

Yo no estoy siendo juzgado (C. Fuentes,
Mex., dialogue)
Estás siendo muy bueno hoy

I'm not being judged
You're being very good today

15.5 Latin-American uses of the continuous

Written—or at least printed—Latin-American Spanish seems to obey the same rules as European Spanish as far as the use of the continuous is concerned. However, there are numerous regional colloquial variants, and it seems, in general, that the continuous is used more extensively in Latin-American speech than in Spain.

(a) In many places the continuous of *ir*, *venir* and other verbs of motion is regularly heard:

—Estamos yendo a Pato Huachana —dijo Lalita (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe., dialogue)	'We're going to Pato Huachana,' Lalita said
Estaba yendo a tomar un café con leche en Brosa (ibid.)	I was on my way to Brosa to have a white coffee
¿Cómo le va yendo? (Chile, quoted Kany, 282; Sp. ¿Cómo le va?)	How are things with you?

In Spain one would use *vamos*, *iba* in these sentences.

(b) In colloquial language in a number of places including Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, the present continuous is used, as in English, to express a pre-scheduled future: *mañana estoy yendo a París* 'tomorrow I'm going to Paris' (= *mañana voy a París*). This is not possible in Peninsular or literary Latin-American Spanish.

(c) Kany, 282ff, reports that in the Andean region, including Chile, verbs like *poder*, *tener*, *haber* also appear in the continuous form, especially in popular styles: *estás pudiendo* = *puedes* 'you can', *¿está habiendo?* 'is there any?' (Spain *¿hay?*). This usage is not heard in standard Spanish. The Peninsular colloquial form *irse yendo* is worth noting: *me voy a ir yendo ¿sabes?* (C. Martín Gaité, Sp., dialogue), 'I'm on my way/I'm off/I'm out of here'.

(d) In colloquial, but not written, Mexican, *andar* is much used instead of *estar* to form the continuous: *ando trabajando* 'I'm working', *¿qué andas haciendo?* 'what are you doing?' Similar forms with *andar* are sometimes heard in popular speech in Spain, e.g. *¿qué andas haciendo?* for *¿qué estás haciendo?*, but *andar* + gerund normally means 'to go around doing something'; see 20.8.1 for discussion and examples.

16

The subjunctive

The subjunctive is an important feature of Spanish in all styles and countries, and it will not die out in the foreseeable future. It occurs most often in clauses preceded by *que*, *cuando*, *en cuanto* and after other subordinating conjunctions (see Glossary), and also in imperatives of the type *diga*, *no digas*.

16.1 Index to chapter

- The importance of the Spanish subjunctive (Section 16.2.1)
- Forms of the subjunctive (Section 16.2.2)
- The *-ra* and *-se* subjunctive forms compared (Section 16.2.3)
- Tense agreement and the subjunctive (Sections 16.2.4, 16.16)
- When the subjunctive is **not** used in clauses beginning with *que* (Section 16.2.5)
- Subjunctive or infinitive? (Section 16.2.6)
- The subjunctive does not always indicate doubt or uncertainty (Section 16.2.7)
- Regional variations and the subjunctive (Section 16.2.8)
- **The subjunctive in subordinate clauses introduced by *que***
 - after negative verbs (Sections 16.2.9, 16.7)
 - after words meaning 'it's possible/probable that...'; 'perhaps...'
(Section 16.3)
 - after words meaning 'depending on'
(Section 16.4)
 - after words meaning 'want'/'order'/'need'/'cause'/'allow'/'prohibit'/'advise'/'persuade'/'avoid'/'exclude', etc. (Section 16.5)
 - after emotional reactions and value judgements ('it's good/bad/fantastic/tragic/strange/enough/tolerable that...', etc.) (Section 16.6)
 - after *lo* + adjective + *que* (Section 16.6.3)
 - after words expressing doubt (Section 16.8)
 - after words expressing fear (Section 16.9)
 - after words meaning 'the fact that...' (Section 16.10)
 - after nouns + (*de*) *que* (Section 16.10.2)
 - after *creer*, *parecer*, *suponer* and *sospechar que...* (Section 16.11.1)
 - after *comprender*, *entender*, *explicar que...* (Section 16.11.2)
 - after *esperar que...* (Section 16.11.3)

- **The subjunctive after other subordinators** (Section 16.12)
infinitive or subjunctive after subordinators? (Section 16.12.2)
- after words meaning 'in order to', 'lest', 'so that (not)...' (Section 16.12.3)
- after words meaning 'because', 'since', 'seeing that' (Section 16.12.4)
- after words indicating result (*así que, de modo que, como (si), etc.*) (Section 16.12.5)
- after *en (el) caso de que, por si (acaso)* (Section 16.12.6)
- after time words: *cuando, antes de que, después de que, desde que, en cuanto, apenas, tan pronto como, nomás, hasta que, mientras que, siempre que, etc.* (Section 16.12.7)
- after words meaning 'provided that', 'on condition that...', 'except that...' (Section 16.12.8)
- after words meaning 'although' (Section 16.12.9)
- after 'whether...or', 'however much...', 'whatever', 'whoever', 'whenever', 'the more...the more...', etc. (Section 16.13)
- **The subjunctive in relative clauses** (Section 16.14)
difference between *una mujer que es...* and *...que sea rica* (Section 16.14.1)
- after superlative statements ('the best that...', etc.) (Section 16.14.5)
- **The subjunctive in main clauses** (Section 16.15)
the subjunctive used to express orders and wishes (Sections 16.15.1–2)
- the subjunctive in common set phrases (Section 16.15.3)
- **Tense agreement with the subjunctive** (Section 16.16)
- **The future subjunctive** (Section 16.17)

The use of the subjunctive in conditional sentences is discussed in Chapter 25. All matters involving the imperative are discussed in Chapter 17.

16.2 General remarks on the subjunctive

16.2.1 The importance of the Spanish subjunctive

English-speakers sometimes wonder why Spanish needs the subjunctive, but it expresses nuances that English ignores—see 16.14.1 for a vivid example. It also removes some ambiguities that affect English—especially the British variety—now that our language has more or less lost the subjunctive. Compare the modern British habit of saying 'we insist that the children are looked after properly' both to state a fact (indicative) and to express a wish, i.e. '...*be* looked after properly' (subjunctive). Spanish-speakers may also find sentences like 'we decided to eat when they arrived' unclear: does it mean 'when they arrived, we decided to eat' (...*cuando llegaron*) or 'we decided not to eat until they arrived' (...*cuando llegaran/llegasen*)?

16.2.2 Forms of the subjunctive

There are three simple (i.e. non-compound) tenses of the Spanish subjunctive: present, imperfect and future. Only the first two are in everyday use: the present, formed as explained at 13.1.9, and the imperfect, of which there are two forms, one in *-ra* and one in *-se*. The latter forms are explained at 13.1.10 and all the forms are shown at 13.5.2. The relationship between the *-ra* and *-se* forms is discussed in the next section. The future subjunctive, discussed at 16.17, is virtually obsolete.

Compound tenses of the subjunctive, e.g. *haya hablado, hubiera/hubiese hablado* (also mentioned at 14.9.9 and 14.10.5), and continuous forms of the subjunctive, e.g. *esté hablando, estuviera/estuviese hablando*, are also common.

16.2.3 The *-ra* and *-se* forms compared

When the *-ra* and *-se* forms are used as subjunctives they are interchangeable and the two forms are shown side by side in the following examples. The *-ra* form is more frequent everywhere, is gaining ground, and in some parts of Latin America has all but replaced the *-se* form. The *-ra* form also has a few uses as an indicative form which it does not share with the *-se* form, at least in normal styles:

(a) It may be a supposedly elegant literary variant for the indicative pluperfect, especially in Latin-American texts: *el hombre que ella conociera años antes* 'the man she had met years ago', for *que había conocido...* See 14.10.2 for discussion.

(b) It frequently replaces the conditional of *haber*—*habría sido mejor/hubiera sido mejor* 'it would have been better'—and less commonly of a few other verbs. See 14.7.5 for discussion.

(c) It is used in a few set phrases: e.g. *acabáramos* 'now I see what you're getting at...', *otro gallo nos cantara* 'that would be another story...'

16.2.4 Tense agreement and the subjunctive

This is discussed in detail at 16.16. The idea that there is a 'Rule of Agreement' that dictates which tense of the subjunctive must be used in Spanish is one of the myths of traditional grammar, but in the majority of cases the following scheme applies:

Tense of verb in main clause	Tense of subjunctive verb
Present, Perfect, Future, Imperative	Present
Conditional, Imperfect, Preterite, Pluperfect	Imperfect

Examples: *le digo/he dicho/diré que se vaya* 'I tell/have told/will tell him to go away'; *le diría/decía/dije/había dicho que se fuera/fuese* 'I would tell/was telling/told/had told him to go away'.

16.2.5 When the subjunctive is not used in clauses introduced by *que*

It is easier to state categorically when the subjunctive is **not** used in clauses introduced by *que* than to list all the cases in which it **is** used. The subjunctive is not used:

(a) After affirmative statements that declare that an event happened, is happening or will happen: *es cierto que hubo una conspiración* 'it's true that there was a conspiracy', *era obvio que lo había hecho* 'it was obvious that (s)he'd done it', *se prevé que habrá déficit* 'a deficit is forecasted', *se queja de que está cansada* 'she complains that she's tired' (*quejarse de* is usually treated as a verb of statement: see 16.6.2.)

(b) After affirmative statements that declare the subject's belief or opinion: *creo/me parece que habla inglés* 'I think (s)he speaks English', *yo pensaba que él era más honrado* 'I thought he was more honest', *dicen que vienen* 'they say they're coming', *parece que su mujer está enferma* 'it seems that his wife is ill/sick'. There are occasional exceptions to (b) discussed at 16.11.1.

NB: As far as (b) is concerned, Spanish differs from Italian and resembles French. Compare *creo que es verdad* / *je crois que c'est vrai* (both verbs indicative) and Italian *credo che sia certo* (second verb subjunctive).

However, negative statements + *que* usually require the subjunctive, e.g. *no creo/no me parece que hable inglés* 'I don't think (s)he speaks English'. See 16.2.9.

(c) After subordinators (words like *cuando*, *después de que*, *mientras que*, etc.), when the verb refers to an action that either habitually happens or had already happened at the time of the main verb. Compare *les pagaré cuando lleguen* 'I'll pay them when they arrive' and *les pago cuando llegan/les pagué cuando llegaron* 'I pay them when they arrive' (habitual)/'I paid them when they arrived' (past). See 16.12.1 for further discussion.

16.2.6 Subjunctive or infinitive?

In many cases a subjunctive can, or must be, avoided by using an infinitive. As far as phrases and clauses + *que* are concerned, a subjunctive subordinate verb is usually only required when the subject of the verb in the main clause and the subject of the subordinate verb are different. When they are the same, the infinitive is used. Thus *yo quiero* 'I want' + *yo voy* 'I go' must be expressed as *yo quiero ir* 'I want to go' (same subject), but *yo quiero* + *él va* 'he goes' = *yo quiero que él vaya*, 'I want him to go' (different subjects, subjunctive obligatory). However, verbs of prohibiting, permitting, requesting, suggesting and advising—i.e. most verbs that can be constructed with an indirect object pronoun—may allow either construction: see 16.5.2.

The infinitive may also be used after certain subordinators when the subjects are identical, e.g. *la llamé después de llegar a casa* 'I rang her after I got home'. See 16.12.2.

