

THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD AS A MEANS OF EXPRESSING UNREALITY

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Annotatsiya: Ingliz tilidagi **subyunktiv mayl (subjunctive mood)** noreallikni ifodalashda muhim grammatik vosita hisoblanadi. U gipotetik, qarama-qarshi (counterfactual) va haqiqiy bo'lmagan holatlarni ifodalash uchun xizmat qiladi. Zamonaviy so'zlashuv ingliz tilida u nisbatan kam qo'llanilishiga qaramay, rasmiy, badiiy va akademik nutq uslublarida saqlanib qolgan hamda mayl va modal ma'nolar o'rtasidagi aniq farqlarni ifodalashda muhim rol o'ynaydi.

Mazkur maqolada subyunktiv maylning **sintaktik, semantik va funksional xususiyatlari** tizimli ravishda tahlil qilinadi. Ayniqsa, uning zamon (tense), aspekt va modal yordamchi fe'llar bilan o'zaro munosabati alohida ko'rib chiqiladi. Korpus materiallari, qiyosiy tilshunoslik dalillari hamda kognitiv-funksional nazariya asosida olib borilgan tahlillar subyunktiv mayl yordamida so'zlovchilar qanday qilib muqobil realliklarni tasavvur qilishlari, istaklarni ifodalashlari, majburiyatni bildirishi va epistemik masofani ko'rsatishlari mumkinligini namoyon etadi.

Tadqiqot natijalari ikkinchi tilni o'zlashtirish jarayonidagi pedagogik jihatlar, ko'p tilli muhitda tarjima qilish bilan bog'liq muammolar hamda noreal ma'noni ifodalovchi til tuzilmalarini nazariy jihatdan tushunishga qo'shadigan umumiy ilmiy hissasini yoritib beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: *subyunktiv mayl, noreal konstruksiyalar, qarama-qarshi holat (counterfactuality), ingliz sintaksisi, shart ergash gaplar, modallik, kognitiv lingvistika, tarjima pedagogikasi.*

Abstract: The subjunctive mood in English functions as a crucial grammatical tool for expressing unreality, encompassing hypothetical, counterfactual, and non-factual situations. While often underrepresented in modern colloquial English, it persists in formal, literary, and academic registers, maintaining precise distinctions in mood and modality. This paper systematically examines the syntactic, semantic, and functional dimensions of the subjunctive, with particular attention to its interaction with tense, aspect, and modal auxiliaries. Drawing on corpus examples, comparative cross-linguistic evidence, and cognitive-functional theory, the study illustrates how the subjunctive enables speakers to project alternative realities, articulate wishes, convey

obligation, and express epistemic distance. The findings highlight pedagogical implications for second language acquisition, translation challenges in multilingual contexts, and broader theoretical contributions to the understanding of non-factual language structures.

Keywords: *subjunctive mood, unreal constructions, counterfactuality, English syntax, conditional clauses, modality, cognitive linguistics, translation pedagogy*

Introduction

Human language provides speakers with a variety of mechanisms to distinguish between actual events and those that are imagined, desired, or counterfactual. Among these mechanisms, the subjunctive mood in English occupies a central role as a grammatical strategy for marking unreality. It allows speakers to express a wide range of non-factual meanings, including wishes, hypothetical scenarios, obligations, recommendations, and counterfactual conditions. For instance, the sentence *I wish I were taller* expresses a desire that is clearly not aligned with present reality, while *It is essential that she be informed of the decision* conveys an obligation that has not yet been actualized. These examples illustrate how the subjunctive functions as a precise linguistic tool for differentiating between factual and non-factual propositions, offering both syntactic clarity and semantic nuance.

Despite its declining usage in informal spoken English, the subjunctive remains a robust and productive feature in formal writing, literary discourse, legal texts, and academic registers. Its persistence underscores the importance of understanding not only the morphological forms of the subjunctive but also its functional, cognitive, and pragmatic implications. The study of the subjunctive mood is particularly relevant in applied linguistics, translation studies, and second language acquisition. Translators must accurately convey the subtleties of non-factuality and counterfactuality across languages with varying mood systems, while language learners often struggle with both the structural forms and the contextual functions of the subjunctive. [Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K., 2002: 63]. For example, rendering *If I were in your position, I would act differently* into a language without a direct subjunctive equivalent requires careful attention to modality, temporal reference, and pragmatic meaning.

