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## PREFACE

As far as is known, all languages have ways of expressing modality, i.e., notions of possibility, necessity, contingency, etc. But this pervasive phenomenon has so far been the object of little systematic linguistic analysis. In fact, investigators do not even agree on the scope of the term modality. Very roughly speaking, two kinds of modality have been distinguished, namely epistemic and deontic. The former involves the speaker's judgment as to the degree of certainty of an event or state of affairs being referred to. Deontic modality, on the other hand, has to do with such notions as obligation, permissibility and necessity. However, as useful as this distinction is, little is known so far concerning the linguistic patterns which express those ideas. It is clear that the modality systems of a great many languages will need to be thoroughly scrutinized and compared before any conclusions can be drawn as to their place in 'universal grammar.'

The papers included in this volume of the Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics were written by graduate students at the University of Kansas for a seminar on modality taught by Professor Choon-Kyu Oh in the spring of 1979. They deal with a variety of topics bearing on modality and with a variety of languages and language families. It is our hope that these papers will stimulate comments from colleagues at other institutions.

The Editors

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## THE SUBJUNCTIVE IN SPANISH

J. Miguel Solano

Abstract: The various analyses for the subjunctive in Spanish that have been proposed can be classified into two major categories: syntactic and semantic. Syntactic analyses consist mainly of classifications of instances in which the subjunctive must be used. Semantic analyses try to give the underlying principle(s) that seem to govern the use of the subjunctive in Spanish. In this paper two examples of each major category are discussed, and a new semantic account in terms of conventional implicature is proposed. A single idea seems to account for most of the cases in which the subjunctive is used in Spanish.

### Introduction

A native speaker of Spanish without a sophisticated knowledge of the subjunctive mood will, when asked about his criterion for choosing a subjunctive form of a verb instead of an indicative one, be able to say whether a sentence is right or wrong, but usually not be able to explain why. For the teacher of Spanish as a second or foreign language, whether or not he is a native speaker, it can be very helpful to have a good understanding of the subjunctive mood, because he will be in a better position to help his students than a teacher without such knowledge.

According to Spanish teachers the subjunctive is one of the most difficult parts of Spanish. Ever since Spanish became a target language for English-speaking students, the word "subjunctive" has caused "fear and trepidation in the hearts of the learners" (Shawl 1975, p. 323), and many learners consider it "the ghastly part of the grammar" (McKay 1976, p. 4).

In this paper I will discuss the different uses of the subjunctive in Spanish, and what they roughly correspond to in English. For this purpose I will examine various types of analyses that have been proposed for the subjunctive in order to determine their degree of success in describing its meaning and usages. I will offer an entirely different analysis that seems to account for the facts better than the analyses that have been proposed so far.

The subjunctive in English seems to be disappearing. The attitudes English speakers have toward this mood are contributing to its extinction: it is considered formal and pedantic, and teachers discourage its use by labeling it pretentious and artificial (McKay 1976, p. 11).

The subjunctive in Spanish, however, is an essential part of the grammar; it is used in all types of situations, and people do not have special attitudes that discourage its use; on the contrary, mastery of the subjunctive is one of the signs of good control of the language.

Descriptions of the subjunctive that various authors have given can be divided into two major categories: syntactic and semantic. The former consists mainly of classifications to help the learner memorize those cases

in which the subjunctive has to be used; the latter attempts to account for the use of the subjunctive in terms of semantic concepts such as presupposition and assertion.

### Syntactic Descriptions

McKay's Account McKay intends to enable the student to grasp the sense and to appreciate the use of the subjunctive in Spanish (McKay 1976, p. 4). He gives three characteristics of the subjunctive in Spanish: (1) It can be used to reflect the world of emotional responses, the joys, the melancholy, and the desires of everyday living, the doubts, judgments, suppositions, and contingencies of the human condition. (2) Its use is determined by the speaker's attitude. It reflects the speaker's feelings or opinions rather than his tested assurances. (3) It usually appears in subordinated constructions, a characteristic which is suggested by the name itself-- the name subjunctive comes from Latin "subjunctus" 'yoked under' (McKay, p. 11). However, the dominating verb does not always appear on the surface.

(1) Que lo HAGA Juan. 'Let Juan do it.'

The verb HAGA (subjunctive forms will be written in capital letters throughout the paper) can be thought of as embedded into a main clause as in

(2) Quiero que lo HAGA Juan. 'I want Juan to do it.'  
(I-want that it DO Juan) (Lit.)

The list of situations that call for the subjunctive includes, according to McKay: commands, impersonal expressions, sentences that express emotion, persuasion, volition, denial, disbelief, uncertainty, indefiniteness, conditions contrary to fact, softened requests, polite statements, and sentences that include expressions like quizás 'perhaps', tal vez 'maybe', ojalá 'I wish, I hope, if only', and como si 'as if'.

Commands: It is true that commands are most frequently expressed in the subjunctive, but to say that commands are expressed in the subjunctive mood and nothing more represents an oversimplification. There are actually two other ways of expressing commands: one that uses an indicative form, and another that uses the imperative form of the verb. Although the imperative mood may be considered an intensification of the subjunctive mood (Gili-Gaya 1973, p. 142), there are surface differences that distinguish them, as (4-6) indicate.

(3) Viene temprano, oye? 'Come early, do you hear?'