16.2.7 The subjunctive does not always indicate doubt or uncertainty

One widespread misconception about the Spanish subjunctive is that it expresses doubt or uncertainty. This is sometimes true, but the subjunctive is not in fact always obligatory after some common words that express uncertainty, e.g. 'perhaps', 'probably' (see 16.3.2) and 'to doubt' (see 16.8). Moreover, the sentence *me acostaré cuando se ponga el sol* 'I'll go to bed when the sun sets' does not imply that the sun may not set: the subjunctive is required after *cuando* simply because the sunset is still in the future.

In this respect students of French or Italian must remember that Spanish uses

the present subjunctive to indicate the future in subordinate clauses after words like 'when', 'after', 'as soon as', etc., where the other two languages often use the future indicative. Compare *on y ira quand il fera beau temps* and *ci andremo quando farà bel tempo* (all verbs future indicative) with *iremos allí cuando haga buen tiempo* (second verb present subjunctive). Portuguese differs from all three in using a future subjunctive in this context: *iremos lá quando fizer bom tempo*.

The subjunctive also expresses certainties in other types of sentence. In *el hecho de que España no tenga petróleo explica en parte las dificultades económicas del país* 'the fact that Spain has no oil explains in part the country's economic difficulties', there is no doubt about Spain's having no oil. It is simply a rule of Spanish grammar that phrases meaning 'the fact that' usually require the subjunctive, possibly because an idea of cause is involved. See 16.10.1 for further discussion.

16.2.8 Regional variations in the use of the subjunctive

There is very little variation in the use of the subjunctive in educated usage throughout the Spanish-speaking world. In some regions, especially Navarre, the Basque Provinces and Argentina, there is a strong tendency in familiar speech to use the conditional instead of the imperfect subjunctive, e.g. *?si tendría dinero, lo compraría* for *si tuviera/tuviese dinero lo compraría* 'If I had some money, I'd buy it'. This should not be imitated by foreign learners, although it is acknowledged (at least in Spain and not in writing) as a well-known regionalism.

Nor should foreign students imitate the tendency, heard in popular speech in parts of Latin America, to use the indicative after subordinators of time that point to the future, e.g. *?se lo diré cuando viene* for *se lo diré cuando venga* 'I'll tell him when he comes'. Another tendency to be avoided by foreigners is the popular Latin-American use of the future indicative after phrases like *es posible que* 'it is possible that', which require the subjunctive in standard Spanish; see 16.3.1.

In Argentina, where *voseo* is normal in the spoken language (see 11.3.1) and should be imitated by foreigners learning that variety, careful speakers may nevertheless use standard Spanish subjunctive forms with *vos*: the expected *vos* forms with a stressed final vowel are considered a shade too popular for many tastes. In the following examples the speakers address one another as *vos*: *tengo miedo que no vengas... que aflojes* (J. Asís, Arg.; Spain ...*miedo de que*) 'I'm scared you won't come...that you'll go off the idea', *no digas nada pero papá fue a matar un pollo...* (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue) 'don't say anything, but father went to kill a chicken...'. Compare this example of very familiar language: *yo no tengo inconveniente en hablar de perros todo lo que querás* (Mafalda cartoon, Arg.; 'correct' style *todo lo que quieras*) 'I don't mind talking about dogs as much as you like'.

16.2.9 Subjunctive required after negative statement + que

Sentences of the type negative statement + *que* are almost always followed by the subjunctive. Compare the following pairs

<i>Es cierto que su mujer está enferma</i>	It's true that his wife is ill
<i>No es cierto que su mujer esté enferma</i>	It isn't true that his wife is ill

Parece que es verdad
No parece que sea verdad

Es que quiero verla

No es que quiera verla

...porque habla ruso
...no porque hable ruso

Esto no significa que ya sepan todo el
uno del otro (Reforma, Mex.)

It seems that it's true
 It doesn't seem that it's true

It's that/The fact is that I want to see
 her/it

It isn't that I want to see her/it

...because (s)he speaks Russian
 ...not because (s)he speaks Russian

This doesn't mean that they already
 know everything about one another

Exceptions occur, especially after *no saber que* 'not to know that', *no decir que* 'not to say (i.e. 'state') that' and *no ser que* 'not to be that'. See section 16.7.

16.3 Subjunctive after statements of possibility and probability (including words meaning 'perhaps')

16.3.1 *Es posible/probable que...* and similar statements

In sentences of the pattern statement of possibility/probability/plausibility + *que* + subordinate verb, the latter is in the subjunctive. 'Possibility' also includes meanings like 'the risk that', 'the danger that', 'it is inevitable that...', etc.:

Es posible que haya tormenta
Era probable/previsible que

sucediera/sucediese así

La sola posibilidad de que aquella muchacha
no lo viese más lo desesperaba (E. Sábato,
Arg.)

Corrías el riesgo de que te vieran/viesen

Es inevitable que los autores... pierdan su
capacidad creadora (J. Marías, Sp.)

También puede ocurrir que Santiago prefiera
tener a Graciela en una relación
deteriorada... (M. Benedetti, Ur.,
dialogue)

There may be a storm
 It was probable/foreseeable that it
 would happen that way

The mere possibility that that girl
 wouldn't see him again filled him
 with despair

You were running the risk of them
 seeing you

It is inevitable that authors will lose
 their creative ability

It may also be the case that Santiago
 prefers being with (lit. 'having')
 Graciela in a shaky relationship...

(i) *Pueda que* is a common Latin-American alternative for *puede que/puede ser que* 'maybe'/'it may be that': *pueda que algo te den y te mejores* (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue) 'maybe they'll give you something and you'll get better'.

(ii) The future indicative, or, when the verb in the main clause is in the past, the conditional, are quite often found in informal Latin-American Spanish after such statements, e.g. ... *la posibilidad de que no podrán* (Spain *puedan*) *moler fábricas que no cuenten con caña suficiente* (Granma, Cu.) '...the possibility that mills that do not have enough sugar-cane will not be able to do any crushing'. This is banned from careful styles.

(iii) Use of *capaz que* for 'possibly', usually, but apparently not always, with the subjunctive, is typical of familiar Latin-American speech: *capaz que a la semana siguiente se lo ofrecen [sic] a Jane Fonda y para que acepte convierten el personaje en mujer* (La Jornada, Mex.) 'it's possible that the following week they'll offer it (the

part) to Jane Fonda and make the character a woman so that she'll accept'. This construction is banned from formal styles and unheard in the standard language of Spain, but it is found in regional dialects in Spain.

16.3.2 Subjunctive after words meaning 'perhaps', 'possibly', 'probably'

Spanish has several words meaning 'perhaps': *acaso*, *tal vez*, *quizá* or *quizás*, *a lo mejor*, *igual* (Sp.), *lo mismo* (Sp.), *posiblemente*, *de repente* (Lat. Am.). These words may appear in main or subordinate clauses, but they are discussed here in order to group them with statements of possibility.

(a) *Tal vez*, *quizá(s)*, *acaso*, *posiblemente*, *probablemente*

Tal vez (written *talvez* in Latin America) and *quizá(s)* are equally common on both continents. Both *quizá* and *quizás* are acceptable, but the former is more common in writing in Spain according to Seco. *Acaso* is rather literary in the meaning of 'perhaps' (it has another use described at 16.3.3). *Posiblemente* and *probablemente* mean 'possibly' and 'probably'.

With all these words, when the event referred to is happening in the present or happened in the past, use of the subjunctive is optional. The subjunctive makes the possibility rather weaker:

Tal vez fuese una discusión auténtica. Tal
vez representaban una comedia en mi
honor (interview, Madrid press; both
moods used)

Tal vez debió irse (El País, Sp., or debiera/
debiese haberse ido)

Tal vez tengamos algo de culpa nosotros
mismos (S. Vodanovic, Ch., dialogue;
or tenemos)

Quizá ni siquiera entabláramos conversación
(J. Marías, Sp.; or entablamos)

Quizá era pena lo que se traslucía en la
sonrisa de... mi padre (ibid.;
fuera/fuese possible)

Posiblemente quedara algo de alcohol
etílico en nuestras venas humorísticas
(G. García Márquez, Col.; quedaba
or quedase possible)

Posiblemente lo más criollo de nuestra
cocina radica en las sopas y los guisos
(Cuba Internacional, Cu.; radique
possible, Spain consiste en. Guiso
more or less interchangeable with
guisado in Spain)

Posiblemente lleguen/llegarán mañana
(not llegan)

Probablemente en ningún momento te
fuiste del cuarto... (J. Cortázar, Arg.)

Probablemente el mérito sea de Ada
(C. Rico-Godoy, Sp., dialogue)

Maybe it was a real argument. Maybe
 they were putting on an act for my
 benefit

Perhaps he should have gone (i.e.
 'resigned')

Perhaps we're partly to blame
 ourselves

Perhaps we didn't even start up a
 conversation

Perhaps it was sorrow that came
 through in my father's smile

Perhaps there was still some ethyl
 alcohol left in the veins of our
 humo(u)r

Possibly the most authentic (lit.
 'creole') aspect of our cuisine lies in
 the soups and stews

Possibly they'll arrive tomorrow

Probably you never left the room for a
 moment

You can probably thank Ada for that

If the event is still in the future, the present subjunctive or, much less commonly, the future indicative, is used, but not the present indicative:

Quizá/tal vez/acaso venga/vendrá mañana
(not *viene mañana)
Quizá tengamos una nueva generación
afectada por un envejecimiento cerebral
temprano a causa de los teléfonos
móviles (Granma, Cu.)
Tal vez me lo expliques cuando te llegue la
hora (L. Sepúlveda, Ch., dialogue)
Quizá España podrá desempeñar un papel
particularmente activo en el
restablecimiento de la paz en Europa
Central (El País, Spain; pueda possible)
Posiblemente sea mañana

Perhaps (s)he'll come tomorrow
Perhaps we are going to have a new
generation affected by premature
cerebral ageing because of mobile
phones
Perhaps you'll explain it to me when
the time's right for you
Perhaps Spain will be able to play a
particularly active part in
re-establishing peace in Central
Europe
Possibly it'll be tomorrow

NB: Posiblemente is less common than the English 'possibly': *ser posible que...* (always followed by subjunctive), *quizá(s)* or *tal vez* are more common.

The conditional of *haber* and *poder* is also common after these words to make the statement more tentative: *quizá habría que revisar asimismo estos conceptos* (A. Gala, Sp.) 'it may also possibly be necessary to modify these ideas'.

If the event *was* still in the future, only the imperfect subjunctive or the conditional can be used: *quizá/tal vez vinieran/viniesen/vendrían al día siguiente* (not *venían) 'perhaps they would come the following day', ...*una generación que acaso no volviera a ser feliz fuera de sus retratos* (G. García Márquez, Col.) '...a generation that would perhaps never again be happy outside its portraits'.

NB: The subjunctive can only be used if the word meaning 'perhaps' precedes the verb it modifies: one can only say *era, tal vez, un efecto de esta política...* 'it was, perhaps, an effect of this policy...'

(b) *A lo mejor* also means 'perhaps', but it does not take the subjunctive. It is heard everywhere on both continents, but it is confined to spoken language or informal writing:

*A lo mejor se ha quedado en casa
Ni siquiera la nombró. A lo mejor se ha
olvidado de ella* (M. Vargas Llosa,
Pe., dialogue)

Perhaps/Maybe (s)he's stayed at home
He didn't even mention her. Maybe
he's forgotten her

(c) In Spain *igual* and *lo mismo* are also used in familiar speech in the meaning 'perhaps': *yo no sé lo que me espera hoy. Igual llego tarde* (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp., dialogue) 'I don't know what's in store for me today. Maybe I'll get back late', *llama a la puerta. Lo mismo te da una propina* 'knock on the door. Maybe he'll give you a tip'. These two constructions are considered sub-standard by some speakers and they are not heard in Latin America. Latin Americans may interpret *igual* as 'anyway'/'all the same', e.g. *también mi estómago se mueve pero igual estoy contento* (M. Benedetti, Ur., dialogue) 'my stomach's churning too, but I'm happy all the same'.

