

The Life of the Subjunctive

We use the Subjunctive to mentally and emotionally organize our perception of our reality and our world in terms of our personal values, views, and relationships with others.

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Sra. Michael

I. The Use of the Subjunctive and the Indicative

Within the Spanish language there are tenses, and there are moods. Tenses refer to the actions that take place in the present, past and future. A mood, which is not used often in English, is more challenging for the Spanish learner. There are two moods in the Spanish language: the Subjunctive and the Indicative.

The Subjunctive

The Subjunctive is not a tense, but a mood. What does this mean? It is called a mood because it doesn't deal with factual reality but with **Wishes, Emotions, Impersonal Expressions, Requests, Desires, and Opinions (WHAT WE REFER TO AS "WEIRDO.")** A detailed explanation of when to use the subjunctive is included on page 3. *We use the Subjunctive to mentally and emotionally organize our world in terms of our relationships with others.*

The Indicative

The Indicative, also a mood, however, at times, does not have the same meaning in English and in Spanish when it applies to the subjunctive. So, you will need to memorize which verbs do not have the same interpretive meaning. The list is included in the WEIRDO table on page 3 and the acronym is **VOPCCEDS**.

Moods can be expressed in many different time frames or tenses. There four tenses that are included are:

- a. The Present Subjunctive – (WEIRDO) actions that occur or are occurring in the present.
- b. The Present Perfect Subjunctive – actions in the *dependent clause (verb after the "que")*, occurred BEFORE the *main clause (WEIRDO) actions*.
- c. The Imperfect Subjunctive – (WEIRDO) actions that occur, are occurring in the present, or will occur in the future. Verbs in the main clause can be in the preterit, imperfect or conditional tenses.
- d. The Pluperfect Subjunctive –actions in the *dependent clause (verb after the "que") occurred in the past (preterit, imperfect, pluperfect) or in the conditional tense*, and occurred BEFORE the *main clause (WEIRDO) actions*.

| W | E | I | R | D | O | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|--|--|------------|--|--|---|-----------|--|---|---------------------|-----------|---|----------|--|---|----------|----------|---|---------|--------------|---|-----------|--------------------|---|-----------------------------|-----------------|---|--------------------------|--|---|-----------|---|
| WANTS, WISHES, PREFERENCES, AND DEMANDS CONCERNING OTHERS | EXPRESSIONS OF EMOTION | IMPERSONAL EXPRESSIONS ("It" is important) | Requests, Giving Advice and Making Suggestions | EXPRESSIONS OF DOUBT OR UNCERTAINTY | STATEMENT OF OBLIGATIONS PERHAPS OR MAYBE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>This subjunctive is used after the following verbs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desear • Esperar • Preferir • Querer • Mandar • Insistir en • Mentir | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alegrarse de • Estar contento • Estar triste • Sorprender • Gustar • Es una lástima • Temer • Tener miedo de | <p>The subjunctive is used after the following impersonal expressions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Es posible • Es imposible • Es probable • Es improbable • Es importante • Es menester • Es bueno • Es mejor • Es fácil • Es difícil • Es necesario | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Decir*</u> • <u>Escribir*</u> • Pedir • Rogar • Mandar • Exigir • Aconsejar • Recomendar • Sugerir | <p>Pensar and creer unlike in English, represent absolute certainty.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="1115 472 1646 1256"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="1115 472 1356 513">Subjunctive</th> <th colspan="2" data-bbox="1356 472 1646 513">Indicative</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 513 1356 578"></td> <td data-bbox="1356 513 1440 578">V</td> <td data-bbox="1440 513 1646 578">Es verdad</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 578 1356 643"></td> <td data-bbox="1356 578 1440 643">O</td> <td data-bbox="1440 578 1646 643">Es obvio Opinión</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 643 1356 708">No pienso</td> <td data-bbox="1356 643 1440 708">P</td> <td data-bbox="1440 643 1646 708">Pensar *</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 708 1356 773"></td> <td data-bbox="1356 708 1440 773">C</td> <td data-bbox="1440 708 1646 773">Es claro</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 773 1356 837">No creer</td> <td data-bbox="1356 773 1440 837">C</td> <td data-bbox="1440 773 1646 837">Creer *</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 837 1356 902">No es cierto</td> <td data-bbox="1356 837 1440 902">C</td> <td data-bbox="1440 837 1646 902">Es cierto</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 902 1356 1008">DUDAR Es dudoso</td> <td data-bbox="1356 902 1440 1008">E</td> <td data-bbox="1440 902 1646 1008">Es evidente Estar Seguro</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 1008 1356 1146">No estar seguro</td> <td data-bbox="1356 1008 1440 1146">D</td> <td data-bbox="1440 1008 1646 1146">No dudar No es dudoso</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="1115 1146 1356 1256"></td> <td data-bbox="1356 1146 1440 1256">S</td> <td data-bbox="1440 1146 1646 1256">Es seguro</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Subjunctive | Indicative | | | V | Es verdad | | O | Es obvio Opinión | No pienso | P | Pensar * | | C | Es claro | No creer | C | Creer * | No es cierto | C | Es cierto | DUDAR Es dudoso | E | Es evidente Estar Seguro | No estar seguro | D | No dudar No es dudoso | | S | Es seguro | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ojalá • Quizás <p>*do not need a "que" to be subjunctive.</p> |
| Subjunctive | Indicative | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | V | Es verdad | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | O | Es obvio Opinión | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No pienso | P | Pensar * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | C | Es claro | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No creer | C | Creer * | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No es cierto | C | Es cierto | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DUDAR Es dudoso | E | Es evidente Estar Seguro | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| No estar seguro | D | No dudar No es dudoso | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | S | Es seguro | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>Whether one desires, hopes, prefers, demands, or insists that another person do something, one can never be sure that the person will in fact do it. Therefore, the action of the verb in the dependent clause is not necessarily real and the subjunctive must be used.</p> | <p>The information in a clause following a verb or expression of emotion can be factual.</p> <p>EX. Me alegro de que Teresa esté con nosotros.</p> | <p>Note that all of the above expressions take the subjunctive since the action of the verb in the dependent clause may or may not take place.</p> | <p><u>*Decir and escribir only when they imply a command.</u></p> <p>EX. Ella me dice que venga mañana.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