(4) Ven! 'Come!' (Imperative familiar singular for speakers who use tu 'you')

(5) Vení! 'Come!' (Imperative familiar singular for speakers who use vos 'you' (my case))

(6) VENGA! 'Come!' (Subjunctive form used with usted 'you' (singular formal)).

The plural form corresponding to these last three examples is the subjunctive form illustrated by (7), because the imperative venid (vosotros) 'Come!' is considered very formal, and is almost never used. Gili-Gaya (1973, p. 142) also recognizes that the subjunctive form predominates in several countries of Latin America.

(7) VENGAN! 'Come!'

Terrel and Hooper (1974, p. 486) consider (3) a formal exception. To me it indicates a reminder or a type of persuasion used in a very familiar style.

Indirect command: This type of sentence refers to commands embedded in a main clause.

(8) DÍGALE que REGRESE a las 6. 'Tell him to return at 6.'  
(tell-him that return at 6)

(9) Le mandé que se AFEITARA. 'I ordered him to shave himself.'  
Sometimes the main clause is omitted, and the speaker's will is expressed in the subjunctive.

(10) Que nadie se ATREVA a decirme nada!  
'Don't anybody dare to say anything to me.'

The constant repetition of this type of indirect command has resulted in idiomatic expressions like

(11) (Que) VIVA el Presidente. 'Long live the President.'

I think expressions of the type illustrated by (11) are more closely related to sentences indicating desire than to indirect commands. Que 'that' is optionally deletable in (11) but not in (10).

Impersonal expressions: With sentences that contain impersonal expressions, the verb in the subordinate clause will be in the subjunctive as long as the subject of the embedded clause is not correferential with that of the main clause.

(12) Es mejor que se QUEDE callado. 'You'd better shut up.'

Other impersonal expressions include mas vale 'It's better', parece 'It seems', puede ser 'It may be', and vale la pena 'It's worthwhile'. When the sentence is completely impersonal, an infinitive is used.

(13) Vale la pena ir. 'It is worthwhile to go.'

Emotion: Expressions in the main clause that have to do with strong feeling like anger, fear, desire, hope, joy, pleasure, regret, sorrow, surprise, etc. call for the subjunctive if there is no correferentiality of the two subjects. The idea involved in this case is that a sentiment expressed by the speaker concerns the actions of another. If there is no change of subject involved, an infinitive is used (but see (44) and (46) below).

(14) No me gusta que me CUENTE sus problemas. 'I don't like her telling me her problems.'

(15) Me gusta contarle mis problemas. 'I like to tell her my problems.'

Doubt: Strong doubt as opposed to weak doubt is essential for using the subjunctive in the embedded clause. If the speaker wants to convey that his doubt is minimal, he may use the indicative. In a similar manner, with verbs of denial or disbelief, it is the speaker's attitude rather than the verb itself that determines the mood of the verb in the embedded clause.

(16) Dudo que me VAYA a hacer falta. 'I doubt that I'll miss her.'

(17) Dudás que está lloviendo? Asomate a la ventana! 'Do you doubt that it is raining? Look out the window!'

(18) No creo que Juan SEPA tanto. 'I don't think Juan knows that much.'

(19) No cree que Juan lo sabe. (Ind.) He does not believe that Juan knows it.'

(20) El juez negó que los abogados ESTUVIERAN involucrados en el asunto. 'The judge denied that the lawyers were involved in that scandal.'





Sentence (36) indicates that the coat exists, but it is not specified. The explanation for the choice of mood in terms of definiteness versus indefiniteness does not work either, as the following example also shows.

(37) Me llevo el abrigo que me QUEDE bien. 'I'll take whatever coat that might fit me.'

McKay's explanation in terms of definiteness versus indefiniteness is partly right. What must be recognized is that Spanish marks a distinction between definite versus indefinite by the article, and also a distinction between specific versus non-specific by the mood of the verb (specific is indicated by the indicative mood, and non-specific by the subjunctive). Examples (34-37) show a neat symmetry of this phenomenon.

definite	specific		
-	-	(33)	(un Subj.)
+	+	(34)	(el Ind.)
-	+	(35)	(un Ind.)
+	-	(36)	(el Subj.)

Softened requests and polite statements: With auxiliary verbs like deber 'must', poder 'can', and querer 'to want' the past subjunctive can be used to soften a statement with politeness.

(38) QUISIÉRAMOS proceder contra ella. 'We would like to sue her.'

(39) Deberías seguir sus consejos. 'You should follow his advice.'

(40) Podrías ayudarme? 'Could you help me?'

The last two examples do not contain subjunctive forms according to the analysis of conditionals given below (p. 76).

Solé and Solé's View Solé and Solé (1977) go a little deeper into the analysis of the subjunctive in Spanish than McKay does. Not only do they give a nearly exhaustive list of situations in which the subjunctive is used, but they also try to give the underlying principles that seem to govern its use.

Causation of Behavior: According to Solé and Solé, the subjunctive is used when the governing notion is one of causation of behavior, i.e., when a speaker tries to influence the behavior of another to attain a desired result. A similar idea was expressed by McKay (page 72 above), but in this case the idea is more general and includes, under different titles, most of the cases mentioned by McKay. Closely related to this idea of causation of behavior is the notion of something being hypothetical. Predicate nominatives as in (41) (what McKay calls impersonal expressions, page 73 above) describe an event as hypothetical.

(41) Hay pocas posibilidades de que se RECUPERE. 'There is little possibility that he will get well.'