(d) In parts of Latin America, especially Peru, *de repente* is used colloquially to mean 'perhaps'; the word means 'suddenly' in Spain and in standard language. It does not take the subjunctive: *de repente viene mañana = a lo mejor viene mañana* 'perhaps (s)he's coming tomorrow'. In colloquial Argentine Spanish *por ahí* + indicative is also used for 'perhaps'.

16.3.3 Further remarks on *acaso*

We said earlier that *acaso* is rather literary in the meaning 'perhaps', but it is found in all styles with the indicative in rhetorical, often sarcastic, questions, i.e. ones to which the speaker already knows the answer:

<i>¿Acaso has visto alguna vez que no llueva en verano?</i> (implies 'of course you haven't...')	Have you ever known it not to rain in summer? (lit. 'have you ever seen that it didn't rain in summer?')
<i>¿Acaso todos los paganos no odian a los huambisas?</i> (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe., dialogue)	Don't all the Indians (lit. 'pagans') hate the Huambisa tribe?

16.4 'Depending'

Statements + *que* that mean 'to depend on...' require the subjunctive:

<i>Yo dependo de que me devuelvan el dinero a tiempo</i>	I'm depending on them giving me the money back in time
<i>De las mujeres depende que se coma en el mundo</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	It's women who ensure that people eat in this world (lit. 'that one eats in this world depends on women')
<i>Miguel contaba con que lo/le llamaran/llamasen aquella noche</i>	Miguel was counting on them calling him that night

16.5 Statements of 'influence' + *que*

16.5.1 General

In a statement of 'influence' the subject of the verb in the main clause tries to influence the outcome of the action in the subordinate clause by wanting, ordering, needing, causing, allowing, prohibiting, advising, persuading or encouraging it to happen, or by avoiding it.

When the subject of the main verb is not the same as the subject of the subordinate verb, the subjunctive must be used for the subordinate verb: *yo quiero que Mario lo haga* 'I want Mario to do it'. When the subjects are the same, the infinitive is used: *yo quiero hacerlo* 'I want to do it'; see 16.5.2a. However, some verbs of 'influence', especially verbs of permitting and prohibiting, can optionally be used with an infinitive even when the subjects are different. This possibility is discussed in 16.5.2b-c.

The following verbs always require the subjunctive when the subject of the subordinate verb is different from the subject of the main verb (although asterisked forms can be used impersonally with the infinitive. See 16.5.2b):

<i>causar que</i> to cause...	<i>necesitar que</i> to need to...
<i>conseguir/lograr que</i> to succeed in...	<i>oponerse a que</i> to be against...
<i>contribuir a que</i> to contribute to...	<i>pedir que</i> (but see 16.5.3) to ask/request that...
<i>cuidar de que</i> to take care that...	<i>preferir que</i> to prefer that...
<i>decir que</i> to tell someone to...	<i>pretender que...</i> to aim for/to aspire to
<i>dificultar que</i> to hinder...	<i>querer/desear que</i> to want...
<i>esforzarse porque</i> to make an effort to...	<i>salvar de que</i> to rescue/save from...
<i>evitar*/impedir que</i> to avoid...	<i>ser necesario que</i> to be necessary that...
<i>exigir* que</i> to require that...	<i>suplicar que</i> to implore to...
<i>hacer falta* que</i> to be necessary that...	<i>tratar de que...</i> to try to ensure that...
<i>insistir/empeñarse en que</i> to insist on...	<i>vigilar que/asegurarse de que</i> to make sure that...

NB: *Decir de* + infinitive is not standard Spanish: cf. French *dire à quelqu'un de faire quelque chose = decirle a alguien que haga algo* 'to tell someone to do something'. But *decir de* occurs in popular speech in Latin America.

There are many alternative ways of expressing the ideas associated with these verbs, e.g. by using adjectives, as in *es necesario/deseable que...* 'it's necessary/desirable that...', or nouns, as in *la petición/obligación de que...* 'the request/obligation that...'. These also require the subjunctive when they are followed by *que*, e.g. *su insistencia en que contestaran/contestasen en seguida* 'his/her insistence on them replying immediately'. Examples:

<i>Quiero que estudies más</i>	I want you to study more
<i>Se esforzaba porque los demás vivieran/viviesen en mejores condiciones (esforzarse por 'to make an effort to')</i>	(S)he strove to ensure that the others lived in better conditions
<i>Organicé que todas nos vistiéramos como ellas (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)</i>	I arranged it so that all of us women should dress like them
<i>Soy partidario de que lo publiquen</i>	I support their publishing it
<i>Esto dio como resultado que no le hicieran/hiciesen caso</i>	The upshot of this was that they ignored him/her
<i>Me salvé de puro milagro de que los ladrones me mataran/matasen</i>	By a sheer miracle I avoided being killed by the thieves
<i>Cierta impaciencia generosa no ha consentido que yo aprendiera a leer (J. L. Borges, Arg.)</i>	A certain generous impatience did not allow me to learn to read
<i>No puedes pretender que cambien las cosas (J. Aldecoa, Sp., dialogue)</i>	You can't expect things to change
<i>El primer paso, le dijo, era lograr que ella se diera cuenta de su interés (G. García Márquez, Col.)</i>	The first thing to do, she said to him, was to get her to notice his interest
<i>Nadie impidió que Hemingway escribiera y publicase sus libros (G. Cabrera Infante, Cu.)</i>	Nobody stopped Hemingway writing and publishing his books
<i>Hay que evitar que ellos se enteren</i>	We have to avoid them finding out
<i>Es necesario/im prescindible que lo reciban para mañana</i>	It is necessary/essential that they receive it by tomorrow

(i) As was mentioned earlier, a noun phrase like *la decisión de que* 'the decision that', *la orden de que* 'the order that', *el deseo de que* 'the wish that', can be used instead of a main clause: *la orden de que se apagaran/apagasen las luces* 'the order for the lights to be turned off', *el anhelo de que Dios exista* 'the longing for God to exist', *la idea era que las chicas ayudasen/ayudaran a los chicos* 'the idea was that the girls should help the boys', *la petición de que se la indultara/indultase no llegó a tiempo* 'the petition for her reprieve didn't arrive in time'. When such a noun phrase immediately precedes *que*, *de* is inserted: *la necesidad de que nos mantengan informados* 'the need for them to keep us informed'. See 33.4.2 for details and exceptions.

(ii) Some verbs may or may not imply 'influence', according to their meaning. They take the subjunctive only when an order or wish is implied: *decidió que lo firmaran/firmasen* '(s)he decided that they should sign it', *decidió que lo habían firmado* '(s)he decided (i.e. 'came to the conclusion') that they had signed it'; *dijo que se terminara/terminase* '(s)he said (ordered) that it should be finished', *dijo que se había terminado* '(s)he said (i.e. 'announced') that it was finished'; and likewise *decir que* 'to tell someone to...' (subjunctive)/'to say that' (indicative), *establecer que* 'to stipulate that' (subjunctive)/'to establish the truth that' (indicative), *pretender que* 'to

try to'/'to aim at'/'wish that' (subjunctive)/'to claim that' (indicative); *escribir* 'to write that' (indicative)/'to write instructing that' (subjunctive).

(iii) Statements of 'hope' are discussed at 16.11.3.

16.5.2 Use of the infinitive with verbs of influence

Some of the verbs listed under 16.5.1, and certain other verbs of influence not mentioned so far, may appear with the infinitive in the following circumstances (for *pedir* and similar verbs of requesting, see 16.5.3):

(a) if the subject of the main clause and the subject of the subordinate clause refer to the same person or thing:

<i>Quiero hacerlo</i> but <i>Quiero que tú lo hagas</i>	I want to do it/I want you to do it
<i>No se deja pensar en ella</i>	(S)he doesn't let himself/herself think of her
<i>No pude evitar caerme (but) No pude evitar que se cayera/cayese</i>	I couldn't help falling (but) I couldn't stop him/her falling
<i>Ya has logrado enfadarme/Ya has logrado que me enfade</i>	Now you've managed to make me angry
<i>Pidió ir/Pidió que fueran/fuesen (but see 16.5.3)</i>	(S)he asked to go/(S)he asked them to go

(b) In impersonal constructions (i.e. when there is no identifiable subject):

<i>Hacía falta conseguir más gasolina</i>	It was necessary to get more petrol/US gas
<i>Se evitaba hablar de ellos</i>	People avoided talking about them
<i>Se exigía presentar los documentos</i>	The documents were required to be presented
<i>Esto obliga a pensar que...</i>	This obliges one to think that...

(c) With certain verbs, even when they are not impersonal and have different subjects. These are verbs that can be constructed with an indirect object, as in *te ayudaré a conseguir/a que consigas lo que quieres* 'I'll help you to get what you want'.

Many of these are always followed by the preposition *a*, and the infinitive is almost always then used in preference to the subjunctive (as a general rule Spanish-speakers avoid the subjunctive when the rules of grammar allow it). The most common of these verbs are:

<i>acostumbrar a</i> to get used to	<i>desafiar a</i> to challenge to	<i>invitar a</i> to invite to
<i>ayudar a</i> to help to	<i>enseñar a</i> to teach to	<i>mandar a</i> to send to do something
<i>autorizar a</i> to authorize to	<i>forzar a</i> to force to	<i>obligar a</i> to oblige to
<i>animar a</i> to encourage to	<i>impulsar a</i> to impel to	<i>persuadir a</i> to persuade to
<i>condenar a</i> to condemn to	<i>incitar a</i> to encourage to	<i>retar a</i> to challenge to
<i>contribuir a</i> to contribute to	<i>inducir a</i> to persuade to	<i>tentar a</i> to tempt to
<i>convidar a</i> to invite to	<i>instar a</i> to urge	

Thus we can say

<i>Le acostumbré/animé/autoricé/ayudé a hacerlo/a que lo hiciera/hiciese</i>	I accustomed/encouraged/allowed/helped him/her to do it
<i>Le condené/desafíé/enseñé/forcé/impulsé/incité a hacerlo/a que lohiciese/hiciera</i>	I condemned/challenged/taught/forced/impelled/incited him to do it
<i>Le induje/invité/mandé/obligué/persuadí/reté/tenté a hacerlo/a que lo hiciera/hiciese</i>	I induced/invited/sent/obliged/persuaded/challenged/tempted her to do it

Verbs not followed by *a* can be divided into two categories. The following are usually followed by the infinitive, although the subjunctive is also found:

<i>dejar</i> to let	<i>mandar</i> to order	<i>prohibir</i> to forbid
<i>hacer</i> to make (i.e. cause to)	<i>ordenar</i> to order	
<i>impedir</i> to prevent	<i>permitir</i> to allow/to permit	
<i>Le dejó/hizo hacerlo/que lo hiciera/hiciese</i>	(S)he let/made him/her do it	
<i>Le impidió hacerlo/que lo hiciese/hiciera</i>	(S)he prevented him/her from doing it	
<i>Le mandó/permitió/prohibió hacerlo/que lo hiciera</i>	(S)he ordered/allowed/prohibited him/her from doing it	
<i>Si te prohíbo que faltes tú, ¿me obedecerás?</i> (A. Buero Vallejo, Sp., dialogue)	If I forbid you not to be there, will you obey me?	
<i>Déjanos a los hombres conversar en paz</i> (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe., dialogue)	Leave us men to talk in peace	
<i>La dosis de vanidad que todos tenemos dentro hizo que me sintiera el hombre más orgulloso de la Tierra</i> (Che Guevara, quoted in <i>Granma</i> , Cu.)	The dose of vanity that we all have within us made me feel the proudest man on Earth	
<i>Estos actos sólo hacen perder la confianza en la democracia</i> (La <i>Época</i> , Ch.)	These actions only make people lose confidence in democracy	
<i>Irala me convidó a acompañarla</i> (J. L. Borges, Arg., dialogue; <i>a que la acompañara</i> also possible)	Irala invited me to accompany her	
<i>Había ordenado retirarse a todas sus sirvientas</i> (A. Gala, Sp.; or ... <i>a todas sus sirvientas que se retirasen/retiraran</i>)	She had ordered all her ladies-in-waiting to withdraw	

