbs: (21)-(22)) from 'unergative' ones (i.e., transitive and unergative intransitive verbs: (18)-(20)). *Daß* subject clauses do not. They can occur with all verb types. See (23), (24) (vs. (20a)) and (25)-(26):

- (23) Es gehört sich nicht, [daß Peter die Lehrerin beschimpft hat]
It is not appropriate that P insulted the teacher
- (24) Es macht nichts, [daß er nicht gekommen ist]
It does not matter that he has not come
- (25) Es wurde geglaubt, [daß er zur Verfügung stehe]
It was believed that he would stay at one's disposal
- (26) Es ist mir vorgekommen, [daß er auf mich böse sei]
It happened to me that he was nasty to me

There is another interesting difference between *daß* and verb second subject clauses. It concerns the distribution of so-called anticipatory *es*.

Whereas *es* is possible with *daß* subject clauses both in first and non-first position ((27) and (29)), with verb second clauses it is only possible in first position ((28) and (30)) (Cf. Cardinaletti (1988)):

- (27)a. Es wurde von allen geglaubt, [daß er den Preis gewonnen habe]
It was believed by everybody that he won the prize
- b. Von allen wurde (es) geglaubt, [daß er den Preis gewonnen habe]
It was believed by everybody that he won the prize
- c. Weil (es) von allen geglaubt wurde, [daß er den Preis gewonnen habe], ...
As it was believed by everybody that he won the prize
- (28)a. Es wurde von allen geglaubt, [er habe den Preis gewonnen]
b. Von allen wurde (*es) geglaubt, [er habe den Preis gewonnen]
c. Weil (*es) von allen geglaubt wurde, [er habe den Preis gewonnen], ...
- (29)a. Es ist dem Mann eingefallen, [daß Hans ihn besuchen würde]
The man (DAT) imagined that H. would visit him
- b. Dem Mann is (es) eingefallen, [daß Hans ihn besuchen würde]
c. Weil (es) dem Mann eingefallen ist, [daß Hans ihn besuchen würde],...
- (30)a. Es ist dem Mann eingefallen, [Hans würde ihn besuchen]
b. Dem Mann ist (*es) eingefallen, [Hans würde ihn besuchen]
c. Weil (*es) dem Mann eingefallen ist, [Hans würde ihn besuchen],...

This distribution follows under Cardinaletti's (1988) analysis of *es* if verb second clauses crucially have to construct into a position selected by the V.

The essence of Cardinaletti's analysis of *es* consists of the following (minimal) assumptions:

- (31)a. *es* can be argumental or non-argumental (pleonastic)
 b. the German C(OMP) is able to licence, in [NP,IP], only non-argumental (pleonastic) *pro*
 c. the use of pleonastic *es* is avoided if pleonastic *pro* can be used instead (a consequence of the Avoid Pronoun Principle)

From these assumptions, it follows that the *es* of (27)-(30b-c) can only be the argumental *es*, the same found in object position, which, as a θ -position, cannot contain a pleonastic element.

But then, the variants of (28b-c),(30b-c) with *es* are excluded for the same reasons that excluded (9b)-(10) above, repeated here as (32a-b)

- (32)a. * Weil ich *es* glaube, er sei krank, ...
 As I think he is ill, ...
 b. * Weil Peter (*es*) bereut, er ist nicht da gewesen, ...
 As P. regrets (it) he has not been there, ...

Namely, the fact that the verb second clause cannot reconstruct into the A-position selected by the V, because this is occupied by argumental *es*. (28a) and (30a) are instead possible because *es* here can be pleonastic *es*. The Avoid Pronoun Principle does not apply, since pleonastic *pro* is not licensed in the SPEC C position (I refer to Cardinaletti (1988) for more careful discussion of these and related issues).

5.3 The case of ergative adjectives

In Grebe (1973), Helbig-Kempton (1981), Helbig-Buscha (1984), it is noted that a class of 'intransitive' adjectives is compatible with a verb second subject clause. Cf. the contrast between (34) and (35):

- (33)a. Es ist klar, [er wird kommen]
 It is clear he will come
 b. Es ist bekannt, [sie hat die Prüfung bestanden]
 It is well-known she passed the exam
 c. Es ist sicher/gewiß, [er wird kommen]
 It is sure/certain he will come

- (34)a. * Es ist peinlich/angenehm, [er wird kommen]
It is unpleasant/pleasant he will come
- b. * Es ist wichtig, [er sei gekommen]
It is important he came
- c. * Es ist gefährlich, [er sei gekommen]
It is dangerous he came

This implies, if condition (1) on the distribution of verb second clauses is correct, that the verb second subject clause of such adjectives is generated, at D-structure, in a position selected by the adjective; in other words, that such adjectives are ergative (while those in (34) are unergative). There is in fact further evidence for the ergative status of such adjectives in German.