There must be a second subject different from the first one upon which the first can exercise influence. Otherwise an infinitive is used.

(42) Insistió en ir. 'He insisted on going.'

(43) Insistió en que VINIERAN. 'He insisted that they come.'

The notion of a change of subject makes sense for (42-43), but I don't think it makes sense for (41). Besides, there are cases in which it is possible to use a clause rather than an infinitive even if there is no change of subject:

(44) Dudo {que yo PUEDA venir}, 'I doubt that I can come.'  
           {poder}



Furthermore, as Solé and Solé point out (1977, p. 161) verbs of believing, thinking, and saying generally take clauses even if no change of subject is involved.

(45) Cree que está bien. 'He thinks he is all right.'

(46) Sé que no puedo conseguir eso. 'I know I can not get that.'

Sentences (45-46) also show that an embedded clause does not always have a verb in the subjunctive. When the verb conveys non-hypothetical information, the indicative mood is used.

Emotion and personal inclination: The subjunctive is also used when the governing notion is causation of emotion or when it describes personal inclination. Verbs which convey anger, pleasure, surprise, regret, forgiveness, hope, fear, etc., always take the subjunctive when they occur in an embedded clause (Solé and Solé, p. 168). There are numerous exceptions to this statement that will also be discussed below.

The most common occurrence of the subjunctive as a causative of emotion is in noun clauses of various functions: subject, object, adverbial. Subject clauses may be extraposed to the end of the sentence as in

(47) Me da envidia que todo le SALGA bien. 'It makes me envious that everything turns out all right for him.'

(48) Espero que ya HAYA llegado. 'I hope he has arrived already.'

(49) Siempre damos un paseo después de que cenamos.  
'We always take a walk after eating.'

(50) Después de que COMAMOS daremos un paseo.  
'We'll take a walk after we eat.'

The last two examples indicate that the choice of mood in adverbial clauses depends on the factual or hypothetical nature of the event. If the adverbial clause expresses finality or goal it takes the subjunctive because the result is hypothetical.

(51) Mañana vengo para que me AYUDES con esta tarea.

(tomorrow I-come so that me you-help with this task)

'I'll come tomorrow so that you can help me with this assignment.'

Conditional: Conditional sentences deserve a section of their own because they are closely related to the subjunctive, especially in English.

There is a controversy among Spanish grammarians on how to treat the conditional. Some authors include it among the forms of the indicative (Gili-Gaya, 1973), and still others consider it to be a transition between the two (Alonso, 1968, and De Val, 1966). De Val considers it to be closer to the subjunctive because of its meaning: both the conditional and the subjunctive are used to express eventuality, condition, and affectivity (p. 165).

The conditional formerly was treated as a separate mood in the grammar of the Spanish Royal Academy before its edition in 1973, in which it was included among the forms of the indicative mood. According to the 1973 grammar the conditional has a periphrastic origin: amaría 'would love' derives from amar hía (había) 'had to love' (había is an indicative form), and it expresses future action in relation to the past.

Perhaps it is important to realize that "conditional" refers to the part that is normally translated in English by would + Verb, and its

most frequent use is in the consequent clause of a conditional sentence.

(52) Si TUVIERA dinero compraría un carro.

('If I-had money I-would-buy a car.')

Gili-Gaya (1973, pp. 167-173) claims that his reasons for considering the conditional as one of the forms of the indicative are conclusive. As evidence he offers the following argument: equivalences between the forms -ría and -ra caused some authors to consider the conditional a subjunctive form. To convince oneself that there are no differences in mood that might separate the conditional from the other tenses of the indicative, all one has to do is use a verb of possibility, necessity or desire in a sentence such as

(53) Dijo que cantaría. 'He said that he would sing.'

as opposed to

(54) Le mandó que {CANTARA}  
{CANTASE}. 'He ordered her to sing.'

The subordinate verb in (53) refers to future action with respect to the past. The embedded verbs in (53-54) are not interchangeable when dijo refers to a verb of saying.

The conditional also expresses probability referring to either the past or the future.

(55) Serían como las 10 p.m. (Probablemente eran las 10.)

(It-would-be about 10) 'It was probably 10 p.m.'

(56) Sería interesante oír lo que va a decir.

'It would be interesting to hear what he is going to say.'

We can express present probability with the future.

(57) Serán las seis. 'It's probably six o'clock.'

('it-will-be six')

Past possibility can be expressed with the future perfect.

(58) Habrán salido ya. 'They will have left already.'

With the conditional we can express what Gili-Gaya calls "imperfect possibility" (p. 168) referring to the past, the present, or the future, as shown in (55), (56) above, and (59) below.

(59) El Presidente Carter estaría dispuesto a hablar con Castro.

'President Carter would be willing to talk to Castro.'

(59) may mean that he is willing to do so right now. By using the conditional the speaker does not assert the truth of the statement. According to Gili-Gaya (footnote 6, p. 168) this limited use of the conditional represents a literal translation from English or French, which does not violate the normal uses of the conditional.

From the same meaning of probability or possibility is derived the concessive use of the conditional in Spanish.

(60) Sería fea de cara, pero tenía buenas piernas.

'She may have had an ugly face, but she had beautiful legs.'

The use of the conditional as an indicator of politeness or modesty derives from the imperfect aspect of había which entered its composition.

(61) Me gustaría conversar con usted. 'I would like to talk to you.'