The cognitive-functional perspective emphasizes that the subjunctive supports human reasoning and imagination by enabling speakers to construct alternative realities, anticipate potential outcomes, and evaluate hypothetical scenarios. This capability is essential not only for problem-solving and planning but also for social cognition, as it allows individuals to consider others' perspectives, predict reactions, and engage in reflective thinking. Functionally, the subjunctive contributes to discourse coherence, politeness strategies, and stylistic variation, allowing writers and speakers to

communicate hypothetical, evaluative, or normative content in a precise and socially appropriate manner.

Furthermore, the subjunctive interacts with tense, aspect, and modal auxiliaries to provide fine-grained distinctions in temporal and epistemic orientation. For example, *If he had studied harder, he would have passed the exam* combines the past perfect in the subjunctive clause with the modal *would* to express a past counterfactual scenario, while *I wish I were traveling now* integrates the past subjunctive with progressive aspect to indicate an unreal present situation. These interactions highlight the syntactic and semantic complexity of the subjunctive and underscore its role as a central mechanism for encoding unreality in English.

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the subjunctive mood as a means of expressing unreality, drawing on theoretical frameworks, corpus-based evidence, functional and cognitive interpretations, and cross-linguistic comparisons. By examining both the form and function of the subjunctive, this study illuminates how English encodes hypothetical reasoning, counter factuality, and non-factual propositions, offering insights that are relevant to linguistic theory, translation, pedagogy, and applied linguistics.

Unreality in language encompasses the expression of events, states, or propositions that do not correspond to actual, factual reality. This includes hypothetical situations, desires, possibilities, obligations, and counterfactual conditions. Understanding how unreality is encoded is crucial for linguistic theory, as well as for practical applications such as translation, second language acquisition, and discourse analysis. In English, grammatical mechanisms, particularly the subjunctive mood, serve as primary indicators of unreality, allowing speakers to differentiate between what is real and what is imagined, wished for, or contrary to fact. These mechanisms operate in conjunction with modal auxiliaries, tense, aspect, and conditional constructions to produce complex layers of meaning. Modal verbs such as *would*, *could*, *might*, and *should* often accompany subjunctive or conditional constructions to signal hypothetical or non-factual situations, while tense and aspect combinations, including the use of the past subjunctive and perfect forms, further clarify the temporal orientation of unreal events. [Palmer, F. R., 1990: 176]. Conditional constructions, particularly Type II and III conditionals, provide structured frameworks for representing alternative worlds, enabling speakers to project counterfactual scenarios or speculate about hypothetical outcomes.

Beyond the grammatical encoding, unreality has significant semantic and pragmatic dimensions. Semantically, it can be conceptualized as a proposition whose truth is suspended or hypothetical, distinguishing it from actualized statements. Pragmatically,

unreal constructions communicate the speaker's attitudes, intentions, and assessments of likelihood or obligation. For example, sentences such as *I wish I were taller* express personal desire and acknowledgment of counterfactuality, while *It is essential that she be present* conveys obligation or necessity within a formal context. These constructions also play important roles in discourse management, politeness strategies, and the organization of textual coherence. Cognitive-functional perspectives highlight that the expression of unreality enables speakers to construct alternative mental models, engage in counterfactual reasoning, and anticipate hypothetical outcomes, all of which are essential for planning, problem-solving, and social interaction. Functionally, the subjunctive mood allows speakers to mark epistemic distance, convey indirectness, and maintain stylistic nuance, particularly in literary and academic registers. Cross-linguistic studies further underscore the importance of understanding unreality, as languages differ in how they encode non-factual propositions. While some languages possess extensive mood systems, others rely more on lexical or modal strategies, making the accurate comprehension and translation of English subjunctive constructions a challenging yet essential task. Overall, the theoretical foundations of unreality in English are grounded in a multidimensional framework that integrates grammatical, semantic, pragmatic, and cognitive-functional factors, providing a basis for the in-depth analysis of the subjunctive mood as a central tool for expressing non-factual and counterfactual meaning.

