

TutorTube: The Subjunctive

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Introduction

Hello and welcome to TutorTube, where The Learning Center's Lead Tutors help you understand challenging course concepts with easy to understand videos. My name is Darren Churn, Lead Tutor for Spanish. In today's video, we will explore the subjunctive. Let's get started.

What is the Subjunctive?

Most Spanish conjugations revolve around what is called the indicative. The indicative is used to definitively describe something. Whatever is said whether it is past, present, or future is a statement that is certain. "I eat food" is a good example of the indicative. The subjunctive on the other hand, is used to describe things that are not certain, but are possible. "It is possible that I eat food" is an example of the subjunctive.

How to Form the Subjunctive

With the basic idea of the subjunctive in mind, let's look at how we conjugate in the subjunctive. For now, we are going to use the present subjunctive. The present subjunctive is formed through a process "Yo Flip". This term is a shortened way to remember the steps you must take to form the subjunctive. The yo part refers to the first step which is taking the yo form conjugation from the present tense. Our example, hablar (which means to talk), would then be conjugated to "hablo". We use the present tense yo form because there are irregulars that need to be kept in the subjunctive. From here, we flip the ending to the opposite vowel. The flip refers to the ending of the verb. If the infinitive ends in AR, the ending will switch to E and conjugate based on that. If the infinitive ends in IR or ER, the ending will switch to an A. For our verb hablar, this would mean we would get the endings based on E. Our endings would be "e, es, e, emos, en" for AR verbs. And "a, as, a, amos, and an" for IR and ER verbs.

How to Use the Subjunctive

The second part to using the subjunctive is the sentence structure. Sentences that use the subjunctive are made up of two clauses: a present tense clause and a present subjunctive clause. Each sentence will include both of these clauses with "que" connecting them. An example would be "Espero que compre un coche." Our present tense clause is "Espero" (I hope) plus our que plus our subjunctive clause "compre un coche" (he buys a car). Our sentence is

“I hope that he buys a car.” This sentence is subjunctive due to the fact that the action is not certain. To better understand when to use the subjunctive, we look at the acronym WEIRDO. WEIRDO includes all of the different ways the subjunctive can potentially be used. Let’s look at each part of the acronym separately.

W-Wishes

The W stands for wishes or desires. This use contains different phrases such as “I hope that, I want, I need.” An example would be “He hopes that I bring food.” This would translate to “Espera que traiga comida.”

E-Emotions

The E stands for emotions. Common phrases of this include “I get happy that, I’m scared that.” Our example is “I am scared that I do not have food.” This translate to “Temo que no tenga comida.” As you can see, the verb tener correctly uses Yo Flip because it is an irregular in the present tense yo form.

I-Impersonal Statements

The I stands for impersonal statements. This refers to different statements that start with “It is” which is a general saying. “It is good, it is bad, it is important” are common examples. “It is important that you drink water” translates to “Es importante que bebas agua.”

R-Recommendations

R stands for recommendations. This refers to different verbs that talk about suggestions or recommendations such as “Recomiendo que and sugiero que.” “My father recommends that you walk every day.” “Mi padre recomienda que camines todos los dias.”

D-Doubts

D stands for doubt, denial, and disbelief. “Dudo que, no creo que, niego que” are common phrases used with this. It is important to note that “No creo” I do not believe, is subjunctive while “Creo” is indicative. “I doubt that you have 10 cats” is “Dudo que tengas diez gatos.”

O- Ojalá

The last part of the acronym is O which stands for Ojalá. This translates to a variety of similar things such as “I hope/pray to God, God willing, I hope, I wish or

if only.” “Ojalá que gane el partido” This would translate roughly to “I pray to God that I win the match.”

Outro

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