With verbs like querer 'to want', deber 'must', and poder 'can', according to Gili-Gaya, the conditional, the preterite imperfect indicative, and the preterite imperfect subjunctive can be used without

changing the time relation.

- (62)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Debería} \\ \text{DEBIERA} \\ \text{Debía} \end{array} \right\}$  tener un poco de vergüenza.

'He should be a little ashamed.'

For me and for the people I consulted, debía has a slightly different meaning. It implies stronger obligation than debería and DEBIERA.

- (63)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{QUISIERA} \\ \text{Quería?} \\ \text{Querría??} \end{array} \right\}$  que me ACOMPAÑARAS.

'I would like you to go with me.'

Instead of querría I use me gustaría 'I would like', and quería in this sentence means 'I wanted'. Therefore, for me, there may be a change of time involved in these forms. Both QUISIERA and querría may be used in response to the question "¿Qué se te ofrece?" 'What do you need?', but quería sounds more appropriate as a response to the question "¿Qué querías?" 'What did you want?'

- (64) Juan  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{podría} \\ \text{PUDIERA} \\ \text{podía} \end{array} \right\}$  salir mejor en sus estudios.

'Juan could do better in his studies.'

In this case podía, in a sentence out of context such as (64), is immediately associated with past ability, rather than possibility.

The equivalence between -ra and -ría, which we notice in (62) - (64), is explained by the sense of doubt conveyed by both forms, the doubt expressed by the subjunctive form being stronger than the doubt expressed by the indicative form. A similar difference in degree of doubt is shown in

- (65) Tal vez  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{(a) TENGÁS} \\ \text{(b) tenés} \end{array} \right\}$  que trabajar. 'You might have to work.'  
'Maybe you have to work.'

in which the present indicative (vos tenés, 'you have') expresses a lesser degree of doubt.

These efforts to justify the inclusion of the conditional among the forms of the indicative may conflict with the traditional definitions of this mood. If the indicative also conveys doubt, it can no longer be considered the mood of "black and white, of fact, assertion, certainty" Sacks (1975, p. 97) or "reality" Royal Academy, (p. 476). In the discussion below we will find a satisfactory explanation for sentences such as (65).

The -ra form of the imperfect subjunctive replacing the conditional -ría in the consequent clause of a conditional sentence is felt to be archaic by Costa Rican speakers except in a few fixed expressions.

- (66) Si TUVIERA dinero ?COMPRARA una casa. (archaic)  
'If I had money, I would buy a house.'

- (67) Aunque no  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{HUBIERA} \\ \text{HUBIESE} \end{array} \right\}$  cielo yo te  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{AMARA} \\ \text{?amaría} \end{array} \right\}$ .

'Even if there were no heaven I would love you.'

In (67) just the opposite to (66) is true. The expected form in -ría sounds strange to me. The reason may be that (67) is part of a famous old prayer, and this fact may have contributed to the preservation of a















to a difference in presupposition (Rivero, p. 326). That is exactly the case with verbs like creer 'believe' and parecer 'seem'.

(98) No cree que Juan va a venir ni cree que VAYA a resolver el problema. 'She doesn't believe that Juan is going to come nor does she think that he is going to solve the problem.'

(99) No cree que Juan va a venir ni que VAYA a resolver el problema. (with deletion of the second matrix verb)

In order to test a few more verbs to determine whether we are dealing with one or two lexical items, it is important to add some comments by Kempson (1977) about the ambiguity test: Anaphoric processes (e.g., do too) require identity of meaning. If it is not possible to have crossed interpretations between two readings, we can conclude that the word is ambiguous, and therefore we should postulate two lexical items; otherwise we are dealing with a case of vagueness rather than ambiguity. The example that Kempson (p. 30) gives illustrates this reasoning clearly.

(100) I saw her duck and Bill did too.

This example can only mean that both persons either saw a duck or that both saw a woman quickly lower her head. It cannot mean, for example, that I saw a duck, and Bill saw her lower her head quickly.

By applying the ambiguity test, we can see that at least in the case of sentir 'feel, be sorry' we have a case of ambiguity.

(101) Siento que está perdiendo fuerza y siento que se está desmayando. 'I feel that she's losing strength and I feel that she is fainting.'

(102) Siento que está perdiendo fuerza y que se está desmayando.

(103) Siento que se DESMAYE y siento que se GOLPEE. 'I'm sorry that she should faint and I'm sorry that she should hurt herself.'

(104) Siento que se DESMAYE y que se GOLPEE.

Whenever we have identity of form and identity of meaning deletion can take place, but when no such identity exists deletion cannot take place.

(105) \*Siento que se desmaya y que se GOLPEE.

'\*I feel that she is fainting and that she should hurt herself.'

The following two cases involving admitir 'admit' and parecer 'seem' are not so clear. In the case of admitir there is identity of form, but not identity of meaning.

(106) Admitió que VINIERA de noche y admitió que la MATARA.

'He<sub>1</sub> allowed him<sub>2</sub> to come at night and he<sub>1</sub> allowed him<sub>2</sub> to kill her.'

(107) Admitió que VINIERA de noche y que la MATARA.

Similarly

(108) Admitió que vino de noche y la mató. 'He admitted having come at night and having killed her.

derives from the deletion of "admitió que" in the second conjunct which was possible because there was identity of form and of meaning, but (109) is not possible.