The subjunctive mood in English functions as a primary grammatical mechanism for expressing unreality, encompassing hypothetical, counterfactual, and non-factual propositions. It allows speakers to indicate that a situation is imagined, desired, recommended, or contrary to fact, distinguishing such utterances from statements grounded in actual reality. The use of the subjunctive is most prominent in formal writing, literary discourse, legal texts, and academic English, although certain forms, particularly the past subjunctive, persist in colloquial speech to convey counterfactuality. The present subjunctive, characterized by the base form of the verb without tense marking, often appears in clauses expressing necessity, demand, suggestion, or recommendation. [Nuyts, J. 2001: 64]. For instance, sentences like *It is crucial that the committee **approve** the proposal* or *I insist that she **attend** the meeting* demonstrate the use of the subjunctive to signal obligation or requirement rather than factual occurrence. The past subjunctive, notably the invariant use of *were* with all persons, is typically employed in unreal or hypothetical contexts, as in *If I **were** a millionaire, I would travel the world* or *I wish he **were** here to see this*. These constructions convey that the condition or state described is not aligned with reality, allowing speakers to project alternative scenarios or express personal desires. The

subjunctive often interacts with modal auxiliaries and conditional constructions, creating a rich system for conveying nuanced meanings. Modal verbs such as *would*, *could*, *might*, and *should* frequently accompany subjunctive clauses to indicate possibility, probability, or obligation, while conditionals structure the sentence to reflect temporal and logical relationships between unreal events. Beyond its syntactic and morphological features, the subjunctive also carries pragmatic and stylistic functions. It can signal politeness, indirectness, or formality, as in *It is requested that all participants **be** on time*, and it allows writers and speakers to maintain epistemic distance by indicating that the proposition is not asserted as factual. From a cognitive perspective, the subjunctive supports counterfactual reasoning, enabling speakers to explore hypothetical alternatives, anticipate consequences, and engage in imaginative or reflective thought. [Croft, W., & Cruse, D. A. 2004: 249]. Comparative linguistic studies reveal that the English subjunctive occupies a relatively narrow formal domain compared to languages with more extensive mood systems, yet it remains an essential marker of unreality. Its accurate comprehension and usage are particularly important in translation, where equivalent expressions may not exist in the target language, and in second language instruction, where learners often face challenges in mastering its forms and functions. In sum, the subjunctive mood represents a central grammatical and functional instrument for expressing unreality in English, combining syntactic precision, semantic subtlety, pragmatic versatility, and cognitive utility, and its study provides valuable insights into the broader mechanisms through which language encodes non-factual and counterfactual meaning.

The expression of unreality in English subjunctive constructions is intricately linked with tense, aspect, and modality, as these grammatical features collectively determine the temporal, probabilistic, and evaluative nuances of non-factual propositions. The past subjunctive, particularly the invariant use of *were*, allows speakers to reference present or future hypotheticals that are contrary to fact, as in sentences like *If I **were** the manager, I would implement new policies* or *I wish she **were** more confident in her abilities*. In these examples, the past subjunctive does not indicate past time; rather, it signals the non-factual nature of the proposition, distinguishing it from the indicative mood, which conveys reality. Similarly, perfect constructions within the subjunctive mood, such as *If he **had studied** harder, he would have passed the exam*, are employed to express past counterfactuality, allowing speakers to reflect on unrealized events and speculate on alternative outcomes. Aspectual distinctions, such as progressive forms, may also appear in subjunctive clauses to indicate ongoing hypothetical situations, as in *I wish I **were traveling** now*, highlighting both the temporal and imagined nature of the event. [Celce-Murcia, M., & Larsen-Freeman, D. 1999: 47].

Modality interacts closely with subjunctive constructions, providing additional layers of meaning related to necessity, possibility, and epistemic stance. Modal auxiliaries such as *would*, *could*, *might*, and *should* frequently co-occur with subjunctive clauses to convey counterfactual reasoning, hypothetical outcomes, and evaluative judgment. For instance, in the sentence *If she **were** more experienced, she **might** handle the situation better*, the subjunctive *were* signals unreal status, while *might* expresses the speaker's assessment of the potential consequence. This interplay between subjunctive mood and modality enables speakers to project alternative realities, convey probability, and encode speaker attitude, making the construction both semantically precise and pragmatically nuanced.