Pütz (1986:2,23,57) notes that adjectives like *bekannt*, *klar*, *sicher*, etc. have the option of 'dropping' in non-first position the *es* which 'anticipates' a subject *daß*-clause, while this is not possible with other adjectives such as *angenehm*, *peinlich*, etc. See (35a-c) vs. (36a-c), all but the last from Pütz (1986) (Cf. also Fanselow (1987:217,218)):

- (35)a. Heute ist bekannt, daß er kommt (= 15)
Today is well-known that he comes
- b. Jetzt ist klar, daß wir ihm helfen müssen (= (153))
Now is clear that we must help him
- c. Heute ist sicher, daß er kommt (= (295))
Today is sure that he comes
- (36)a. * Heute ist angenehm, daß er kommt (= (17))
Today is pleasant that he comes
- b. * Jetzt ist peinlich, daß wir ihm helfen müssen (= (155))
Now is unpleasant that we must help him
- c. * Auch ist gefährlich, daß er bleibt
Also is dangerous that he stays

Pütz suggests that the difference between the two classes of adjectives be related to a further difference: the ability of the latter and the inability of the former to have an infinitival subject clause. According to Pütz, the option shown in (36) could then be made to depend on the feature combination [+ *daß*-clause; -Inf].

Quite apart from its merely decriptive nature, the suggestion is unsatisfactory also from an empirical point of view. As noted in Latour (1981), an adjective such as *klar* does admit an infinitival subject clause (albeit only at a colloquial level) for certain speakers (cf. Marx-Moyse (1983, fn.7)):

- (37) Ihm war klar, jetzt etwas tun zu müssen
 It was clear to him to have now to do something

The difference in question between the two classes of adjectives follows instead from Cardinaletti's (1988) analysis of *es*. Which, in turn, constitutes interesting independent confirmation for her analysis and, at the same time, for the ergative/unergative distinction in the domain of adjectives.

Recall the three main assumptions of Cardinaletti's analysis, repeated here:

- (31)a. *es* can be argumental or non-argumental (pleonastic)
 b. the German C(OMP) is able to licence, in [NP,IP], only non-argumental (pleonastic) *pro*
 c. the use of pleonastic *es* is avoided if pleonastic *pro* can be used instead (a consequence of the Avoid Pronoun Principle)

According to this analysis, (35a-c) are expected to be possible if the extraposed subject *daß*-clause is related to an empty category, θ -marked by the adjective, under A, so that the [NP,IP] position can contain a pleonastic element (*pro* because of the Avoid Pronoun Principle).

(36a-c) are instead expected to be illformed because, the adjectives being unergative, the [NP,IP] position is a θ -position and thus must contain an argument: *es*, but not *pro*, since C only licences pleonastic, not argument, *pro* (with the extraposed subject *daß*-clause, in apposition, giving content to it).

The contrast between (35a-c) and (36a-c), thus, exactly parallels that between (38), containing ergative/passive verbs, and (39), containing unergative/transitive verbs:

- (38)a. Dem Mann ist eingefallen, daß Hans ihn besuchen würde
The Man (DAT) imagined that H. would visit him
- b. Von allen wurde geglaubt, daß er den Preis gewonnen habe
It was believed by everybody that he won the prize
- (39)a. * Heute macht nichts, daß er nicht gekommen ist
Today it does not matter that he has not come
- b. * Folglich beweist meinen Vorschlag, daß es nicht abwesend sein kann
So it proves my proposal that *es* cannot be absent

The variant of (35a-c) with *es*

- (40)a. Heute is es bekannt, daß er kommt
- b. Jetzt ist es klar, daß wir ihm helfen müssen
- c. Heute ist es sicher, daß er kommt

is of course expected just as it was with passive and ergative verbs (cf.(27b-c)-(29b-c)). In this case, *es* is argumental *es* moved to [NP,IP] from the θ -position under A', with the *daß*-clause in apposition: an option always available.⁹

Fanselow (1987:41) notes that *peinlich* behaves like *klar*, etc. when a dative complement is present. Cf. the contrasts between (41a-b) and (42a-b)

- (41)a. * Jetzt ist peinlich, daß wir ihm helfen müssen
Now it is unpleasant that we must help him
- b. Jetzt ist mir peinlich, ihm helfen zu müssen
Now it is unpleasant to me to have to help him

The same is true for other adjectives. Cf., e.g., (42a-b):

- (42)a. * Heute ist kalt
Today is cold
- b. Heute ist mir kalt
Today is cold to me (I am cold)

Within the present analysis, this suggests that the adjectives in question 'become' ergative when another internal argument is added.

