Figure It Out!

Las blusas negras están de moda.
Me molesta el hecho de que las blusas negras estén de moda.
Hay que reconocer el hecho de que las blusas negras estén de moda.
Busco la blusa negra que vi ayer, la que está de moda.
Busco una blusa negra que esté de moda.
Voy a comprar una de esas blusas negras cuando estén de moda.
La tienda no tiene que promover mucho las blusas negras, ya que están de moda.
¡Jamás voy a comprar una blusa negra, aunque estén de moda!
Aunque las blusas negras estén de moda, no pienso comprarme una de ellas.

The previous sentences all use the verb estar in various types of clauses, sometimes indicative (está, están) and sometimes subjunctive (esté, estén). Try to discover principles that control whether the verb is subjunctive or indicative.

Introduction

You guessed it! More uses of the present subjunctive! You will learn how and when the subjunctive is used in certain types of noun clauses, and also in adjective and adverb clauses. So let's get started!

Review of Clause Types

Let's review for a minute what are the noun, adjective, and adverb clauses.

A clause is simply a grammatical unit that includes a subject and a predicate. If it can stand on its own as a statement, then it is a "main" clause. If it can't stand alone, and depends on another clause, then it's a "dependent" or "subordinate" clause. The thing to remember about subordinate clauses is that they always perform a certain function within the main clause.

If a clause functions as a noun (for example, the subject or object of a verb, or an object of a preposition), then it's a NOUN CLAUSE.

If it functions as an adjective (to describe or modify a noun), then it's an ADJECTIVE CLAUSE.

If it functions as an adverb (modifying or somehow limiting a verb), then it's an ADVERBIAL CLAUSE.

Here's an example of each type of clause, in English. The clauses in question are underlined in the sentence.

**Noun Clause.** The fact that she came didn't surprise me.
"She" is the subject of the clause, "came" is the predicate, and the whole clause functions as a noun, since it names "the fact."
Adjective Clause. I'm looking for a man who knows Spanish. "Who" is the subject of the clause, "knows Spanish" is the predicate, and the whole clause functions as an adjective, describing the man in question.

Adverbial Clause. I'll do it when they give me the instructions. "They" is the subject of the clause, "give me instructions" is the predicate, and the whole clause functions as an adverb, describing when the action of the main verb will take place, in other words, when "I" will do "it."

Use of Subjunctive in Various Types of Noun Clauses

There are instances where a clause functions as a noun. One important use of noun clauses is as a complement to another noun, renaming or elaborating on that noun.

El hecho de que... This phrase means "the fact that," and is followed by a noun clause that restates the "fact." This noun clause usually functions as the subject of the sentence, but can also be an object. If the sentence involves any of the usual subjunctive "triggers" such as emotional reaction or value judgment, then the verb in the noun clause should be subjunctive.

Two alternative ways to phrase el hecho de que are el que and even, in certain circumstances, que.

Important Note:

You might have learned that the subjunctive is used only when there's a doubt involved. But what could be more certain than a "fact?" The fact that the phrase "the fact that" can take subjunctive (how's that for redundancy) disproves the old myth about "doubt" and "uncertainty." Have a look at the examples that follow:

El hecho de que no tenga novio no quiere decir que no sea atractiva.
The fact that she doesn't have a boyfriend doesn't mean that she's not attractive.

¿Qué te importa el que yo venga o no?
What does it matter to you whether I come or not?

No es eso; lo que me molesta es el hecho de que no me tomen en cuenta.
It isn't that; what bothers me is the fact that they don't take me into account.

But, notice the use of indicative present tense in the following passage, which does not convey a judgment or reaction but simply the act of learning or perceiving a fact.

Finalmente, tuve que reconocer el hecho de que no me quiere.
I finally had to recognize the fact that he/she doesn't love me.
Similar Structures to el hecho de que. Many nouns that are derived from verbs, and other abstract nouns, can have a complement in the form of de que. For example:

la esperanza de que (the hope that)
lá idea de que (the idea that)
la seguridad de que (the assurance that)

This kind of structure is more common in Spanish than it is in English, and includes nouns that, when translated, don't seem to fall easily into this pattern in English:

el problema de que (the problem of)

The same as with el hecho de que, the verbs in the clauses following de que are subjunctive if the main verb of the sentence falls into a usual subjunctive category such as doubt, negation, or emotional reaction. For example:

No soporto la idea de que ese hombre llegue a ser Presidente.
I can't stand the idea of that man being president.

