

Comparative Analysis of Subjunctive Mood in Polish and Spanish: A Corpus Study on Subordinate Clauses

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Keywords: żeby complementizer, subjunctive mood, I-participle, subordination, conditional mood

Subjunctive mood is a grammatical category that is usually expressed by the morphological ending on the verb following the mood versus modality distinction. As a result, the lack of a verbal paradigm tantamount to the lack of a given mood. Hence, traditional Polish grammars, following explicitly or not this assumption, recognise three grammatical moods in Polish: the indicative, the conditional, and the imperative. Since the late eighties, representatives of diverse syntactic approaches (e.g. Wierzbicka 1988, Tomaszewicz 2007, Biskup 2021, Kaleta 2021) have raised the question of whether there exists a fourth mood as well. Furthermore, comparative research on the Romance languages, has also pointed out the similarities between Polish żeby-clauses and the subjunctive mood in the respective languages. As a result, this paper intends to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on Polish subjunctive mood by comparing its distribution in subordinate clauses with that found in Spanish. The Polish subjunctive is taken here as a discontinuous form, comprising the complex complementizer żeby followed by the I-participle, the past impersonal form or the infinitive. The objective of this study is, thus, to determine what differences there are between the frequency of different types of subordinate subjunctive clauses in both languages. The frequency with which the speakers encounter the subjunctive will, among other things, help to establish which subtype of the subjunctive is the prototypical one. In order to achieve this goal, a corpus study will be conducted using Polish Web 2019 (plTenTen 2019) corpus. This study will focus only on the clauses involving the żeby complementizer as it is taken to be neutral in terms of register. A similar study will be carried out using Spanish Web 2018 (esTenTen 2018) for Spanish. Both corpora comprise internet data, predominantly from major news websites in respective languages. In the case of Spanish, the search will be restricted to European Spanish to avoid any confusion that may come from using data from various varieties. The final results will show whether there is an overlap between these two languages in terms of the distribution of subjunctive clauses. In turn, it will indicate whether the same prototypical construction lies at the heart of both subjunctive construction networks or whether there are language-specific differences.

References

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