II. The Subjunctive Forms

A. The Present Subjunctive - Regular verbs

The Present Subjunctive conjugation endings are opposite from the endings we learned for the Present Tense. Conjugate in the Present Subjunctive by taking the *first person singular "Yo" form of a verb*, for "ar" verbs add the opposite ending: `e' and for "er and ir" verbs add the opposite ending: `a'.

| | AR VERBS | IR/ER VERBS | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------|---|--|
| | | | 1) <i>Hablar</i> ----> <i>Hablo</i> | 1) <i>vivir</i> ----> <i>Vivo</i> |
| Yo | e | a | 2) Drop the "o" | 2) Drop the "o" |
| Tú | es | as | 3) ---->Habl- | 3) ---->viv- |
| Él, ella, usted | e | a | 4) Add the opposite ending: `e' (in other words, an ending we would expect to see on an <i>Ir</i> or <i>Er</i> verb) | 4) Add the opposite ending: `a' (in other words, an ending we would expect to see on an <i>Ar</i> verb) |
| Nosotros | emos | amos | | |
| Ellos, ellas, ustedes | en | an | 5) ---->Hable | 5) ---->Viva |

B. The Present Subjunctive - Irregular verbs

The same opposite endings of the verbs apply: “ar” verbs end in e and “ir/er” end in a.

a. GO verbs

- i. Poner, salir, venir, etc. They change to the “yo” form, present tense.
- ii. Ex: ponga, salga, venga.

b. Car (c → qu) –Gar (g → gu) – Zar (z → c) verbs

- i. Tocar = toque, pagar = pague, organizar = organice. They change to the “yo” form present tense.

c. Cir (c → Zc) –Ger (g → J) verbs. They change to the “yo” form.

- i. Conducir = conduzca, recoger = recoja.

d. Stem Changing Verbs with “AR and “ER.” They change to the “yo” form present tense.

- i. Pensar = piense
- ii. Volver = vuelva
- iii. No stem change for the nosotros

e. Stem Changing Verbs with “IR.” They change to the “yo” form present tense for all the conjugations, put the change and add an “a” EXCEPT for nosotros.