Evidence supporting the ergative nature of the variant of the adjective with a dative complement comes from the cliticization properties of the *es* which anticipates the subject *daß*-clause.

As Cardinaletti (1988) observes, only an *es* generated in [NP,VP] can be cliticized to a preceding dative pronoun, whether it is argumental, quasi-argumental, or the anticipatory *es* of a *daß*-clause. See (43)-(44):

- (43)a. ..., daß ich ihm's gestern gegeben habe
 ..., that I to-him it yesterday given have
- b. ..., daß ihm's graut
 ..., that to-him appals
- b. ..., daß ich ihm's gestern gesagt habe, daß er kommen sollte
 ..., that I to-him it yesterday said have that he should come
- c. ..., daß ihm's gestern gesagt wurde, daß er kommen sollte
 ..., that to-him it said was that he should come
- (44)a. * ..., daß ihm's geholfen hat ('s = das Mädchen)
 ..., that to-him she (the girl) helped
- b. * ? ..., daß ihm's einen Vorteil liefert, daß sie nicht gekommen ist
 ..., that to-him it an advantage offers that she has not come

The fact that the *es* which can anticipate the subject *daß*-clause of *peinlich*, *kalt* can cliticize to a preceding dative object, when this is present, strongly suggests that the *es* comes from the internal object position of the adjective, i.e., that the adjective is ergative (in this particular usage):

- (45)a. (?) Jetzt ist mir's peinlich, daß wir ihm helfen müssen
 Now is to-me it unpleasant that we must help him
- b. (?) Heute ist mir's kalt
 Today is to-me it cold (I am cold)

A comparable change of class (from an unergative to an ergative adjective), when a dative internal argument is added, is attested in Italian.

A sharp diagnostic of ergativity in Italian is *Ne*-cliticization from an inverted subject (Cf. Burzio (1986)). This diagnostic is utilized with others in Cinque (1988) to extend the ergative/unergative distinction to the class of adjectives.

Cf., among other contrasts, that between the adjective *noto*, which behaves as ergative, and *simpatico*, which behaves as unergative, with respect to the test:

- (46) (Dei suoi articoli) ne è noto solo uno
 (Of his articles) of-them is well-known only one
- (47) (Dei suoi atteggiamenti) *? ne è simpatico solo uno
 (Of his attitudes) of-them is nice only one

Interestingly, if a dative argument is added to *simpatico*, *Ne*-cliticization becomes possible:

- (48) (Dei suoi atteggiamenti) me ne è simpatico solo uno
 (Of his attitudes) to-me of-them is nice only one

A distinct argument for the ergative nature of *bekannt*, *klar*, *sicher* comes from a peculiarity of a construction with *wie* 'as' in German, which like the corresponding *come* construction in Italian, discussed in Cinque (1988), appears to provide a diagnostic for ergativity.

If we follow in essence Stowell's (1987) observations concerning the corresponding English *as*-construction, it seems that the empty CP category 'relativized' by *come*, and, we submit, *wie* in Italian and German, respectively, can essentially only be a D-structure object. So, for example, neither the CP subject of a transitive V, nor that of an intransitive V can be relativized by *come* or *wie*. See (49a-b) vs. (50a-b)/(51a-b):

- (49)a. Come ho detto —, lui non verrà
 b. Wie ich — sagte, wird er nicht kommen
 As I said, he will not come
- (50)a. * Come — dimostra la sua innocenza, Gianni era all'estero
 b. * Wie — seine Unschuld beweist, war Gianni im Ausland
 As demonstrates his innocence, G. was abroad
- (51)a. * Come — conta, G. è qui
 b. * Wie — zählt, ist Gianni da
 As matters, G. is here

The fact that *wie* can instead 'relativize' the subject of passive and ergative verbs is not surprising given that these are generated under V' at D-structure:

- (52)a. Come è stato già detto —, sarà qui domani
 b. Wie bereits — gesagt wurde, wird er morgen hier sein
 As was already said, he will be here tomorrow
- (53)a. Come spesso succede —, lui si è sbagliato
 b. Wie oft — vorkommt, hat er sich geirrt
 As often happens, he made a mistake

Whatever the reason is for the noted restriction, the phenomenon represents by itself a test for ergativity that can be applied to adjectives as well. What we expect, as noted in Cinque (1988), is that only the inverted subject of ergative adjectives, not that of unergative adjectives, will constitute a wellformed gap in *come/wie*-clauses, since only in the former case will the CP occupy the D-structure position of the internal object.