But, some verbs are in a transitional state. The older construction is with the subjunctive and is safer for foreigners, but the infinitive construction is often heard and is creeping into the written language:

<i>aconsejar</i> to advise	<i>pedir</i> to ask (but see 16.5.3)	<i>recomendar</i> to recommend
<i>obstaculizar</i> to hinder	<i>proponer</i> to propose	<i>sugerir</i> to suggest
<i>Te propuse hacerlo/que lo hiciéramos/hiciésemos</i>	I suggested to you that we should do it	
<i>Te confieso que te propuse fugarnos</i> (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe., dialogue)	I admit that I suggested to you that we should elope	
<i>Además, aprende de Octavia, a quien una vez le sugerí pasar a la otra parte</i> (ibid.)	Moreover, learn from Octavia, to whom I once suggested that she should go over to the other side	
<i>Incluso las radioemisoras aconsejaron con insistencia a los capitalinos abstenerse de salir</i> (La <i>Jornada</i> , Mex.)	Even the radio stations strongly advised residents of the capital to avoid going out	

(i) Some of the verbs listed in this section can appear without an object in their main clause where English requires a dummy object like 'one' or 'people': *un delgado vestido que impedía llevar nada bajo él/...que se llevara/llevase nada debajo de él* 'a thin dress that prevented one from wearing anything underneath it', *que hagan respetar los derechos humanos* (El *Tiempo*, Col.) 'let them get people to respect human rights', *esto permite pensar que...* 'this allows one to think that'.

(ii) When the object is non-living and the subject is human the subjunctive should be used. One can say *la hiciste llorar* 'you made her cry', but not **se puede hacer un texto significar cualquier cosa* for ... *hacer que un texto signifique cualquier cosa* 'one can

make a text mean anything' (impersonal *se* counts as a human subject); *el experto técnico puede hacer que el acompañamiento se oiga menos* 'the technical expert can make the backing sound less loud' but not **...puede hacer al acompañamiento oírse menos*.

When both subject and object are non-living it seems that either construction is possible, although the safe option is the subjunctive: *el embalse permite que las aguas del río alcancen unos niveles adecuados* (possibly *permite a las aguas alcanzar...*) 'the dam allows the water of the river to reach suitable levels', ... *vientos flojos que harán bajar las temperaturas* (Radio Nacional de España) '...light winds that will cause temperatures to fall'.

16.5.3 Use of the infinitive with *pedir* and verbs of similar meaning

Pedir and other verbs of similar meaning, e.g. *rogar* 'to request', seem to be in a complex transitional state with respect to the use of the infinitive. They may appear in requests with the infinitive when the subjects are identical—*pidió hablar con el director* '(s)he asked to speak to the director', *pidió verme a las seis* '(s)he asked to see me at six o'clock'. They normally require *que* and the subjunctive when the subjects are different, as do other verbs of requesting: *pidió/suplicó/rogó que contestaran/contestasen cuanto antes* '(s)he asked/implored/requested them to answer as soon as possible'. Nevertheless, when the subject of the main verb is impersonal *se*, the infinitive is found in public notices of the type *se ruega a los residentes no llevar las toallas a la piscina* 'residents are asked not to take the towels to the swimming pool'.

In other cases, use of the infinitive when the subjects differ is not normally accepted as correct in standard language, but it is heard in familiar Latin-American speech and sometimes appears in Latin-American writing: *piden restituir a empleados de Correos que fueron despedidos* (La *Prensa*, Panama) '(unions) ask for reinstatement of dismissed Post Office workers', normally ... *piden que se restituya a los empleados...*; *le pidió dejarlo solo con los varones* (G. García Márquez, Col.) 'he asked her to leave him alone with the men', normally *le pidió que lo dejara/dejase solo*; *te pido exigir que te den lo que nos ofrecieron* (idem, dialogue) 'I ask you to insist on them giving us what they offered us', usually *te pido que exijas que...*; *hoy nos hemos reunido por lo del wáter y les ruego permanecer sentados hasta que se solucione el problema* (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe., dialogue) 'we've met today over the question of the lavatory and I ask you to remain seated until the problem is solved', usually ... *que permanezcan sentados*.

This infinitive construction is rejected in Spain, but it is increasingly common in journalistic styles, especially headlines, e.g. *?Amnistía Internacional pide al gobierno español presionar* (better *que presione*) *a Chile* (El *País*, Sp.) 'Amnesty International asks Spanish Government to pressure Chile'. Moreover, sentences like *?me pidió salir con él* 'he asked me to go out with him' are heard in the informal speech of young Spaniards. This seems to be limited to this third-person singular dating formula: informants who thought that this form was natural would not accept **nos pidieron ir con ellos al cine* for *nos pidieron que fuéramos/fuésimos con ellos*, or **les pedimos salir con nosotros* for *les pedimos que salieran/saliesen con nosotros*.

16.6 Emotional reactions and value judgements

16.6.1 Emotional reaction or value judgement + *que* + subjunctive

See also 26.4.2 for further remarks on the use and non-use of *de que* with such expressions.

In standard Spanish, the subjunctive is used in sentences of the pattern emotional reaction + *que* + subordinate verb. 'Emotional reaction' covers a vast range of possibilities including regret, pleasure, blame, displeasure, surprise, understanding, toleration, excusing, rejection, statements of sufficiency and insufficiency, importance, etc. It also includes value judgements like 'it's logical that...', 'it's natural that...', 'it's enough that...'. Examples:

<i>Es natural/comprendible que esté alterada</i>	It's natural/understandable for her to be upset
<i>Que estuviera todo tal cual, era hasta cierto punto lógico</i> (E. Lynch, Arg.; subordinate clause precedes main clause)	It was logical to some extent that everything was as it was
<i>Que te protejan no está mal</i> (A. Buero Vallejo, Sp., dialogue)	It's not a bad thing that they protect you
<i>No aguanto/perdono que me hablen de esa manera</i>	I can't stand them/anyone talking to me like that
<i>Basta que te ofrezcan mucho dinero para que de repente no sepas ni para qué sirve</i> (S. Puértolas, Sp., dialogue)	You only need to be offered a lot of money to suddenly realize that you don't even know what use it is
<i>Estoy hasta el moño de que tengamos que ser siempre nosotras las que debemos recoger la mesa</i> (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp.)	I'm sick to death with the fact that it's always us women who have to clear the table
<i>Andrés era el culpable de que me pasaran todas esas cosas</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	It was Andrés's fault that all these things were happening to me

A number of impersonal verbs denoting value judgements require the infinitive when their *indirect* object and the subject of the following verb are the same, as in *¿te importa hacer menos ruido?* 'do you mind making less noise' or *nos gusta comer mejillones* 'we like eating mussels'. Similar verbs are: *afligir* 'to afflict', *agobiar* 'to oppress/overwhelm', *agradecer* 'to thank for', *alarmar* 'to alarm', *alegrar* 'to cheer up', *apetecer* as in *me apetece hacerlo* 'I feel like doing it', *bastar* as in *te basta con decir gracias* 'all you have to do is say thanks', *conmover* 'to move' (emotionally), *convenir* as in *me conviene hacerlo mañana* 'it suits me to do it tomorrow', *costar* 'to be hard work', *disgustar* 'to displease', *doler* 'to hurt', *fastidiar* 'to annoy', *interesar* 'to be of interest'/'to be advantageous', *preocupar* 'to worry', *sorprender* 'to surprise', etc.

Some verbs take the infinitive when there is a shared subject, as in *odio hablar en público* 'I hate speaking in public'. Similar are: *aceptar* 'to accept', *avenirse a* 'to agree to', *conformarse con* 'to agree to', *consentir en* 'to consent to', *contentarse con* 'to be content to', *deplorar* 'to deplore', *lamentar* 'to lament', *resignarse a* 'to be resigned to', *soportar/aguantar* 'to put up with', etc. (based on GDLE 36.3.2.3).

A fuller list of infinitive constructions appears at 18.2.3.

(i) One must differentiate between value judgements and statements of fact like *es verdad que* 'it's true that', *es obvio/evidente que* 'it's obvious that', *es indiscutible que* 'it is beyond dispute that', *afirma/pretende que...* '(s)he claims that...'. The latter require the indicative, even though the distinction may sometimes appear arbitrary

to English-speakers, particularly when they notice that *ser natural que* 'to be natural that' takes the subjunctive whereas *quejarse de que* 'to complain that' usually takes the indicative; see note to 16.6.2. For statements like 'it is *not* true that', see 16.7.

(ii) *Menos mal que* 'thank heavens that' takes the indicative: *menos mal que no se ha roto* 'thank heavens it's not broken'. *Qué bien que* takes the subjunctive in Spain: *qué bien que haya venido Tito* 'it's great/good news that Tito's come'. In Latin America it may appear with the indicative.

(iii) The form *mejor...* 'it would be best that...' is also followed by the indicative. This abbreviation of *sería mejor que* is very common in Latin America, but it is also heard in colloquial language in Spain: *mejor lo dejamos para más tarde* 'we'd better leave it until later'. Compare *sería mejor que lo dejáramos/dejásemos para más tarde* 'it would be better if we left it until later'.

(iv) In spontaneous language in Latin America, and to a lesser extent in some parts of Spain, an emotional reaction to a past, present or habitual event may be expressed by the indicative; this tendency is rather stronger with verbs followed by *de que*: see 16.6.2.

The indicative is sometimes seen in writing in Latin America, especially in Argentina. Examples:

<i>El innegable genio de Joyce era puramente verbal; lástima que lo gastó en la novela</i> (J. L. Borges, Arg.)	Joyce's undeniable genius was purely verbal; a pity that he wasted it on the novel
<i>Es curioso que uno no puede estar sin encariñarse con algo</i> (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue)	It's strange that one can't manage (lit. 'can't be') without getting fond of something
<i>Me da lástima que terminó</i> (ibid., dialogue)	I'm sorry it's ended
<i>Me parece raro que este hombre baja y dice "Mire..."</i> (Ven., quoted DeMello, 1996, (2), 367)	It seems strange to me that this man gets out and says 'Look...'

DeMello's (1996), 2, study of recordings from Hispanic capital cities suggests that colloquial Spanish distinguishes between value judgements accompanied by emotional reactions (subjunctive) and value judgements that simply inform the speaker of a fact (s)he didn't know (indicative). But he notes that whereas the indicative was found in 57% of Latin-American sentences involving value judgements, it occurred in only 36% in Spain. Literary language strongly prefers the subjunctive after value judgements + *que*.

(v) English-speakers should beware of over-using *si* 'if' in sentences involving a value judgement: *sería maravilloso que/si no hubiera/hubiese hambre en el mundo* 'it would be wonderful if there were no hunger in the world'.

(vi) The subjunctive is still required when the main clause is deleted: *...pero que él diga eso...* (some phrase like *es increíble que...* having been deleted from the sentence) '...that he should say that.../...that he should have the nerve to say that...'