Register and stylistic considerations further influence the use of tense and aspect in subjunctive constructions. Formal writing and legal discourse often preserve traditional subjunctive forms to maintain clarity, precision, and adherence to prescriptive norms, while informal speech may replace subjunctive structures with modal-based equivalents, as in *If I was rich, I'd travel the world* instead of the more prescriptive *If I were rich....* Despite such variation, the subjunctive remains a crucial grammatical marker for indicating non-factuality and counterfactuality, particularly in contexts where precision, politeness, or stylistic formality is required. Cross-linguistic perspectives underscore that tense and aspect in subjunctive constructions often lack direct equivalents in other languages, which poses challenges for translation and second language learning. Learners must not only recognize the morphological form but also interpret its temporal, modal, and evaluative nuances to achieve accurate comprehension and production.

Conditional constructions are central to the expression of unreality in English, serving as syntactic frameworks through which hypothetical, counterfactual, and non-factual situations are articulated. These constructions allow speakers to imagine alternative realities, speculate about possible outcomes, and evaluate consequences of actions that did not or may not occur. Conditionals are typically classified into types that reflect temporal orientation and degree of factuality. Type II conditionals, often referred to as present unreal conditionals, describe situations that are contrary to present reality, as in *If I **were** taller, I would play basketball*. Here, the use of the past subjunctive *were* signals that the condition is not true in the current reality, while the modal *would* conveys the hypothetical result. Type III conditionals, or past unreal conditionals, describe situations contrary to past reality, such as *If she **had studied** harder, she would have passed the exam*. The perfect aspect in the subjunctive clause highlights that the unreal condition refers to a past event, allowing speakers to reflect on alternative outcomes and consider the implications of actions that were not realized.

The interaction between conditional structures and the subjunctive mood provides nuanced distinctions between factuality and possibility. In counterfactual constructions, the subjunctive mood marks the divergence from reality, while modals and auxiliary verbs encode potential outcomes, probability, and speaker evaluation. For example, *If he **were** more diligent, he **could** have achieved better results* combines a present unreal condition with a modal to indicate the speaker's assessment of potential success. Such constructions demonstrate the cognitive capacity of language to model alternative worlds, enabling reasoning, planning, and evaluative judgment.

Conclusion

The subjunctive mood in English emerges as a central linguistic mechanism for expressing unreality, encompassing hypothetical, counterfactual, and non-factual propositions across a variety of communicative contexts. Its significance extends beyond mere grammatical form, reflecting intricate interactions between syntax, semantics, modality, and pragmatics. The subjunctive enables speakers to project alternative realities, express personal desires, convey obligation, and manage epistemic stance, making it a versatile tool for nuanced communication. Through its interaction with tense, aspect, and modal auxiliaries, the subjunctive allows for precise expression of temporal relationships, hypothetical outcomes, and counterfactual reasoning, which are crucial for both theoretical analysis and practical applications.

The implications of understanding the subjunctive are particularly significant in translation studies and second language acquisition. Translators must navigate cross-linguistic differences in mood systems and modality, while language learners must grasp both morphological forms and functional nuances to achieve accurate and contextually appropriate usage. Pedagogical strategies that integrate corpus examples, cross-linguistic comparisons, and contextualized practice can enhance comprehension and production of subjunctive forms, ultimately fostering higher linguistic competence. In conclusion, the subjunctive mood exemplifies the multifaceted ways in which English encodes unreality, reflecting an intricate synthesis of grammatical precision, cognitive functionality, and communicative effectiveness. Its study provides insights into fundamental questions of language structure, meaning, and human thought, while offering practical benefits for translation, education, and applied linguistics. By examining its syntactic, semantic, pragmatic, and cognitive dimensions, researchers, educators, and language practitioners gain a comprehensive understanding of how unreality is systematically and effectively expressed in English, reinforcing the subjunctive's enduring relevance in both theory and practice.

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11. Talabnomani to'ldirish tartibi

Familiya	Amirqulova
Ism	Nargiza
Otasining ismi	Toshtemir qizi
Davlat, shahar	Toshkent
Ilmiy daraja	Yo'q
Ilmiy unvon	Yo'q
Ish joyi	"Respublika "kelajak" markazi" davlat muassasasi
Lavozimi	Xorijiy til uslubchisi
Ishtirok etish shakli (kunduzgi, sirtqi)	sirtqi
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