This prediction appears to be borne out by the facts. See (54)-(55) vs. (56)-(57):

- (54)a. Come è noto —, Gianni ha vinto il premio
 As is known, G. won the prize
 b. Come è ormai chiaro — a tutti, Mario non ce la farà
 As is already clear to everybody, M. will not make it
- (55)a. Wie — bekannt ist, hat Gianni den Preis gewonnen
 b. Wie allen schon — klar ist, wird Mario das nicht fertig bekommen
- (56)a. * Come è sorprendente —, Anna non è ancora partita
 As is surprising, A. has not left yet
 b. * Come è rischioso —, Gianni andrà a trovarlo
 As is risky, G. will visit him
- (57)a. * Wie — überraschend ist, ist Anna noch nicht abgefahren
 b. * Wie — gewagt ist, wird Gianni ihn besuchen

A further argument for the ergative nature of *bekannt*, *klar*, *sicher*, etc. is provided by one ergativity test discussed in Cardinaletti (1988). She notices that a subject *daß*-clause can marginally remain in situ in the 'Mittelfeld', if the predicate is ergative or passive as in (58), but not if it is unergative as in (59):

- (58) ?? Du weißt, daß jetzt, daß er gekommen ist, nicht erzählt wurde
 You know that now, that he came will not be told
- (59) * Ich glaube, daß jetzt, daß er gekommen ist, gefährlich ist
 I believe that now, that he came, is dangerous

This, she argues, follows from Koster's (1978) analysis of subject clauses, according to which they cannot occupy the [NP,IP] position, and the fact that a different position is available for the *daß*-clause with ergative/passive predicates only, namely the object position under X', in which a *daß*-clause normally yields an acceptable, though marginal, result. Cf.(8) above.

Now the fact that adjectives like *bekannt*, *klar*, etc. (in opposition to *gefährlich*, *peinlich*, etc.) pattern with (58) rather than with (59), provides direct evidence for the ergative nature of such adjectives (cf.(60)):

- (60)a. ?? Ich glaube, daß jetzt, daß er gekommen ist, bekannt/klar ist
 I think that now, that he came, is well-known/clear
- b. * Ich glaube, daß jetzt, daß er gekommen ist, gefährlich/peinlich ist
 I think that now, that he came, is dangerous/unpleasant

There is, however, one unexpected difference between the putative ergative adjectives *bekannt*, *klar*, *sicher*, etc. and ergative and passive verbs. Whereas an ergative or passive past participle can move to SPEC C together with its verb second complement (cf. (61)a-b), this possibility is apparently precluded to ergative adjectives (cf. (62)a-b):

- (61)a. ?? Vorgekommen, [er war krank], ist noch nie
 Happened he was ill has never yet
- b. Geglaubt, [er stehe zur Verfügung], habe ich nicht
 Believed he remained at one's disposal I have not
- (62)a. * Klar, [Peter wird kommen], ist leider immer nicht
 Clear P. will come is unfortunately still not
 (cf. Klar, daß Peter kommen wird, ist leider immer nicht)
- b. * Sicher, [er könne die Prüfung bestehen], war nicht
 Sure he could pass the exam (it) was not
 (Cf. Sicher, daß er die Prüfung bestehen könnte, war nicht)

At first sight, this could be taken as evidence against the ergative nature of the adjectives in question. But a closer look suggests that an independent factor is involved. Even object clauses of transitive adjectives cannot move to SPEC C together with the adjective. See:

- (63) * Sicher, [er wird kommen], bin ich nicht
 Sure he will come I am not
 (Cf. Sicher, daß er kommen wird, bin ich nicht)

Thus, the impossibility of (62) cannot be taken to show that the subject verb second clause is not generated under A'. How the illformedness of (62)-(63) should be interpreted is another matter, and one for which we do not have an adequate account.¹⁰

Notes

* I am indebted to Anna Cardinaletti, Günther Grewendorf, Hubert Haider, Thomas Herok, Richard Kayne, Martin Prinzhorn and Arnim von Stechow for discussions touching on various aspects of this analysis.

1. "verb second tritt nur in valenzgebundenen S'-Positionen, also an der Stelle von Komplementsätzen, auf" (Reis (1985:285)). I thank Günther Grewendorf for pointing out this passage to me.