16.6.2 Further remarks on emotional reactions followed by *de que*

For further remarks on *de que* after such expressions, see 26.4.2.

It was stated in 16.6.1 that the subjunctive is used with expressions of emotion

and value judgements, and foreigners should respect this rule. But when the verb is followed by *de que* the indicative mood is sometimes heard in relaxed speech when the verb is in the present or past. This tendency should not be imitated by foreign students:

<i>Me alegré de que (pensaban)/pensaran/ pensasen hacerlo</i>	I was glad that they intended to do it
<i>Se indignaba de que sus suegros (creían)/creyeran/creyesen en la pena de muerte</i>	(S)he was outraged that his/her in-laws believed in the death penalty
<i>Se asombra de que todo el mundo tiene un ticket (quoted DeMello, 1996 (2), 367; Madrid speech)</i>	(S)he's surprised everyone's got a ticket

Quejarse de que 'to complain that...' seems to foreign learners to be an emotional reaction, but it is usually followed by the indicative (although the subjunctive is possible): *se queja de que Berta la hace quedarse a dormir la siesta* (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue) 'she complains about Berta making her stay in to sleep in the afternoon'. *Lamentar que* 'to regret the fact that' takes the subjunctive. *Lamentarse de que* 'to lament the fact that...' takes the subjunctive when it expresses an emotional reaction and the indicative when it merely makes a statement. *Protestar de que* 'to protest that' takes the indicative: *protestaba de que/se lamentaba de que el gobierno había subido los impuestos* '(s)he was protesting at/lamenting the fact that the Government had raised taxes', *lamento que ustedes no me hayan comprendido* 'I regret that you did not understand me'.

16.6.3 Lo + emotional reactions

If a value judgement is expressed by a phrase involving the 'neuter article' *lo*, the rule for the use of the subjunctive is as follows:

(a) *Lo lógico es que.../lo normal es que.../lo habitual/corriente es que...* are followed by a subjunctive:

<i>Lo lógico/lo normal/lo habitual es que no venga</i>	The logical thing/the normal thing/the usual thing is that he doesn't come
<i>En nuestro país, lo habitual es que en todo asunto en que una persona pobre reclama de algún abuso... termine con problemas mayores que aquellos por los cuales reclama (La Época, Ch.)</i>	In our country, it's usual that, in any matter in which poor people complain about some abuse, they end up with worse problems than the ones they are complaining about

(b) *Lo peor es que/lo mejor es que.../lo malo es que.../lo terrible es que.../lo molesto es que...*, etc., are followed by a subjunctive when the verb in the main clause points to an event still in the future:

<i>Lo peor será/es que no venga nadie</i>	The worst thing will be if no one comes
<i>Lo malo sería que no terminaran/ terminasen el trabajo a tiempo</i>	The problem would be if they didn't finish the work on time
<i>Lo más provocante de la ley es que provoque una reacción violenta del gobierno cubano (La Jornada, Mex.)</i>	The most provocative thing about the law is that it may produce a violent reaction from the Cuban government

But if the main verb is timeless, habitual or in the past, the verb is usually in the indicative, although the subjunctive is also possible, in which case the event seems more doubtful:

<i>Lo peor fue que no vino nadie</i>	The worst thing was that no one came
<i>Lo que me indigna es que la sociedad todavía condena los amores o amoríos entre una señora madura y un jovencito (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp.)</i>	What makes me mad is that society still condemns romances or love affairs between a mature woman and a young man
<i>Lo malo es que soñé nuevamente con Emilio (M. Benedetti, Ur., dialogue)</i>	The worst is that I dreamt of Emilio again
<i>Lo que más me sorprendió... fue que... se habían detenido y vuelto (J. Marías, Sp.)</i>	What surprised me most was that they had stopped and turned round

The subjunctive could have been used in these examples with the effect of making them more hesitant.

In some cases use of the subjunctive depends on the meaning: *lo increíble era que Pedro no lo sabía* or *supiera/supiese* 'the incredible thing was that Pedro didn't know about it'. Here the indicative assumes that Pedro did not know whereas the subjunctive leaves open the question whether he knew or not. The choice depends on whether the action denoted by the subordinate verb is a reality to the speaker. Compare: *lo peor es que mi padre nunca dice nada* 'the worst thing is that my father never says anything', and a possible reply to this: *sí, lo peor es que no diga nada* 'yes, the worst thing is that he doesn't say anything' (i.e. *if that is the case*). In the second example the speaker does not claim knowledge of the facts described by the first speaker. This subtle distinction will be found to operate in many examples of subjunctive use.

16.7 Subjunctive after denials

In sentences of the pattern denial + *que* + subordinate clause, the subordinate verb is usually in the subjunctive:

<i>Mayta negó que hubiera intervenido en el raptó (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe., dialogue; or hubiese)</i>	Mayta denied he was involved in the kidnapping
<i>Yo no he dicho que seas una histérica (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp., dialogue)</i>	I never said you were a hysteric
<i>Esto no significa que haya que esperar un cambio radical de actitud (J. Cortázar, Arg.)</i>	This doesn't mean that one must expect a radical change of attitude
<i>No ocurre/sucede que haya eclipse todos los días</i>	It doesn't happen that there's an eclipse every day
<i>No se trata de que tengas que quedarte todos los días hasta las nueve de la noche</i>	It's not a question of your having to stay till nine p.m. every day
<i>Pero nunca creí que Marta se acostumbrara a vivir en un pueblo (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue)</i>	But I never thought Marta would get used to living in a small town
<i>Nunca pensé que fueras así (A. Arrafut, Cu., dialogue)</i>	I never imagined you were like this

However the subjunctive is sometimes optional after verbs of knowing or believing, depending on the degree of uncertainty involved. Choice of the subjunctive in such cases depends on the speaker's background knowledge. If one knows for a

fact that X is a thief, one says *no confesaba que había robado el dinero* '(s)he didn't confess to stealing the money'. If X may be innocent one says *no confesaba que hubiese/hubiera robado el dinero*. For this reason, negated statements of demonstrable fact, e.g. *yo no sabía que la puerta estaba abierta* 'I didn't know the door was open' (it was) are more likely to take the indicative (although *estuviera/estuviese* is also correct), and negated opinions, e.g. *no creo que sea muy útil* 'I don't think it's very useful', are almost certain to take the subjunctive.

(i) The indicative is occasionally found after *negar que* and verbs of similar meaning, although this construction is unusual, especially in Spain: *niego que hubo bronca* (*Proceso*, Mex.; usually *hubiera, hubiese* or *haya habido bronca*) 'I deny there was a row'; *¿también va Vd. a negar que los ingleses se lavan?* (J. Camba, Sp.; indicative used because a denial would be unreasonable) 'are you also going to deny that the English wash?'; *pero negaban tozudamente que transportaban marihuana en esta ocasión* (*Granma*, Cu.) 'but they stubbornly denied that they were carrying marijuana on this occasion', *rechaza que Dios existe* (from Navas Ruiz (1986), 69, usually *exista*) '(s)he denies that God exists'.

(ii) Negative questions and negative orders take the indicative. See note (v).

(iii) *No ser que* and *no que...* are denials and are normally followed by the subjunctive: *no es que yo diga que es mentira* 'it's not that I'm saying that it's a lie', *no es que se dijeran grandes cosas* (J. Marías, Sp.) 'it isn't that important (lit. 'great') things were said', *no era que no hubiese pobres por toda la ciudad* (A. Mastretta, Mex.) 'it wasn't that there were no poor people all over the city'. But *no ser que* takes the indicative in questions: see note (v).

Exceptionally *no ser que* is followed by the indicative, in which case the denial is more confident and assertive: *no era que tomaba posesión del mundo* (M. de Unamuno, Sp.) 'it wasn't that he was taking possession of the world'.

For the formula *no sea que* 'lest'/'so that not...', see 16.12.3b.

(iv) Compare the different translations of *decir* in the following examples: *ha dicho que venía* '(s)he said (s)he was coming', *no he dicho que venía* 'I didn't say I was coming', *no he dicho que viniera/viniese* 'I didn't tell him/her to come'.

(v) Negative questions and negative orders are not denials, so the indicative is used: *¿no es verdad que ha dicho eso?* 'isn't it true that he said that?', *¿no sientes que el corazón se te ensancha al ver esto?* (J. Ibarguengoitia, Mex., dialogue) 'don't you feel your heart getting bigger when you see this?', *no digas que es verdad* 'don't say it's true', *no creas que esto es lo único que hacemos* (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue) 'don't think that this is the only thing we do', *pero no crean ustedes que me vio* (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp., dialogue) 'but don't get the idea that he saw me', *no será que no quiere hacerlo?* 'isn't it the case that he doesn't want to do it?', *¿no sería que no quedaban más?* 'wouldn't it be the case that there were none left?'

16.8 Statements of doubt

Dudar que takes the subjunctive, but after statements meaning 'not to doubt that...' the indicative is used when the meaning is 'to be sure that...':

Dudo que sea verdad
No dudo que sea verdad lo que dices

I doubt whether it's true
I don't doubt whether what you say is true (tentative remark)

But:

No dudo que es verdad lo que dices
No dudo que vendrá/venga
Dudo que yo pueda venir mañana/Dudo poder venir mañana (infinitive possible since the verbs are in the same person)
No hay duda que ella puede ser discutida (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe.; Sp. *no hay duda de que...*)

I don't doubt (i.e. 'I'm convinced') that what you say is true
I don't doubt he'll come
I doubt I can come tomorrow

There is no doubt that it can be debated

(i) For the possibility *dudar de que* see 33.4.3 note (ii).

16.9 Statements of fear

Temer/Tener miedo de que 'to fear' and other statements of similar meaning may take the subjunctive or a future indicative tense (including future time expressed by *ir a* 'to be going to...'), or, if they refer to the past, a past subjunctive or an indicative future in the past. For *temerse que* see note (ii):

Temo que le moleste/Temo que le va a molestar/molestará/le vaya a molestar
Temíamos que le molestara/molestase/molestaría/Temíamos que le iba/fuera a molestar
Yo tenía miedo de que te hubieras ido (G. Cabrera Infante, Cu., dialogue)
...para no ver el mar por la escotilla porque nos da miedo de que entre (E. Poniatowska, Mex.)

I'm afraid it may upset him/her
We were afraid it would upset him/her
I was scared that you'd gone
...so as not to see the sea through the hatchway, because we're afraid it'll come in

The subjunctive is always used if the main verb is negated: *no temía que me fuera/fuese a atacar* 'I wasn't afraid he/she/it was going to attack me'.

(i) Use of redundant *no* (see 23.2.4) instead of *que* after *temer(se)* changes the meaning: the subjunctive is then obligatory. Compare *temo que no te va a gustar* 'I'm afraid you're not going to like it' and redundant *no* in *temo no te vaya a gustar demasiado* 'I'm afraid in case/lest you're going to like it too much', *temo no te vayas a enfadar* 'I'm afraid in case/lest you get cross'.

(ii) *Temerse que* usually means little more than 'I'm sorry to say that...' and it therefore takes the indicative: *me temo que no he sido muy delicado* 'I fear I haven't been very discreet', *de eso me temo que no puedo hablarte* (L. Sepúlveda, Ch., dialogue) 'I'm afraid I can't talk to you about that'. But the subjunctive is possible: *mucho nos tememos que se trate de los primeros* (Terra, Ur.) 'we are very much afraid that the former are involved'.