(109) \*Admitió que [ a) VINIERA ] y que la [ a) mató ]  
[ b) vino ] [ b) MATARA ]  
 ([ ] are intended to mean "read across").

In the case of parecer 'seem' apparently we can have crossed interpretations (see (113) below) between the two readings. As (110-111)

show, when the verbs are in the same mood, there is no problem in con-joining the two sentences.

- (110) A la enfermera le parece que el paciente está muy grave y a mi también me parece que está muy grave. 'It seems to the nurse that the patient is very sick, and it seems to me that he is very sick, too.'

By a Gapping Transformation we can get (111) from (110)

- (111) A la enfermera le parece que el paciente está muy grave y a mi también.

Similarly, we can obtain (112) by combining two complex sentences that contain a verb in the subjunctive in the embedded clause, and deleting the second occurrence of the same verb.

- (112) A la enfermera le parece lógico que el paciente ESTÉ tan grave y a mi también. 'It seems logical to the nurse and to me that the patient should be so sick.'

Since it is possible to have crossed interpretations between (111) and (112) as in (113), we can conclude that parecer 'seem' is not ambiguous but unspecified.

- (113) A la enfermera le parece que el paciente está muy grave y a mi me parece lógico (que lo ESTÉ).

But (113) can only be interpreted as deriving from another deletion of ser 'be' as in

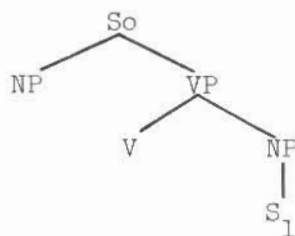
- (114) A la enfermera le parece que el paciente está muy grave y a mi me parece (que es) lógico (que lo ESTÉ).

'It seems to the nurse that the patient is very sick, and it seems to me (that it is) logical (that he should be).'

Therefore, according to my analysis parecer 'seem' can be followed by the subjunctive in affirmative statements only as a result of a transformation that deletes ser 'be'.

I feel that the theory of homophonous lexical items deserves to be investigated more thoroughly. It is possible that we simply have not found the right tests. I think we have a good start in the few examples discussed in this section.

If the difference in mood can not always be attributed to different matrix verbs, there must be another explanation. Rivero considers that the difference can be found in the underlying form of the sentences. Semantically the subjunctive is a report of the opinion of a person, and no presupposition is involved. Syntactically the structural description of a complex sentence with a verb in the subjunctive has the following Phrase Marker (Rivero, p. 332).



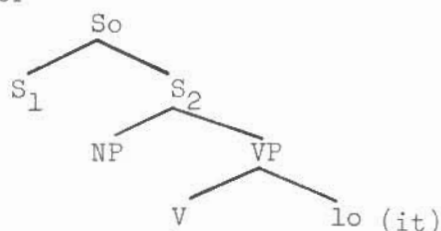
This structure can undergo Negative Transportation, Subject Raising, Equi-NP Deletion, and Negative Incorporation, and is subject to tense

restrictions as can be expected from a clause governed by the matrix verb.

The underlying structure of an indicative complement is more complicated. Semantically, it involves a presupposition which is not claimed by the subject of the matrix verb, but is made by somebody else, who is not always explicitly mentioned. Syntactically it can not undergo the transformations mentioned above, and it is not subject to tense restrictions. All of these facts can be accounted for by assuming that the indicative complement originates as a conjunct (Rivero, p. 332). Thus a sentence like

(115) Admite que el doctor vino. 'He admits that the doctor came.'  
derives from

(116) El doctor vino. Lo admite. 'The doctor came. He admits it.'  
and has the following P-Marker



Terrel and Hooper's Analysis According to the semantic analysis presented by Terrel and Hooper (1974), the use of subjunctive or indicative forms corresponds directly to certain basic semantic factors such as truth value, presupposition, assertion, and anticipation. Rivero's analysis in terms of presupposition agrees with this view, but her entire analysis, according to Terrel and Hooper, is syntactic since she is concerned with the syntactic origin of both indicative and subjunctive embedded clauses (p. 494, footnote 3).

According to Terrel and Hooper's semantically-based analysis, when a speaker wants to convey some information about the truth of a proposition s/he chooses her/his syntactic structures accordingly. The mood of the embedded verb can be freely chosen, and thus carries meaning. Using the notions of presupposition and assertion, Terrel and Hooper classify sentences into 6 types according to the different attitudes which the speaker can adopt (p. 488).

SEMANTIC NOTION	TYPE	MOOD
ASSERTION	1. Assertion	Indicative
	2. Report	Ind.
PRESUPPOSITION	3. Mental Act	Ind.
	4. Comment	Subjunctive
NEITHER	5. Doubt	Subj.
	6. Imperative	Subj.

The notions of presupposition and assertion are important for explaining embedded clauses. When the complement of a construction is presupposed to be true, the truth value remains, even if the sentence

is negated (Kiparsky and Kiparsky, 1971, p. 351).

(117) Me alegra que la campaña HAYA terminado. 'I'm glad that the campaign is over.'

(118) No me alegra que la campaña HAYA terminado. 'I'm not happy that the campaign is over.'

In both cases the speaker presupposes the complement to be true. Assertion is different from presupposition in this regard. The negation of an assertion affects the truth value of the embedded clause

(119) Es cierto que vino. 'It's true that he came.'

(120) No es cierto que VINIERA. 'It isn't true that he came.'