2. Cf. Barss (1986, 1988), and the references cited there, for discussion of the Reconstruction issue.

3. As is well-known, no CP, whether verb second or verb final, can occur as 'complement' to a subcategorized preposition or be related to an empty category in the position of 'complement' to such a preposition. See, e.g. :

- (i) * Ich verlasse mich auf a. ihn morgen zu sehen
 b. daß er kommen wird
 c. er wird kommen

I count on seeing him tomorrow/that he will come

An analogous restriction holds in other languages. Cf., for discussion, Stowell (1981), Hoekstra (1984), Cinque (forthcoming, Chapter 2).

4. We assume that NP and CP complements of Vs and As are generated to the left of V and A and θ -marked in that position (cf.(i)-(ii)), whereas NP and CP complements of Ns (and Ps) are generated to the right of the N (and P) and θ -marked there, (cf. (iii)-(iv)).

CPs, but not NPs, can (should preferably, if tensed) be to the right of V and A in a 'derived' (extraposed) position at S-structure (cf. (8a-b) :

- (i) a. Weil ich [_{CP} ihn zu sehen] versuchte, ...
As I to see him tried, ...
- b. Weil ich [_{NP} das Buch] las, ...
As I the book read, ...
- (ii) a. Weil ich [_{CP} ihn zu sehen] zufrieden war, ...
As I was glad to see him, ...
- b. Weil er [_{NP} dem Karl] böse war, ...
As he to K. nasty was, ...
- (iii) a. Die Behauptung [_{CP} daß er ein Spion war]
The assertion that he was a spy
- b. Die Feststellung [_{NP} der Tatsachen]
The determination of the facts
- (iv) a. Ueber [_{NP} die Tafel]
On the table
- b. Zwischen [_{NP} die Häuser]
Between the houses

5. An apparent exception is provided by Vs like *glauben*, which may take *es* (cf.(9c) above), and also allow for verb second complements (cf.(9a)). A possible solution would be to say that such verbs have a dual usage, both as factive and non-factive. As a matter of fact, as Günther Grewendorf informs me, the presence or absence of *es* with *glauben* implies a sharp difference in meaning, along the expected lines, presence of *es* necessarily implying factivity. See, however, Cardinaletti (1988) for arguments suggesting that the complement clause of factives (whether *es* is present or not) is in a structurally different position from that of verbs like *glauben* when *es* is present.

6. Cf. the possibility, in certain dialects of German, of moving *da* out of the PP much as *er* in Dutch.

7. This means that *es*, when 'scrambled' leftwards leaving an empty object position, does not cease to be an argument: whence the impossibility for the Verb second CP to reconstruct into the ec bound by *es*.

8. This sentence is from Grewendorf (1987:60) who explicitly notes that "Subjekt-sätze niemals Verb-Zweit-Stellung aufweisen können". Haider (1987:307) observes that a Verb second subject clause is possible with the impersonal use of a limited class of verbs such as *scheinen*, *dünken*, *dämmern*:

- (i) a. Mir scheint, es habe sich was zugetragen
 b. Mich dünkt, wir werden scheitern
 c. Langsam sollte auch ihm dämmern, er könnte im Unrecht sein

He further observes that these verbs select auxiliary *haben*, hence cannot be ergative. Note, however, that they are all psych-verbs. If Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) analysis of the corresponding verbs in Italian can be extended to German, then the possibility opens up that such verbs take the clause as an internal argument, despite their selecting auxiliary *haben*, and thus allow for the Verb second variant. I must leave this question open here.

9. The two classes of adjectives also behave differently under "Vorfeldbesetzung".

For reasons that I do not understand, the *es* which is optional with ergative adjectives (cf. (35) and (40)) becomes impossible (see (i)). And the obligatory *es* of unergative adjectives (cf. (36)) becomes optional (see (ii)):

- (i) a. Klar ist (*es), daß er kommt
 Clear is that he comes
 b. Bekannt ist (*es), daß er trinkt
 Well-known is that he drinks
- (ii) a. Peinlich ist (es), daß er kommt
 Unpleasant is that he comes
 b. Angenehm ist (es) daß er kommt
 Pleasant is that he comes

Anna Cardinaletti (p.c.) suggests that this fact might be related to a similar phenomenon in the class of psych-verbs, whereby the otherwise obligatory *es* of ... *daß* *(es) *mich freut* becomes optional when the past participle is moved to the "Vorfeld": *Gefreut hat mich, daß*...

10. It also remains to be seen whether the ergativity tests discussed in Grewendorf (1987) can be extended, at least in part, to the domain of adjectives. But I will not pursue this matter here.