Me entusiasma la posibilidad de que se ayude a mucha gente.
I'm excited by the possibility that a lot of people can be helped.

But, note the use of the indicative mood in the following example:

Tengo la plena seguridad de que todos están seguros.
I'm absolutely sure that everyone is safe.

Adjective Clauses (Relative Clauses)

An adjective clause modifies a noun and generally begins with que or quien(es), depending on whether the noun being modified is human. The following table lists those cases where relative clauses usually take a subjunctive verb. Examples are given for each case.
Adverbial Clauses

Adverbial clauses include a wide variety of subordinate clauses that modify a verb or an entire clause in some way. Typically, they provide additional information such as time, place, purpose, or conditions of an event. Following you’ll review the main categories of adverbial clauses, specifically in connection with how they affect the use of the subjunctive mood.

Time. Clauses of this type indicate when an action took place, takes place, or will take place. Some of the usual words and phrases that introduce time clauses are the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Unidentified antecedent. If the identity of the person or thing modified by the adjective clause is unknown, use subjunctive in the relative clause.</td>
<td>Busco a un hombre que tenga pelo castaño. I'm looking for a man with brown hair. (I don't have a particular man in mind. Any man with brown hair will do) Busco a un hombre que tiene pelo castaño. I'm looking for a man with brown hair. (I have a particular man in mind. He happens to have brown hair)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Future tense. If the main verb is future tense, the relative clause will generally use future tense.</td>
<td>Mi pobre madre será la que tenga que limpiar después de que todos se hayan ido. Mi poor mother will be the one who has to (will have to) clean up after everyone has gone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Existence of the antecedent denied. In statements that deny that the antecedent of the adjective clause even exists, the verb in that clause is subjunctive.</td>
<td>No hay nadie que pueda competir con ellos. There is nobody who can compete with them. En este pueblo no hay ningún hombre a quien el peluquero no haya afeitado. There's not a man in this town that the barber hasn't shaved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. After superlatives. If the antecedent is given as a superlative, the relative clause uses subjunctive mode, especially if it uses the auxiliary verb haber to form the present perfect tense. This rule is often ignored in normal conversation or informal writing.</td>
<td>Ese es el hombre más guapo que nosotras jamás hayamos visto. That is the most handsome man that we have ever seen.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With clauses of time, simply remember that if the action referred to is in the future, you should use the subjunctive. In this case, use of the subjunctive has nothing to do with how certain or doubtful the future even is. The mere fact that it hasn't happened yet requires the subjunctive. This may seem counter-intuitive to English speakers, but it virtually always applies. For example:

Voy a estar esperándote cuando llegues de la escuela.
I'm going to be waiting for you when you come from school.

No te olvides de cerrar la puerta con llave en cuanto entres.
Don't forget to lock the door as soon as you come in.

Antes de que te vayas, ¿me permites apuntar tu número de teléfono?
Before you leave, may I write down your telephone number?

But, note the use of indicative mood in the following examples:

Doris siempre llega después de que termina la fiesta.
Doris always arrives after the party ends.

Los muchachos se limpian los zapatos cuando llegan a la casa.
The boys clean their shoes when they come to the house.

Purpose. Clauses of this type indicate the goal or purpose of an action, or, in the negative sense, something that is to be avoided by the action. Some of the words and phrases that introduce this type of clause are:

para que so that
porque so that (after certain verbs such as esforzarse)
a fin de que in order that
con el objeto de que for the purpose of
no sea que so that not

Clauses introduced by these words and phrases virtually always take the subjunctive.

Organizamos estas actividades para que todos puedan participar.
We organize these activities so that everyone can participate.

A fin de que podamos llegar a un acuerdo, vamos a limitar el tiempo de la reunión.
So that we can arrive at an agreement, we're going to limit the meeting time.
Observe the traffic laws; you wouldn't want them to give you a fine.

**Cause.** Adverbial clauses indicating cause usually take indicative verbs rather than subjunctive, since they refer to the established cause of an action. Words and phrases that introduce clauses of this type are:

- **como** since, as
- **dado que** given that
- **debido a que** due to the fact that
- **porque** because
- **pues** because
- **puesto que** since
- **ya que** since

The phrase *siendo que* ("being that") is also heard sometimes in colloquial speech, but it is suggested that you avoid it in formal writing and speech.

Here are some examples of causal adverbial clauses:

*No voy porque no tengo tiempo.*
I don't go because I don't have time.