- i. Sentir = sienta, dormir = duerma (yo form)
- ii. In the nosotros form:
 - ✓ the “e” goes to “i” = sintamos
 - ✓ the “o” goes to “u” = durmamos

f. Irregular Verbs song: haya, vaya, sea, sepa, dé, esté – put the appropriate endings

| | |
|------------|--------------------|
| Yo = vaya | Nosotros = vayamos |
| Tú = vayas | |
| Él = vaya | Ellos = vayan |

c. The Imperfect Subjunctive Conjugations

To conjugate the imperfect subjunctive, follow these steps:

1. Take the third person plural preterite form of any regular, irregular, or stem-changing verb.
2. Drop the -ON ending
3. Add the appropriate ending:

HABLAR -> ellos hablaron

| | | |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| yo hablara | nosotros | habláramos |
| tú hablaras | vosotros | hablarais |
| él hablara | ellos | hablaran |

TENER -> ellos tuvieron

| | | |
|-------------|----------|------------|
| yo tuviera | nosotros | tuviéramos |
| tú tuvieras | vosotros | tuvierais |
| él tuviera | ellos | tuvieran |

D. The Present Perfect of the Subjunctive

- a. The present perfect subjunctive is a compound verb formed with the subjunctive of the auxiliary verb haber + the past participle of the main verb.

HABLAR

yo **haya hablado** nosotros **hayamos hablado**

tú **hayas hablado**

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------|----------------------|
| él | | ellos | |
| ella haya hablado | | ellas | hayan hablado |
| Ud. | | Uds. | |

SALIR

yo **haya salido** nosotros **hayamos salido**

tú **hayas salido**

| | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------|---------------------|
| él | | ellos | |
| ella haya salido | | ellas | hayan salido |
| Ud. | | Uds. | |

- b. Include the past participle for the irregular verbs in the song: **abierto, cubierto, dicho, hecho, puesto, escrito, visto, vuelto, muerto roto y frito.**

E. The Pluperfect of the Subjunctive

The pluperfect subjunctive is a **compound verb** formed with the **imperfect subjunctive** of the auxiliary verb **haber** + the **past participle** of the main verb. Remember that the imperfect subjunctive has two sets of conjugations, thus the pluperfect subjunctive has two sets of conjugations.

HABLAR

yo **hubiera hablado** nosotros **hubiéramos hablado**

tú **hubieras hablado**

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| él | ellos |
| ella hubiera hablado | ellas hubieran hablado |
| Ud. | Uds. |

SALIR

yo **hubiera salido** nosotros **hubiéramos salido**

tú **hubieras salido**

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| él | ellos |
| ella hubiera salido | ellas hubieran salido |
| Ud. | Uds. |

Include the past participle for the Irregular verbs in the song: **abierto, cubierto, dicho, hecho, puesto, escrito, visto, vuelto, muerto roto y frito.**

III. The Sequence of the Subjunctive

Sequence Examples using **Ojalá** (which is derived from the Arabic expression meaning “May Allah grant” and also used as “I hope” or “I wish”):

- ❖ *The examples pertain to a party being held with the hope that Carly attends.*
- **Present Subjunctive:** (If the party is in progress or is being planned, and it is likely that Carly will come to the party).
 - Ojalá (que) Carly venga a la fiesta.
 - *I wish that Carly comes to the party.*
- **Present Perfect Subjunctive:** (The party is ACTUALLY going on, so you can express an action that has taken place and what can still take place).
 - Ojalá (que) Carly haya venido a la fiesta.
 - *I wish that Carly has come to the party.*
- **Imperfect Subjunctive:** Is used to express strong doubt about Carly’s attendance to the party. (There are two possible situations. First, the party is being planned, and it is unlikely that Carly will come to the party. In the second situation, the party is ACTUALLY going on, therefore, in the speakers’ view, it is highly unlikely that Carly will come to the party).
 - Ojalá (que) Carly viniera a la fiesta.
 - *I wish that Carly would be coming to the party.*
- **Pluperfect Subjunctive:** Is used to express an action that is viewed as prior to some other action in the past. So, the party is over, and Carly’s attendance to the party would have had to have occurred before the party ended.
 - Ojalá (que) Carly hubiera venido a la fiesta.
 - *I wished that Carly would have come to the party.*