(iii) *Temer que* may also be found with the indicative when it refers to timeless or habitual actions: *temo que la verdadera frontera la trae cada uno dentro* (C. Fuentes, Mex., dialogue) 'I fear that each one of us carries the real frontier inside ourselves',

empezaba a temer que las imágenes de los dos mundos...perteneían a dos caras de la misma moneda (J. Aldecoa, Sp.) 'I was beginning to fear that the images of the two worlds...belonged to the two sides of the same coin'.

16.10 Subjunctive after 'the fact that...' and after other noun phrases

16.10.1 'The fact that...'

There are three common ways of translating 'the fact that': *el hecho de que*, *el que*, and *que*; the latter two items have various other meanings, for which see the Index.

(a) With all of these the subjunctive is used whenever any kind of value judgement or emotional reaction is involved, or whenever any idea of cause or influence is involved:

(*El que no digan nada no debería afectar tu decisión*)

No hay duda de que el hecho de que me hayan dado el Nobel va a dar mayor resonancia a todo lo que diga y haga (G. García Márquez, Col.)

El que yo escriba un diario se debe también a Virginia (J. J. Arreola, Mex., dialogue.)

Que tres aviones se destrocen, se desplome un tren... arda una discoteca, y todo en menos de un mes, quizá sea simplemente casualidad (Cambio16, Sp.)

The fact that they say nothing shouldn't affect your decision

There is no doubt that the fact that they've given me the Nobel prize will give more weight to everything I say and do

The fact that I keep a diary is also thanks to Virginia

The fact that three planes are destroyed, a train plunges into a ravine, ... a discotheque catches fire, and all in less than a month, is perhaps pure chance

(b) The indicative is required when the main verb is a verb of knowing or perceiving (e.g. *enterarse de* 'to find out', *darse cuenta de* 'to realize'). When *el hecho de que* is preceded by a preposition it almost always takes the indicative:

Se ha dado cuenta del hecho de que tiene que trabajar para vivir

...parten del hecho de que muchos mayores tienen dificultades para usar correctamente los aparatos (El Mundo, Sp.)

Que el poder tiende al abuso... no debe escandalizar a nadie (El País, Sp.)

(S)he has realized (s)he has to work in order to live

...are based on the fact that many elderly persons find it difficult to use the equipment

That power tends to abuse ... is a fact that should scandalize no one

(c) In some cases the subjunctive and indicative appear to be interchangeable. After years of reconsidering these examples we can still detect no difference of meaning between them, but foreigners will not go wrong if they apply the rules set out in (a) and (b):

Le molesta el hecho de que no venga/viene a verlo/le

No le daba importancia al hecho de que él no le hacía/hiciera/hiciese caso

No quiero que el hecho de que te conozco/conozca sea un obstáculo

El hecho de que no me veía/viera/viese me hacía sentirme seguro

The fact that (s)he doesn't come to see him annoys him

(S)he didn't mind the fact that he paid her/him no attention

I don't want the fact that I know you to be an obstacle

The fact that (s)he couldn't see me made me feel safe

El que 'the fact that' must be distinguished from *el que* 'the person that' (discussed at 36.1.4). Sometimes only context makes the sense clear: *el que haya dicho eso no sabe lo que dice* 'the person who/whoever said that doesn't know what (s)he's talking about', *el que haya dicho eso no tiene importancia* 'the fact that (s)he said that has no importance'.

(i) English-speakers tend to overdo *el hecho de que* for 'the fact that'. *El que...* or *que...* alone are in fact as common if not more so.

16.10.2 Subjunctive after other noun phrases used as subordinators

When a noun phrase replaces a verb phrase it is normally connected to a following subordinate clause by *de que*: compare *esperamos que llueva* 'we hope it will rain' and *la esperanza de que llueva* 'the hope that it will rain': see 33.4.2 for more detailed discussion of the use of *de que* after nouns.

In general the mood of the subordinate verb after such noun phrases is governed by the same rule that would affect verb phrases of the same meaning, i.e. *la posibilidad de que...* 'the possibility that...' takes the subjunctive because *es posible que...* 'it's possible that...' does. However, there is a series of miscellaneous noun phrases after which choice between the subjunctive and indicative is determined by meaning. Two factors may combine or operate independently to invoke the subjunctive: (a) the type of verb in the main clause, (b) the reality or non-reality of the event expressed by the subordinate clause.

(a) In the following examples the verb in the main clause is of a type (emotional reaction, possibility, etc.) which would itself require the subjunctive:

Le contrarió la casualidad de que encontrase/encontrara ahí a su primo

No podía soportar la idea de que no le dieran/diesen el puesto

(S)he was annoyed by happening to find his/her cousin there

(S)he couldn't stand the idea of them not giving her the job

(b) In the following sentences the indicative is used because the subordinate verb indicates an established fact or reality, even though in some cases the person affected may not yet know the truth of the situation:

Siempre daba la casualidad de que no llegaban a tiempo

Se tenían que enfrentar con el problema de que no tenían dinero

Consiguió que aceptara la idea de que no le darían el puesto

Tengo la convicción de que no hace nada

Se encontró con la sorpresa de que estaba de mal humor

Le atormentaba la obsesión de que su mujer le engañaba

It always happened that they never arrived on time (habitual fact)

They had to face up to the problem of not having any money (fact)

(S)he managed to get him to accept the idea that they wouldn't give him/her the job (i.e. accepting a fact)

I'm convinced (s)he doesn't do anything (knowledge)

(S)he was surprised to find that (s)he was in a bad mood (factual)

He was tormented by the obsession that his wife was being unfaithful to him (factual, as far as he knows)

(c) In some sentences, the difference between the subjunctive and the indicative reflects a very subtle distinction between statements of fact (indicative) and value judgements (subjunctive):

Tuve la suerte de que no me viera / vio I was lucky in that he didn't see me (on that occasion; factual, but subjunctive more usual)

But:

Tenía la suerte de que no me veía I was lucky in that he didn't see me (on one or several occasions. Indicative only)

Tenía siempre la preocupación de que le iba / fuera a pasar algo (S)he always worried that something might happen to her/him

Vivían con la pesadilla de que perderían su dinero They lived with the nightmare of losing their money (indicative only)

Le animaba la ilusión de que lo conseguiría She was encouraged by the dream of getting it (same subject for both verbs)

Le animaba la ilusión de que ella lo conseguiría / consiguiera / consiguiese (S)he was encouraged by the dream that (s)he would get it (different subjects)

16.11 Subjunctive after special verbs

16.11.1 Subjunctive after *creer*, *parecer*, *suponer* and *sospechar*

We said at 16.2.5b and 16.7 that expressions of belief + *que* take the indicative—*creo que Dios existe* 'I believe that God exists'—unless they are negated: *no creo que Dios exista* 'I don't believe God exists'. However, the subjunctive occasionally appears after some of these verbs even when they are affirmative. The meaning is then more hesitant, but the difference can barely be translated into English:

<i>Sospecho que es / sea mentira</i>	I suspect it's a lie
<i>Como si la Historia fuera una especie de saltamontes; y parece que lo sea pero en otro sentido</i> (A. Sastre, Sp., dialogue)	As if History were a sort of grasshopper; and it seems that it is, but in a different sense
<i>¿Por qué estás así? Parece que te estuvieras ahogando</i> (E. Bryce Echenique, Pe., dialogue)	Why are you like that? It looks as though you were drowning

Use of the subjunctive to make a question ironic (i.e. the speaker already knows the answer) seems to be confined to Latin-American Spanish:

<i>¿Usted cree que esto ayude?</i> (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue; incredulous tone)	Do you really think that this helps?
<i>¿Usted cree que yo quiera lastimar a esta niña preciosa?</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	Do you really think I want to hurt this lovely girl?

In Spain the indicative (*ayuda, quiero*) would have been used.

16.11.2 Subjunctive after *comprender/entender que*, *explicar que*

All of these verbs take the subjunctive when they are negated, e.g. *no entiendo que ahora me pregunten sobre la ponencia* (interview in *El País*, Sp.) 'I don't understand why people are asking me now about the written statement/paper'.

Comprender and *entender* take the subjunctive when they mean 'to sympathize with':

<i>Yo comprendo que los concejales defendieran sus posiciones dentro del partido</i> (Interview in <i>Cambio16</i> , Sp.; or <i>defendiesen</i>)	I understand the councillors/US councilors defending their positions inside the party
---	---

Explicar usually takes the indicative when it really means 'to state' or 'to say': *Manuel explicó que había estado enfermo* 'Manuel explained that he had been ill'. But the subjunctive is used when the verb means 'gives the reason why': *esto explica que las mutaciones de la literatura estén estrechamente ligadas a las innovaciones técnicas* 'this explains how changes in literature are intimately linked to technical innovations'.

16.11.3 Subjunctive after *esperar que*

Esperar 'to hope' may be followed by the subjunctive, by the future indicative, by the indicative of *ir a*, or by the conditional. The subjunctive is by far the commoner form when the verb means 'to hope'. Use of the indicative of these tenses suggests the meaning 'to expect':

<i>Espero que le convenzas / convencerás</i>	I hope/expect you'll convince him
<i>...con la esperanza de que ella haría lo mismo</i> (C. Fuentes, Mex.)	...in the hope that she'd do the same
<i>Por un momento la invadió la esperanza de que su marido no habitara ya el reino de los vivos</i> (S. Pitol, Mex., or <i>habitase</i>)	For a moment she was overcome by (lit. 'invaded by') the hope that her husband no longer dwelt in the realm of the living
<i>Espero que me vas a pagar</i>	I hope you're going to pay me

(i) *Esperar a que* and *aguardar a que* 'to wait for...' take the subjunctive: *yo estaba esperando / aguardando a que fuera / fuese otro el que lo hiciera / hiciese* 'I was waiting for someone else to do it'.

(ii) *No esperar que* always takes the subjunctive: *yo no esperaba que me fuera a escribir* 'I didn't expect (s)he was going to write to me'.

16.12 The subjunctive after subordinators

16.12.1 Introductory

Subordinators are words like 'before', 'after', 'provided that', 'because', 'when', 'unless', which introduce subordinate clauses. The general rule governing the use of the subjunctive after subordinators is: if the event referred to has or had occurred, the verb is in the indicative; if the event has or had not yet occurred, the verb is in the subjunctive. Example:

<i>Te lo di cuando llegaste</i>	I gave it to you when you arrived
<i>Te lo daré cuando llegues</i>	I'll give it to you when you arrive
<i>Yo iba a dártelo cuando llegaras / llegases</i>	I was going to give it to you when you arrived

It follows from this that a few subordinators, e.g. *antes de que* 'before', *para que / a que* 'in order that', always take the subjunctive because they must refer to something that has or had not yet happened. In some cases, e.g. *puesto que* 'since' (i.e. 'because'), *debido a que* 'due to the fact that', the event referred to has obviously

already happened, so the indicative is obligatory (these subordinators are also discussed in Chapter 33). But in most cases use of the subjunctive depends on the rule given above.

As in English, the subordinate clause may precede or follow the main clause: *después de que llegaron, empezamos a hablar / empezamos a hablar después de que llegaron* 'after they arrived we started talking' / 'we started talking after they arrived'.

NB: The rules given in this section do not refer to question-words like *cuándo, dónde, cómo*, which are not subordinating conjunctions. In direct and indirect questions they are followed by the indicative: *¿sabes cuándo llega?* 'do you know when (s)he's coming?', *¿te acordarás de dónde lo has/habrás dejado?* 'will you remember where you've left it?', *dudo que sepa cómo se dice* 'I doubt (s)he knows how to say it'. Note that *depende* and *según* are followed by non-interrogative forms: *depende de cuando lleguen* 'it depends when they arrive', *según quien sea* 'according to who it is'.