Another difference between presupposition and assertion concerns the use of the phrase 'the fact that'. Complements which are presupposed can be introduced by 'the fact that', but those which are asserted can not (Kiparsky and Kiparsky, p. 347).

(121) El hecho de que la campaña HAYA terminado no tiene importancia.  
'The fact that the campaign is over is not important.'

(122) \*Dudo el hecho de que son las 10. '\*I doubt the fact that it is 10.'

The examples above show that something cannot be both asserted and presupposed at the same time.

The examples that follow illustrate the different attitudes that a speaker can adopt.

**Assertion:** A speaker may qualify an assertion by embedding it in an assertive matrix sentence, in which case we obtain an indirect assertion.

(123) Me parece que él puede hacerlo. 'It seems to me that he can do it.'

**Report:** Another kind of indirect assertion consists of a cited assertion. Verbs like decir 'tell', leer 'read', contestar 'answer', and escribir 'write' simply describe the way in which the "intelligence" is acquired (Bolinger, 1974, p. 464).

(124) Leí que había tenido un accidente.  
'I read that he had had an accident.'

Since the matrix phrase merely tells how the assertion was conveyed, or not conveyed in the case of a negative sentence, the negation does not deny the assertion.

(125) No me contó que había tenido un accidente.  
'He didn't tell me that he had had an accident.'

This example expresses that there was indeed an accident. If the speaker does not wish to make an assertion he can use an infinitive, as in

(126) No mencionó haber tenido ningún accidente.  
'He didn't mention having had any accident.'

**Mental Act:** The first type of presupposed complement describes a mental act. Verbs like darse cuenta 'realize' and tomar en consideración 'take into consideration' describe a mental act.

(127) El tomó en cuenta que ella estaba embarazada.  
'He took into account the fact that she was pregnant.'

**Comment:** The second type of presupposed complement refers to a comment. A speaker may make various types of comments about propositions. There can be value judgements and subjective comments.

(128) Es una lástima que ESTÉ lloviendo.  
'It's too bad that it is raining.'





## CHART I

## SEMANTIC CLASSIFICATION OF MATRICES AND SENTENCES

CRITERIA	BELIEF	REPORT	MENTAL ACT	COMMENT	DOUBT	COMMAND
Semantic						
ASSERTED	+	+	-	-	-	-
PRESUPPOSED	-	-	+	+	-	-
Syntactic						
INDICATIVE	+	+	+	-	-	-
CONSTANT UNDER NEGATION	-	+	+	+	-	+
USES el hecho de	-	-	+	+	-	-
TENSE RESTRICTIONS	-	-	-	-	-	+
RESTRICTIONS WITH 1st. Sing Neg	-	-	+	-	-	-

(Terrel and Hooper, p. 490)

(143) is intended to be a report and (142) a command. Tense restrictions apply to (142) but not to (141).

(141a) Insisto en que no

vinieron.	(Past Ind.)
vendrán	(Fut. Ind.)
vendrían	(Cond. Ind.)

(142a) \*Insisto en que no VINIERAN. (Imperfect Subj.)

(142) does not even permit another subjunctive form.

The verb sentir 'feel, be sorry' (see also p. 84 above) can be assigned to different classes. As a verb of comment, it can take el hecho de, but not as a verb of reporting.

(143) Siento el hecho que se DESMAYE. 'I'm sorry about the fact that he faints.'

(144) \*Siento el hecho que se desmaya. '\*I feel the fact that he faints.'

No creer 'believe (Neg)' (cf. p. 82 above) can be used as a verb of assertion and as a verb of doubt.

Ver 'to see' can be used to report or to assert the truth of a statement.

(145) Vi que el niño estaba en el piso. 'I saw that the baby was on the floor.'



- (146) Vi que había estudiado mucho y le puse una A. 'I saw that he had studied a lot and gave him an A.'

If these sentences are negated, (145) remains a report, but (146) changes into a dubitative sentence which requires the subjunctive.

- (147) No vi que el niño estaba en el piso y me le paré en la mano.  
'I didn't see that the baby was on the floor and I stepped on his hand.'  
(148) No vi que HUBIERA estudiado mucho y por eso le puse una C.  
'I didn't see that he had studied much, and because of that I gave him a C.'

I think ver 'to see' can also be used as a verb of command.

- (149) Viste que la puerta ESTUVIERA cerrada? 'Did you make sure that the door was closed?'

If the indicative form (estaba) is used, the question would ask for confirmation of a report.

Some matrices can be used either as subjective comments or as imperatives. In this case it is difficult to see the difference since the subjunctive is used in both; however we can see the difference if we use 'el hecho de', which can be used only if the sentence is a comment.

- (150) (El hecho de) que te QUEDES en la casa los domingos es muy importante porque así podés pasar algún tiempo con tu familia.  
'The fact that you stay home on Sundays is very important because in that way you can spend some time with your family.'  
(151) Es muy importante que te QUEDES en la casa el domingo porque todavía estás enfermo. 'It is very important for you to stay home next Sunday because you are still sick.'

Finally, the matrix es imposible 'it's impossible' can be compatible with doubt or with command.

- (152) Es imposible que REGRESÉS esta noche (para cuando la reunión TERMINE ya no habrá vuelos). 'It's impossible for you to return tonight (by the time the meeting is over there won't be any flights).'  
(153) Es imposible que REGRESÉS esta noche (el contrato dice que tenés que pasar la noche allá). 'It's impossible for you to return tonight; (the contract says that you have to spend the night there).'