The Sequence of the Subjunctive

The sequence of the tenses in the Subjunctive (dependent clause) depends on the form of the main verb (main clause).

| <u>(Main Clause)</u> | <u>(Dependent Clause)</u> | EXAMPLE | | |
|---|---|--|------------|--|
| | | <u>(Main Clause)</u> | que | <u>(Dependent Clause)</u> |
| Present (Progressive) Present Perfect Future Command | Present Subjunctive Or Present Perfect Subjunctive | Esperan Están esperando Han esperado Esperarán Esperen | QUE | vayan al cine. hayan ido al cine. |
| Imperfect Preterite Conditional Pluperfect | Imperfect Subjunctive Or Pluperfect Subjunctive | Esperaba Esperó Esperaría Había esperado | QUE | Juan fuera al cine. Juan hubiera ido al cine. |

IV. Adverbial Clauses

➤ The Subjunctive is always used with the following expressions:

| | | | |
|----------|-------------------|-----|--|
| <u>D</u> | Después de | que | After ** if it does not include "que" uses the <u>infinitive</u> |
| <u>E</u> | En caso de | que | In case |
| <u>E</u> | El hecho de | que | The fact that |
| <u>P</u> | Para | que | So that ** if it does not include "que" uses the <u>infinitive</u> |
| | | | |
| <u>C</u> | Con tal de | que | Provided that |
| <u>A</u> | A fin de | que | In order that |
| <u>S</u> | Siempre y cuando | | Provided that |
| <u>A</u> | Antes de | que | before ** if it does not include "que" uses the <u>infinitive</u> |
| <u>C</u> | Como si | | As if |
| <u>A</u> | A condición de | que | On the condition that |
| <u>S</u> | Sin | que | Without ** if it does not include "que" uses the <u>infinitive</u> |
| <u>A</u> | A menos, a no ser | que | unless |

➤ The Subjunctive is ***sometimes*** used with the following expressions: * **EXPLANATION on NEXT PAGE***

| | | | |
|----------|------------|-----|---|
| <u>M</u> | Mientras | que | While ✓ Mientras que <u>tengas</u> tiempo, tómate una café. ✓ Yo comía <u>mientras</u> que el tomaba un café. |
| <u>A</u> | (a)donde | | To where ✓ A donde fueras, yo te seguiría. |
| <u>T</u> | Tan pronto | que | As soon as ✓ Tan pronto que <u>salgas</u> de la escuela, te relajas. ✓ Tan pronto que <u>llegó</u> , me llamó. |
| <u>C</u> | Cuando | | When - Main clause is in the imperative AND - Indicative used when dependent clause is in the present tense (masters pg. 333) - Subjunctive used when the dependent clause is in the future tense (masters pg. 333) |
| <u>H</u> | Hasta | que | Until ** if it does not include "que" uses the <u>infinitive</u> ✓ Yo voy a esperar hasta que <u>lleguen</u> . ✓ Yo esperé hasta que <u>llegaron</u> . |
| <u>A</u> | Aunque | | Although - Indicative for definite factual event - Subjunctive used for a possible or uncertain event (masters pg. 333) |
| <u>E</u> | En cuanto | | As soon as ✓ En cuanto <u>llegues</u> , come la comida. ✓ En cuanto <u>llegó</u> , el se comió toda la comida, |
| <u>L</u> | Luego | que | As soon as ✓ Luego que <u>salgas</u> de la escuela, te relajas. ✓ Luego que <u>llegó</u> , me llamó. |

Adverbial Clauses (continuation)

SOMETIMES EXPLANATION

Después (de) que, Hasta que, Mientras que, Luego que, En Cuanto, Tan pronto como

The Indicative is used to refer to past or present actions or events. The main verb is usually in the present indicative or the preterit.

- Fui a Chile **tan pronto como** tuve dinero.
- I went to Chile **as soon as** I had money.

The Subjunctive is used to refer to future events that have not yet occurred and, therefore, are considered AS UNCERTAIN. The main verb is usually in the future indicative tense or expresses future time with the construction of: ir + a + infinitive.