16.12.2 Use of the infinitive after subordinators (see also 18.3)

The infinitive is used after certain subordinators when both verbs have the same subject. Compare *entré sin verla* 'I came in without seeing her' (same subject 'I') and *entré sin que ella me viera / viese* 'I came in without her seeing me' (different subjects). This is possible with the following subordinators:

(a) All those that include the word *de*, e.g. *con tal de que* 'provided that', *antes de que*, 'before', *después de que* 'after', *bajo la condición de que* 'on condition that', *con el objeto de que / a fin de que* 'with the intention of', *a cambio de que* 'in return for', *a pesar de que* 'despite', *en caso de que* 'in the event of', *el hecho de que* 'the fact that', etc. The *que* is dropped before the infinitive:

<i>Lo haré antes de salir</i>	I'll do it before I going out
<i>Lo escribió con el objeto de criticar a sus colegas</i>	(S)he wrote it with the intention of criticizing his/her colleagues
<i>El hecho de saber cuatro lenguas me ayuda</i>	The fact of knowing four languages helps me

NB: Exception: *en vista de que* 'in view of the fact that', always takes an indicative finite verb, never an infinitive.

(b) *Sin que* 'without', *para que / porque / a que* 'in order to', *nada más* 'as soon as', *hasta que* 'until'. The *que* is dropped before an infinitive. Compare: *entré sin hacer ruido* 'I came in without making any noise', *entré sin que me viera / viese* 'I came in without him/her seeing me', *fue al dentista a que le sacara / sacase una muela* 'she went to the dentist for him to take one of her teeth out' and *fui al supermercado a comprar pan* 'I went to the supermarket to buy bread'. Compare also *cerré los ojos por no llorar* 'I shut my eyes so as not to cry', *estábamos cruzando la Plaza de San Martín para tomar el colectivo* (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe., dialogue) 'we were crossing San Martín square in order to get the bus'.

In the case of the other subordinators, e.g. *cuando, mientras que* 'while', *en cuanto / una vez que* 'as soon as', a subordinate finite verb cannot be replaced by an infinitive: *te lo diré cuando te vea* 'I'll tell you when I see you', never **te lo diré cuando verte*, which is not Spanish.

(i) Some of these subordinators that allow the infinitive construction are sometimes found with an infinitive in very informal speech even when the subjects are not the same, as in *¿cómprame unas postales para mandárselas yo a mi madre* for *cómprame unas postales para que yo se las mande a mi madre* 'buy me some postcards for me to send to my mother'. But this is banned from careful language and should be avoided by foreigners.

16.12.3 Subjunctive with subordinators of purpose

(a) Phrases meaning 'in order to' such as *a fin de que, para que / porque, con el objeto de que, con el propósito de que, con la intención de que* and *a que* (which also has other meanings, e.g. *a que sí* 'I bet it's true'), are always followed by a subjunctive because they must point to an event that has or had not yet happened. (When the subjects of the verbs are identical the infinitive is used, e.g. *lo hice para fastidiarte* 'I did it to annoy you'; see 16.12.2b):

<i>Afuera, para que la solidaridad se sienta, hay que reunir un millar de personas</i> (M. Benedetti, Ur., dialogue)	Outside, so that people should sense the (level of) solidarity, one ought to assemble about a thousand people
<i>Me callé porque / para que no me acusaran / acusasen de metomentodo</i>	I kept silent so that they wouldn't accuse me of interfering
<i>He escrito una circular a fin de que se enteren todos</i>	I've written a circular so that everybody knows about it

For the difference between *por* and *para* when both mean 'in order to', see 34.14.7.

(b) A number of phrases express negative intention or avoidance, i.e. 'so that not', and always take the subjunctive. They are awkward to translate now that our word 'lest' has become obsolete. These phrases do not allow replacement of the subjunctive by an infinitive:

<i>Trabaja más, no sea que te despidan</i>	Work harder so that they don't (lit. 'lest they') fire you
<i>Me subí al coche en tres minutos no se me fuera a arrepentir de la invitación</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	I got into the car within three minutes lest he regretted/so that he wouldn't regret the invitation
<i>No corras tanto, no vaya a darte un infarto</i>	Don't hurry (lit. 'run') so much—you don't want to give yourself a heart attack
<i>Devuélvele el dinero, no ocurra que nos demande</i>	Give her/him back the money. We don't want her/him to sue us

16.12.4 Subjunctive with subordinators of cause and consequence

These do not allow replacement of the finite verb by an infinitive.

(a) The following are always followed by the indicative:

<i>pues</i> because (see 33.5.3)	<i>ya que</i> since/seeing that	<i>debido a que</i> due to the fact that
<i>puesto que</i> since	<i>en vista de que</i> seeing that	

Como, when it means 'since'/'because', is also usually followed by the indicative and is discussed in detail at 33.5.2. When followed by the subjunctive *como* means 'if' and is discussed at 25.8.2. For the use of *como* in sentences like *hazlo como quieras* 'do it as/how you like', see 16.12.5b. *Cómo* means 'how' in direct and indirect questions, and is best thought of as a different word: see 24.7.

<i>Invítame ya que / puesto que tienes tanto dinero / Como tienes tanto dinero me puedes invitar</i> (in this meaning <i>como</i> must appear at the head of the clause; see 33.5.2)	Since you have so much money you can pay for me
--	---

(b) *Porque* is usually followed by an indicative but requires the subjunctive when it means 'just because'/'only because' or 'not because' and the main verb is negated. Sometimes it can be preceded by *sólo / solo*:

<i>No lo hago porque tú lo digas</i>	I'm not doing it just because <i>you</i> say so
<i>Que nadie venga a nosotros porque piense que va a obtener enchufes (Cambio16, Sp.)</i>	Let no one come to us (just) because they think that they'll get special favo(u)rs

NB: *El enchufe*, literally 'plug', is used in Spain to mean 'connections': *está muy enchufado* 'he's well-connected', *el enchufismo* 'the old-boy network', 'the inside-favours system'; also *el amiguismo*.

But:

<i>No lo hago porque tú lo dices</i>	I won't do it because you say so/said I should
<i>No lo hago sólo/solo porque tú lo dices</i>	I'm doing it, but not simply because you're telling me to
<i>No salgo contigo sólo/solo porque tienes un Ferrari</i>	The fact that you have a Ferrari isn't the only reason I go out with you

Compare also: *sólo/solo porque tengas un Ferrari no voy a salir contigo* 'the fact that you have a Ferrari isn't a good enough reason for me to go out with you'.

The subjunctive is used after *bien porque... o/ya porque... o, fuera porque... fuera porque* meaning 'whether... or':

<i>Bien/ya porque tuviera algo que hacer o porque estuviera cansado, el caso es que no estuvo muy amable con nosotros... ya fuese para apuntalar al Gobierno, ya para atacarlo (Abc Color, Par.)</i>	Whether he had something to do or whether he was tired, the fact is that he wasn't very kind to us... whether in order to support the government, or to attack it
<i>Fuera porque no sea costumbre de los arrabales estadounidenses, fuera porque a nadie le interesara demasiado su vida... (S. Puértolas, Sp.; bien porque... o porque could have been used)</i>	Whether because it wasn't usual in the suburbs in the USA, or because her life didn't interest people too much...

(i) If *porque* means *para que* (as it does after verbs like *esforzarse porque* 'to make an effort in order that...'), the verb is always subjunctive: *nos esforzamos porque/para que todos tengan agua limpia* 'we're making an effort to ensure that everyone has clean water', *estoy un tanto apurado y como impaciente porque pase el trago* 'I'm a bit worried and rather impatient for this unpleasantness to pass'.

(ii) *No porque...* 'not because' always take the subjunctive: *me perdí y llegué tarde. No porque yo me oriente mal, sino porque iba un poco sonada* (C. Martin Gaité, Sp.) 'I lost my way and was late. Not because I have no sense of direction but because I was a bit high/stoned'.

(c) *De ahí que* 'hence the fact that' is almost always followed by a subjunctive:

<i>De ahí que el Papa haya incluso presionado al nuevo Gobierno (El País, Sp.)</i>	This is why the Pope has even put pressure on the new Government
<i>De ahí que visitar nuestra casa se convirtiese de vez en cuando en motivo de excursión (L. Goytisolo, Sp.)</i>	This is why visiting our house occasionally became the pretext for an excursion

(d) *Dado que* takes the indicative if it means 'given that', the subjunctive if it means 'if it is the case that':

<i>dado que él quiera hacerlo</i>	if it's the case that he wants to do it...
<i>dado que es así...</i>	given that this is the case...

16.12.5 Subjunctive with subordinators of result, aim and manner

The basic rule is that these take the indicative when they imply result and the subjunctive when they refer to an aim or intention. They do not allow replacement of the finite verb by an infinitive.

(a) When they indicate the result of an action the following take the indicative:

<i>así que so</i> (= 'as a result')	<i>de manera que</i> in such a way that/so
<i>conque so</i> (esp. in questions, e.g. <i>¿conque lo has hecho tú?</i> 'so it was you that did it?')	<i>de suerte que</i> in such a way that/so
<i>de modo que</i> in such a way that/so	<i>de forma que</i> in such a way that/so
<i>Tú tienes la culpa, de modo que/así que/conque no te puedes quejar</i>	You're to blame, so you can't complain
<i>Lo hicieron en silencio de modo/forma/manera que no se enteró el portero</i>	They did it in silence so (as a result) the doorman didn't find out
<i>Se han dispuesto helicópteros que sobrevuelen la zona, de manera que podría ser factible hacerlo por esa vía (La Época, Ch.)</i>	Helicopters have been ordered to overfly the area, so it could be feasible to do it (i.e. 'enter the area') using that route

De modo que/de manera que/de forma que may also indicate aim or purpose, in which case they take the subjunctive. Unfortunately some varieties of English, especially British, no longer always mark the difference between result and aim in this kind of sentence, so *lo hizo de modo que nadie se enteró* and *lo hizo de modo que nadie se enterase/enterara* may both be translated '(s)he did it so no one realized', despite the fact that in Spanish the indicative implies that no one realized and the subjunctive that (s)he *hoped* that no one would. It seems that North Americans usually differentiate 'he did it so no one realized' (indicative) and 'he did it so no one would realize' (subjunctive), so they should know when to use the subjunctive:

<i>Compórtate de modo/manera que no sospeche</i>	Behave so as to avoid him/her suspecting
<i>Entró silenciosamente de modo/manera que yo no la oyera/oyese</i>	She came in quietly so that I wouldn't hear her
<i>Entró silenciosamente de modo/manera que no la oí</i>	(S)he came in quietly so (i.e. 'and') I didn't hear her
<i>—Está sobreactuando —me dijo a mí en el pasillo, de forma que nuestra madre no le pudiera oír (S. Puértolas, Sp.)</i>	'She's overacting,' he said to me in the corridor so that our mother wouldn't hear him

(b) *Como* requires the subjunctive when it refers to an action which is or was still in the future:

<i>Hazlo como quieras</i>	Do it however you like
<i>Lo hizo como quiso</i>	(S)he did it the way (s)he wanted
<i>Te dije que podías venir como quisieras/quisieses</i>	I told you could come any way you liked

In literary styles, *como* is occasionally found with the *-se* or *-ra* forms when it refers to a past action: *como se diese/diera cuenta de que...* 'as/when he realized that...'

For *como* + subjunctive meaning 'if' see 25.8.2; for *como* meaning 'as' (i.e. 'seeing that') see 33.5.2.