Analysis in terms of Conventional Implicature It is possible to arrive at a different and perhaps more satisfactory account if we apply Grice's concept of conventional implicature (1975), as applied by Karttunen and Peters (1979).

There are three characteristics that identify conventional implicatures: (1) They are detachable--i.e., there is another way of saying the same thing without giving rise to the implicature; (2) They depend not on how something is said, but rather on what is said--i.e., they depend on the meaning of the words themselves rather than on the context in which they are used; and (3) They are not cancellable--i.e., a speaker cannot deny something that is conventionally implicated without being contradictory. We can illustrate these characteristics with an example given by Grice himself (p. 66).



- (164) El abrigo que me QUEDE me lo dejo.  
(Lit: the coat that me fit (Subj) me-benefactive it I-keep)
- (165) El abrigo que no me QUEDE lo boto. 'I'll throw away what-ever coat that does not fit me.'

In (159-161) the speaker is 100% sure that there is such a coat, and that is why he uses the indicative. In (162-165) the speaker indicates that such a coat may or may not exist (he is not 100% sure), and therefore he uses the subjunctive. Examples (159-165) also indicate that Spanish makes an overt difference between the de re and the de dicto reading as these concepts are defined by Allwood et al. (1977, p. 115). De re readings are marked by the indicative, while de dicto readings are marked by the subjunctive. For verbs that can be followed by either mood in affirmative statements (see page 80 above), we need a different type of explanation. The choice of mood seems to be determined by a greater or lesser degree of certainty. What we need is something like the following.

0-----50-----100
Subj (p)                      Ind (p)
Ind (7p)                      Subj (7p)                      (7p) = not-p

Indicative (p) = chances of p being true = more than 50%.  
Subjunctive (p) = chances of p being true = less than 50%.

- (166) Confío en que ESTÉ diciendo la verdad. 'I trust that he's telling the truth.'
- (167) Confío en que está diciendo la verdad. 'I am confident that he's telling the truth.'

For a reason that will be explained shortly, (168) sounds strange if a first person subject is used, even if the complement clause refers to a known fact. It is as though we were dealing with idiomatic expressions.

- (168) Me alegro de que HAYAS pasado el examen.  
'I'm glad that you passed the exam.'

The attitude that the speaker adopts is also important in determining the use of the subjunctive. In (168) the speaker is simply commenting on the fact; he is not asserting it. This statement is supported by the fact that (168) is not normally used to inform but, rather, to comment on the information previously received. In other cases the speaker acts as if it were not the case that p. A person who is informed that somebody is saying that s/he is dishonest will probably say something like

- (169) Me importa un comino lo que DIGA.  
'I don't give a darn what he says.'

It may also be convenient to talk about two kinds of fact: bare fact<sup>5</sup> and interpreted fact. In (170) we are dealing with a bare fact. We are using the fact to inform, while in (171) we are dealing with an interpreted fact in the sense that we are merely commenting on the fact.

- (170) Está buscando un abrigo que le queda.  
'He's looking for a coat that fits him.'
- (171) Me alegro de que le QUEDE el abrigo.  
'I'm glad that the coat fits him.'

Therefore, in accounting for the use of the subjunctive in Spanish we not only have to consider the degree of certainty, but also how the speaker looks at the facts. It may be that p is true in the actual world, but the speaker looks at it from outside the actual world.

The fact that we can expand (82) and (172) indicates that what matters is the speaker's knowledge or belief, rather than the knowledge or belief of the subject of the sentence.

(172) Ella<sub>1</sub> cree que (ella<sub>1</sub>) no es bonita, pero yo sí lo creo.

'She thinks that she's not beautiful, but I think she is.'

Comparison between this analysis and the others presented in this paper: In order to find out how this analysis compares to the ones presented above, it is necessary to look again at the examples that proved to be exceptions, or for which no satisfactory explanation was found.

McKay's cases that call for the use of the subjunctive can all be explained easily in this analysis.

A command expresses an action that has not occurred yet, i.e., it is not known to be true; therefore it is logically (for Spanish) expressed by the use of the subjunctive. A command in the indicative mood need not be considered a formal exception (see p. 72 above). (173) expresses that the speaker's certainty that the hearer is going to act as directed is over 50%, and that is why the command is felt as a reminder.

(173) Viene temprano, oye? 'Come early, do you hear?'

In a sentence like (174), it seems to me that we must not talk about weak doubt (see p. 73 above) because the speaker is 100% sure that it is raining, since he is looking out the window, and can see that in fact it is raining.

(174) Dudás que está lloviendo? Asomate a la ventana.

'Do you doubt that it's raining? Look out the window.'

In (175a) I do not know what type of instruction you are going to give me. In (175b) I already know how I am supposed to act.

(175) Haré el trabajo como usted me lo

(a)	ORDENE
(b)	ordena

.

a) 'I'll do the work whatever way you order me.'

b) 'I'll do the work as you say.'

In (176) the speaker expresses with (a) that the chances of considering her homely are over 50%, and therefore he considers her homely. He expresses with (b) that the possibilities are less than 50%, and therefore he does not commit himself to the truth of the proposition.

(176) Aunque

(a)	es
(b)	SEA

 fea, es una buena muchacha.

a) 'Although she is homely, she's a good girl.'

b) 'Even though she may be homely, she's a good girl.'