*Debido a que ya hemos excedido el presupuesto, no podemos contratar a más gente.*
Due to the fact that we have already exceeded the budget, we cannot hire more people.

*Como tú vas a pagar la cuenta, yo dejo la propina.*
Since you're going to pay the bill, I'll leave the tip.

**Possibility.** You might expect clauses expressing hypothetical situations to always be subjunctive, but it's not as simple as that. Here are a few words and phrases that introduce hypothetical situations, along with an indication of whether they take an indicative or a subjunctive verb.

- **si** if (indicative for present tense, subjunctive for contrary-to fact, to be covered in a later activity)
- **en caso de que** in case (imperfect subjunctive)
- **por si acaso** just in case (either indicative or imperfect subjunctive)
- **por si** in case (usually indicative)

Examples:

*Si él llama, dile que no estoy.*
If he calls, tell him I'm not here.
En caso de que él llamara, dile que no estoy.
In case he should call, tell him I'm not here.

Desconecta el teléfono por si acaso él llamara/llama.
Disconnect the telephone just in case he should call.

Result/Intention. Clauses of this type can take either subjunctive or indicative verbs, depending on the shade of meaning that the speaker wants to convey. Indicative verbs give the idea of a simple result, while subjunctive verbs give the notion of purpose. Common words and phrases that introduce these clauses are:

así que so
de modo que so, so that
de manera que so, so that
de forma que so, so that

In the case of the phrases de modo que, de manera que and de forma que, you can insert the word tal either before or after modo, manera, or forma to mean "in such a way that." However, these phrases can also be used to convey either purpose or result. Here are a few examples:

Vamos a preparar los informes de [tal] manera que nadie diga que no hemos cumplido con nuestra responsabilidad.
Let's prepare the reports in such a way that no one will be able to say that we haven't fulfilled our responsibility.

El caso ya está cerrado, de manera que ya no podemos hacer nada.
The case is already closed, so we can no longer do anything.

Condition. Clauses that set up a condition upon which the main clause depends generally require the subjunctive. Common words and phrases that introduce these clauses are:

a menos que unless
a no ser que unless
con tal (de) que provided that
con/bajo la condición de que on the condition that
siempre que as long as
siempre y cuando provided that/as long as

Examples:

Estoy dispuesto a dar de mi parte, siempre y cuando usted haga lo mismo.
I'm willing to do my part, provided that you do the same.

A menos que me entreguen las mercancías en la fecha indicada, no les voy a pagar.
Unless you deliver the merchandise to me on the specified date, I'm not going to pay you.

Nos lleva con la única condición de que le ayudemos con los costos del viaje.
He’s taking us on the sole condition that we help him with the costs of the trip.

**Concession.** These phrases, which convey the notion of “even though” or “in spite of,” take the subjunctive mood when referring to future events or things that “might” happen, or suppositions that are contrary to fact. They take the indicative for established events or facts in the past or present. Some of the words and phrases used to introduce such clauses are:

- *aunque*: even though
- *aun cuando*: even though
- *a pesar de que*: despite the fact that
- *si bien*: even though (always indicative, never refers to future events)

Examples:

*Aunque trabajemos toda la noche, no vamos a terminar.*
Even if we have to work all night, we’re not going to finish.

*Aunque vives aquí ahora, no quiere decir que conoces nuestras maneras.*
Even though you live here now, that doesn’t mean that you know our ways.

*El joven nunca estudió, aunque tuvo la oportunidad de hacerlo.*
The young man never studied, even though he had the opportunity to do so.

**Summary**

The present subjunctive verbs are used in three specific types of clauses:

- **In NOUN CLAUSES** attached to phrases such as *el hecho de que*, use the subjunctive when the stated “fact” is somehow being evaluated or a reaction is being expressed. If the noun clause is a simple recognition of fact, use the indicative.

- **In ADJECTIVE CLAUSES**, use the subjunctive mode if the clause modifies a thing or person
  - that is not identified
  - whose existence is doubted
  - that is referred to in the future
  - that is part of a superlative

  Otherwise, use the indicative.

- There are numerous types of **ADVERBIAL CLAUSES** that convey the time, condition, cause, possibility, result, and purpose of some action or state. For each of these types of adverbial clauses you should learn whether indicative or subjunctive verbs are required.
AP Spanish Language Semester 2
Independent Study: Grammatically Speaking
Study Sheet

Practice Questions

A. Fill in the Blanks: Indicative or Subjunctive
Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb in paréntesis. The verb forms maybe in
the present indicative or the present subjunctive depending on the adjectival clause.