- Iré a Chile **tan pronto como** tenga dinero.
- I will go to Chile **as soon as** I (might) have money.

V. Subordinate Adjective Clauses

- Remember that you **only** need the WEIRDO rule when it applies to the subordinate clause. The rule we are going to explore is when the subjunctive is used in a **subordinate adjective clause when that clause modifies an indefinite, vague, or non-existent (unreal)** antecedent. An antecedent is a previously mentioned noun, which is the understood or implied subject of the verb in the adjective clause. Definite articles before the antecedent are: el, la, los and las. Indefinite articles before the antecedent are: un, una, unos, unas, algún, ningún(o,a), ninguno(a), algo, nada,
- Example - the word “computer” is the antecedent of the subordinate adjective:
 - Necesitamos **una** computadora que funcione. (una is an indefinite computer)
 - *We need **a** computer that works. (Such a computer may not exist).*
 - Example - the word computer is **NOT** the antecedent of the subordinate adjective:
 - Necesitamos **la** computadora que funciona. (la is a specific computer)
 - *We need **the** computer that works. (We know that this computer exists).*

 - No hay **ninguna** computadora que funcione. (**No hay ninguna** is an antecedent that does not exist) When negative expressions are used, the subjunctive is used.
 - *There isn't a computer that works.*

VI. Hypothetical or Contrary to STATEMENTS of Fact

REMEMBER:

- The Imperfect and Pluperfect subjunctive are exclusively used in the IF clause.
- The Conditional and Conditional Perfect are in the clause expressing the suspected result (what would happen or would have happened.)

Examples:

Statement of fact:

- Si manejas como un loco, te pondrán una multa
(If you drive like a maniac, they will give you a ticket)

Contrary to fact:

- Si manejaras como un loco, te pondrían una multa
(If you drove like a maniac, they would give you a ticket)
- Si hubieras manejado como un loco, te habrían puesto una multa
(If you had driven like a maniac, they would have given you a ticket)

VII. Si, Como si, Cuando, Imperative

1. Si means IF in English

Use the imperfect Subjunctive after **si**, when a situation is unlikely, impossible, or not true. Use the imperfect subjunctive AFTER **the si**, and use the conditional in the other clause.

- **Si tuviera** tiempo, aprendería más sobre el calentamiento global.
- **Si viviéramos** en un mundo sin guerra, sería ideal.

2. Como Si means AS IF in English

The imperfect subjunctive in the dependent clause is used after **como si**. The main clause verb can be in either the present or past tense.

- Él se vestía **como si fuera** un artista de cine.
- Él se viste **como si fuera** un artista de cine.

Si, Como si, Cuando, Imperative (continuation)

3. Cuando means WHEN in English

The indicative and the subjunctive moods are used when the time clause is introduced with **cuando**. The choice of tense or mood depends on WHEN the events that are being described occur.

The Indicative is used to refer to past or present actions or events. The main verb is usually in the present indicative or the preterit.

- **Cuando** mis padres **viajan**, siempre **sacan** fotos.
- La camarera **cambió** las sábanas **cuando limpió** la habitación.

The Subjunctive is used to refer to future that have not yet occurred and therefore are considered AS UNCERTAIN. The main verb is usually in the future indicative tense or expresses future time with the construction or ir a + infinitive.

- Viajaré a Chile **cuando tenga** dinero.
- Voy a viajar a Chile **cuando tenga** tiempo.

4. The Imperative and Cuando

When the main verb is in the imperative (command), the subjunctive mood is used when the event is in the future tense.

- No me llames cuando esté de viaje la semana próxima. - **Subjunctive**
- *No me llames cuando estoy en el trabajo.* – **Indicative**
- Ten cuidado cuando conduzcas esta noche. . – **Subjunctive**
- Ten cuidado cuando conduces de noche. – **Indicative** (in general, it happens)

This document is dedicated to my Spanish 3 honors students. They survived and learned about the Life of the Subjunctive! My colleagues and students helped me edit this document, and I am very thankful for their time and feedback. I hope that The Life of the Subjunctive helps them succeed in their Spanish studies. Thank you for a wonderful year!

Sra. Carmen Michael.