The statement that impersonal expressions require the subjunctive if there is a change of subject (p. 73 above) is not entirely satisfactory because we can say:

(177) Es cierto que él dijo eso.

'It's true that he said that.'

In a similar manner we can explain McKay's examples involving persuasion, volition, uncertainty, requests, and polite statements.

A single concept can account for all those cases, and there is no need for such long classifications.

The same explanation holds for Solé and Solé's classification and their ideas of causation of behavior and hypothetical event. If something is intended to cause a certain behavior, it is hypothetical because it has not occurred yet, and therefore it is not known to be true. That is why the subjunctive is used.

In (79a) I do now know what the truth is, but I hope that person is being honest. In (79b) I know what the truth is and I hope that person is being honest.

(79) Confío en que (a) ESTÉ } diciendo la verdad.  
   (b) está }

a) 'I trust that he's telling the truth.'

b) 'I'm confident that he's telling the truth.'

A sentence like (178) expresses with (a) a proposition that needs to be accepted or rejected, and with (b) a report (to use Terrel and Hooper's terms) of known facts. It is felt as a type of complaint that the problem usually ends up the way it looks at the beginning and nothing is done about it.

(178) a) Opino que el problema se DEJE como está.

'I'm of the opinion that the problem should be left as it is.'

b) Opino que el problema generalmente se deja como está.

'I'm of the opinion that the problem is usually left as it is found.'

We have seen that a semantic analysis gives more satisfactory explanations for the use of the subjunctive than a syntactic one. Since Terrel and Hooper consider Rivero's analysis to be syntactic (see p. 86 above) the analysis I am proposing in this section is to be preferred over hers.

I consider that I have given enough examples for which explanations in terms of conventional implicature seem to be obvious; therefore in the rest of this paper I will concentrate on special cases for which an explanation may not be immediately obvious.

Sentence (179) can either mean that he allowed his accomplice to visit him, or that he admitted that his accomplice visited him (the meaning that Rivero considers (p. 324).

(179) Admitió que lo VISITARA el cómplice.

(he-admitted that him visited the accomplice) (Lit)

The permission reading requires the use of the subjunctive because the event follows the permission. The second reading also requires the use of the subjunctive if the speaker wants to express doubt. The reading expressing doubt can occur in the following situation: A prisoner has confessed that he was visited by his accomplice, but the speaker is not certain that it really happened. It is possible that the prisoner was forced to confess.

Terrel and Hooper's types of sentences can also be explained easily in terms of conventional implicature. Assertion, report, and mental act all involve some evidence on the part of the speaker. On the other hand, comment, doubt, and imperative express lack of certainty. There seems to be a descending degree of certainty among the classes just mentioned, and



in the order just specified.

(180) Sé que 2 + 2 son 4. 'I know that 2 + 2 = 4.'

In this assertion I am 100% sure.

(181) Dijo que mañana viene. 'He said that he's coming tomorrow.'  
I am not 100% sure, but there is no reason to believe that he will not come.

(182) Se da cuenta que está en un gran lío.

'He realizes that he's in big trouble.'

The speaker knows that he is in trouble, or at least he considers that his chances of being in great trouble are over 50%.

(183) Conviene que nos VAYAMOS ahora mismo.

'It's convenient for us to leave immediately.'

We have not left yet.

(184) Dudo que QUIERA ir con nosotros. 'I doubt that he wants to go with us.'

I am almost sure that he does not want to go with us.

(185) ABRA la puerta! 'Open the door!'

There is no guarantee that the door will be opened.

As we have seen, an analysis in terms of conventional implicature can give explanations which are at least as satisfactory as those offered by Terrel and Hooper, who depend on six concepts which at most can be reduced to three general notions: assertion, presupposition, and neither one (p. 488). If both analyses are equally adequate, the simpler one is to be preferred (Chomsky, 1958, p. 223).

In this paper I have shown that the syntactic analyses that have been offered for the subjunctive in Spanish are not accurate. Besides, they are long and complicated. A simpler analysis based on a single concept gives the learner an idea of what underlies the use of the subjunctive in Spanish. The analysis in terms of conventional implicature accounts for most of the cases in which the subjunctive is used. Sentences like (168) above are exceptions to the analysis in terms of conventional implicature in the sense that a subjunctive form is used, even though we are dealing with a known fact. For sentences like these, we need a distinction between emotive and non-emotive like the one I propose in my thesis (The Subjunctive in Spanish, section 3.3.2.).

Finally the question of whether or not we should talk about homonymous lexical items in Spanish still remains an open one. It seems to me that at least for pedagogical purposes, we should talk about two lexical items in those cases where a verb may be followed by a subjunctive or an indicative verb form.

### Footnotes

1 These are the forms that Costa Rican speakers use with the pronoun vos 'you familiar'. We use vos instead of tú 'you familiar' which occurs in other dialects. The primary difference consists of stress: vos { TENGÁS } ; tú { TENGAS } 'you have'  
{ tenés } { tienes }

2 This is the only reference included in the grammar of the Royal Academy.

3 Bolinger says (footnote 10, p. 470) that he obtained those examples from a Col. Gordon T. Fish.

4 The ambiguity test is discussed in detail by Zwicky and Sadock (1975).

5 Searle's "brute" and "interpreted" facts (1969, p. 50) do not have to do with what I am discussing here.

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