1. Algún día voy a casarme con una persona que me _____ (querer) muchísimo.
2. No hay nadie en el mercado de San Juan que _____ (hablar) sueco.
3. No me gustan los niños que _____ (ser) malcriados en público.
4. Nosotros queremos visitar un lugar donde no _____ (haber) muchos turistas.
5. Mis padres desean visitar un país donde siempre _____ (hacer) buen tiempo.
6. Voy al parque de atracciones que _____ (tener) muchas diversiones y aparatos emocionantes.
7. Me gustaría asistir a una universidad que _____ (ser) bien reconocida.
8. Busco el libro que _____ (tratar) los recursos naturales de Argentina.
9. Juan y su esposa quieren un coche que no _____ (usar) mucha gasolina.
10. A mi padre le encantaría comprar la camioneta que _____ (tener) doble tracción.
11. ¿Buscas al hombre que _____ (ser) joyero?
12. Vamos a alojarnos en un hotel que _____ (estar) cerca de la playa y que _____ (ser)
   conveniente a los restaurantes más populares.
13. Necesitamos una secretaria que _____ (saber) escribir 65 palabras al minuto en la
    computadora.
14. No hay ningún alumno de la escuela secundaria que _____ (hablar) 10 idiomas
    extranjeros.
15. Nosotros tenemos una casa que _____ (tener) una cancha de tenis, una piscina y
doble garaje.
16. Mi hermano menor _____ (poseer) el último disco compacto de Enrique Iglesias.

B. Sentence Creation: Indicative or Subjunctive
Create sentences from the following phrases below. Decide from the information given
whether the new sentence will be in the present indicative or the present subjunctive. Refer
to the model as a guide.

Model:     El supervisor / buscar / un joven / hablar ruso.
           El supervisor busca un joven que hable ruso.


2. Tú / desear / una recepcionista / ser / amable / con los clientes.

3. Las jóvenes / buscar / una tienda de modas / vender prendas de ropa.

5. El jefe de la compañía / buscar / alguien / poder / contestar el teléfono cortésmente.

6. ¿No encontrar (tú) / nada / te gustar?

7. Mateo / querer / un apartamento / tener / un balcón.

8. Nosotros / desear / una casa / no necesitar renovación.


10. Estoy buscando / un novio / tener / un buen sentido de humor.

C. Fill in the Blanks: Adverbial Clauses
Fill in the blanks below with the correct form of the verb in paréntesis. Decide whether the verb should be in the indicative or subjunctive.

1. ¿Qué haremos en caso de que _____ (nevar)?
2. Vamos a alquilar un carro para que tú _____ (conocer) toda la ciudad.
3. Iremos a Argentina con tal de que no _____ (costar) demasiado.
4. No iré de compras a menos que Elena _____ (ir) también.
5. Los invitados se quedaron hasta que _____ (llegar) Mario.
6. Patricia quiere comprar los zapatos en la zapatería “Ultima Moda” donde _____ (haber) mucha variedad.
7. Voy a hacer mi tarea de ciencia antes de _____ (jugar) fútbol con mis amigos.
8. Saldremos cuando _____ (terminar).
9. No queremos ir al cine sin que tú _____ (ir) con nosotros.
10. Hazme saber cuando _____ (llegar) el cartero, por favor.
11. Ellos salieron sin _____ (despedirse) de los huéspedes.
12. Tomé el desayuno después de _____ (bañarse).

D. Translation: Indicative or Subjunctive
Translate the following sentences into Spanish. Remember the various indicators that trigger the use of the subjunctive.

1. I can’t stand the idea of that woman being my English professor.

2. The football fans stood in line at the box office after they ate lunch.
3. I’ll lend you the video so that you won’t have to rent it.

4. Pilar is going to study for her exam before going shopping.

5. We’ll play the game even though it might rain.

6. The university is looking for a professor that speaks Chinese.

7. I don’t know anyone who speaks Basque.

8. There is no belt, in this store, that she likes.

E. Writing Exercise: Indicative or Subjunctive
Write 10 original sentences using either the indicative or the subjunctive and the vocabulary from this lesson. Try to write 5 sentences of each type.

1. ______________________________________________________________________

2. ______________________________________________________________________

3. ______________________________________________________________________

4. ______________________________________________________________________

5. ______________________________________________________________________

6. ______________________________________________________________________

7. ______________________________________________________________________

8. ______________________________________________________________________

9. ______________________________________________________________________

10. ______________________________________________________________________