(c) *Cual si* (literary: see 24.3.1), *como si* 'as if', and *sin que* 'without' always take the subjunctive (but for *como si* = 'just as if'/'it's just the same as when', see note (ii)):

<i>Me miró como si no me viera/viese</i>	(S)he looked at me as if (s)he couldn't see me
<i>Las trató con gran familiaridad, como si las viera todos los días</i> (C. Fuentes, Mex.)	He treated them very familiarly, just as if he saw them every day
<i>Debes hacerlo sin que yo tenga que decírtelo</i>	You must do it without my having to tell you

(i) *Comme si* takes the indicative in French: *comme si elle avait quinze ans* = *como si tuviera quince años* 'as if she was fifteen years old'.

(ii) *Hacer como si* 'to act as if' and *ser como si* 'to be as if...' take the indicative when *como si* means the same as *como cuando*. . . '...the same as when. . .': *hicieron como si no se enteraban* (S. Puértolas, Sp.) 'they acted as if they didn't understand', *es como si/como cuando no puedes respirar y te asustas* 'it's the same as when you can't breathe and you get scared', *el niño pasa de todo, como si le llevo a una manifestación en favor del divorcio o contra los bocadillos de calamares* (M. Vázquez Montalbán, Sp., dialogue) 'my little boy doesn't worry about a thing: it's the same whether I take him on a demonstration in support of divorce or against squid sandwiches'.

Como si. . . is also found colloquially in Spain with the indicative to mean 'even if': —*No iré hasta las ocho.* —*Como si no vienes, a mí me da igual* (Spain, colloquial) "I won't come until eight o'clock." "Even if you don't come it's the same to me".

(iii) *Tan...como que...* 'such...as that...' takes the subjunctive: *dos héroes como nosotros no pueden retroceder por cosas tan sin importancia como que le coma a uno un gigante* (children's story book, Sp.) 'two heroes like us can't turn back because of such unimportant things as being eaten by a giant' (lit. 'as that a giant eats one').

(iv) *Como que*, which can also mean 'as if', takes the indicative: *últimamente lo he venido notando preocupado, como que desea comunicarme algo* (J. J. Arreola, Mex., dialogue) 'lately I've been noticing that he's preoccupied, as if he wanted to tell me something'.

16.12.6 Subjunctive with subordinators of possibility (words meaning 'perhaps' are discussed at 16.3.2.)

En caso de que and *en el caso de que* call for the subjunctive:

<i>En caso de que no esté, llámame</i>	If (s)he's not in call me
<i>Esperaremos dos minutos para darle tiempo de ponerse cómodo, en el caso de que se esté usted duchando</i> (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe.)	We'll wait two minutes for you to make yourself comfortable if it should happen that you're having a shower
<i>Las puse en la maleta en caso de que las necesitaras/necesitases</i>	I put them in the suitcase in case you needed them

But *por si* usually (but not invariably) takes the indicative, although *por si acaso* may take either mood, the subjunctive making the possibility less likely:

<i>Llévate el paraguas por si (acaso) llueve/lloviera/lloviese</i>	Take the umbrella in case it rains
<i>Siempre estaba haciendo favores a la gente por si acaso a alguien se le ocurría devolvérselos</i> (S. Puértolas, Sp.)	She was always doing people favo(u)r(s) in case someone thought of repaying them
<i>Está apuntando hacia la otra acera, por si hay un ataque por retaguardia</i> (J. Ibarguengoitia, Mex., dialogue)	He's aiming at the other pavement/sidewalk in case there's an attack from the rear
<i>Por si fuera poco...</i> (set phrase)	As if that wasn't enough...
<i>Conviene que vayas enterado por si alguien te pidiera una aclaración</i> (E. Mendoza, Sp., or <i>pidiese</i>)	It would be best if you were informed (lit 'went informed') in case anyone asks you for an explanation

Suponiendo que 'supposing that' requires the subjunctive: *suponiendo que venga, ¿le/llo vas a dejar entrar?* 'supposing he comes, are you going to let him in?'

16.12.7 Subjunctive with subordinators of time

These include such words and phrases as the following:

<i>a medida que/según/ conforme as</i>	<i>después (de) que</i> after	<i>mientras que</i> as
<i>antes (de) que</i> before	<i>en cuanto/nada más/apenas/ tan pronto como/una vez que/nomás que</i> (Lat. Am.)	long as
<i>cuando</i> when	as soon as	<i>siempre que</i> every time
<i>desde que</i> since	<i>hasta que</i> until	

After subordinators of time the subordinate verb is in the subjunctive when its action is or was still in the future. Students of French and Italian must not use the future tense after these subordinators: compare *je lui donnerai son livre quand il arrivera*, *gli darò il suo libro quando arriverà* and *le daré su libro cuando llegue* 'I'll give him his book when he arrives':

<i>Llegamos antes de que empezara/empezase a nevar</i> (for <i>antes de que</i> see note ii)	We arrived before it started snowing
<i>No sea muy dura con su empleada, después que se haya tranquilizado</i> (S. Vodanovic, Ch., dialogue. Spain <i>después de que</i> . . .)	Don't be very hard on your maid after she's calmed down (or 'after you've calmed down')
<i>Me saludará cuando llegue</i>	(S)he'll greet me when I arrive/(s)he arrives
<i>Me saluda cuando llega</i>	(S)he greets me when (s)he arrives (habitual)
<i>Tú conoces a mi prima. Cuando venga le diré que te lo cuente</i> (A. Arrafut, Cu., dialogue)	You know my cousin. When she comes I'll tell her to tell you about it
<i>Iban a cenar cuando llegaron/llegasen los demás</i>	They were going to have supper when the rest arrived (i.e. they had not yet arrived)
<i>Las ideas se irán haciendo más y más claras en la medida en que nos aventuremos más y más por la senda que iremos construyendo</i> (El País, sp.)	The ideas will get progressively clearer as we venture further along the path we will be building
<i>Me doy cuenta, a medida que Rosita pasa mis notas a máquina, de que he reunido cerca de doscientas páginas</i> (C. Fuentes, Mex.)	I realize, as Rosita types out my notes, that I've assembled more than 200 sheets of paper
<i>tan pronto como acabe la huelga. . .</i>	as soon as the strike is over...
<i>tan pronto como acabó la huelga. . .</i>	as soon as the strike was over...

<i>En cuanto pueda me compraré un reloj</i> (M. Benedetti, Ur., dialogue)	As soon as I can, I'll buy a watch
<i>Nomás que oscurezca te vas por la carretera</i> (J. Ibarra, Mex., dialogue; Sp. en cuanto oscurezca... For <i>nomás</i> see 23.2.5)	As soon as it gets dark you go down the road
<i>Apenas pueda, te llamo</i> (J. Asís, Arg. <i>Apenas</i> is discussed more fully at 23.5.7. See also note i)	As soon as I can, I'll ring you
<i>Hasta que no llegue a ser ministro no se quedará contento</i>	He won't be satisfied until he becomes a Minister
<i>Hasta que no llegó a ser ministro no se quedó contento</i>	He wasn't satisfied until he became a Minister
<i>Siempre que la vea se lo diré</i>	I'll tell her every time I see her

(i) Of these subordinators of time, only *antes de*, *después de*, *hasta* and *nada más* (and in Latin America *nomás*) can take an infinitive construction when the subjects of both verbs are identical: *me fui después de comer* 'I went after I had eaten', *hazlo antes de acostarte* 'do it before you go to bed', *trabajó hasta no poder más* '(s)he worked until (s)he could work no longer', *la llamaré nada más llegar a casa* 'I'll call her as soon as I get home'. In the case of *nada más*, the subjects do not need to be identical: *salí nada más entrar ella* 'I left as soon as she came in'. *Apenas* is heard with the infinitive in very informal speech when the subjects are identical, although this is stigmatized: *?lo hice apenas llegar a casa* (good Spanish *lo hice apenas llegué a casa*) 'I did it as soon as I got home'. The rest allow only a finite verb, indicative or subjunctive according to the rule given.

(ii) *Antes de que* is always followed by the subjunctive because it must refer to a future event. Both *antes de que* and *antes que* are correct, the former being more common in Spain. *Antes que* also means 'rather than' and must not be confused with *antes (de) que* 'before': *cualquier cosa antes que casarse* 'anything rather than get married'.

(iii) *Después (de) que* 'after' and similar phrases, e.g. *a los pocos días de que*, 'a few days after', *desde que* 'since', *luego de que* 'after', always take the subjunctive when they refer to an action still in the future. If they refer to a past action they should logically take the indicative, but in written Spanish the *-ra* and *-se* forms are quite common: see 14.10.3. *Después que* for *después de que* is quite common in Latin America.

(iv) *Mientras* 'as long as'/'while' is variable with respect to the subjunctive. When it means 'on condition that'/'provided that', the subjunctive is obligatory: *no irá a la cárcel mientras no robe* '(s)he won't go to prison provided/as long as (s)he doesn't steal anything'. When it refers to simultaneous events in the past or the present, or to habitual events, the indicative is used: *ayer me arreglé el abrigo mientras oía la radio* 'yesterday I mended my coat while I listened to the radio', *siempre pongo la televisión mientras como* 'I always switch the television on while I eat'. When it refers to simultaneous actions in the future the subjunctive or indicative can be used: *mañana puedes hacer la comida mientras yo arreglo/arregle la casa* 'tomorrow you can do the cooking while I tidy the house'.

In all the above contexts *mientras que* may be heard instead of *mientras*, but students are advised to use *mientras* alone (see Seco, 1998, 296). However, when

contrast is implied (i.e. when it means 'on the other hand'), the *que* is usual: *él es inaguantable mientras que ella es muy simpática* 'he's unbearable while she's very nice'.

(v) *Nada más* is followed by an indicative when it means *sólo*: *sólo/nada más voy un momento a comprar el periódico* 'I'm just going out for a moment to buy a newspaper'.

16.12.8 Subjunctive with subordinators of condition and exception

They all take the subjunctive. (For *si* 'if' and *como* when it means 'if' see 25.8.1 and 25.8.2.) Those that include the word *de*, e.g. *con tal de...*, are used with the infinitive when the subject of both verbs is identical, as explained at 16.12.2, e.g. *me lo llevaré a condición de no tener que leerlo* 'I'll take it on condition that I don't have to read it'.

(a) Condition: the following mean 'provided that', 'on condition that':

<i>con tal (de) que</i>	<i>a condición de que</i>	<i>a cambio de que</i>
<i>siempre que</i> (also 'whenever'. See 16.13.6 ii)	<i>con la condición de que</i>	(also 'in return for')
<i>siempre y cuando</i> (emphatic)	<i>bajo (la) condición de que</i>	

<i>El Gobierno está dispuesto a negociar siempre que/siempre y cuando/con tal (de) que/a condición de que sean razonables</i>	The Government is ready to negotiate provided they are reasonable
<i>...sin la condición previa de que se anule el contrato...</i> (El País, Sp.)	...without the precondition that the contract should be cancelled...
<i>...siempre que su muerte se debiera a causas naturales</i> (L. Sepúlveda, Ch., dialogue)	...provided his death was due to natural causes
<i>Añadió cincuenta mil pesetas a la minuta a cambio de que yo hiciera esta llamada telefónica</i> (M. Vázquez Montalbán, Sp.)	He added fifty thousand pesetas to my professional fees in return for my making this telephone call

(b) Exception (occasionally followed by the indicative in the cases discussed in note i). The infinitive cannot be used with these subordinators:

<i>a no ser que</i> unless	<i>a menos que</i> unless	<i>como no (sea que)</i> unless
<i>salvo que</i> unless/save that	<i>fuera de que</i> (less common) unless	(in suggestions)
<i>excepto que</i> unless/except that		<i>como no fuera que</i> unless

<i>Me casaré contigo a no ser que/salvo que/como no sea que/a menos que hayas cambiado de idea</i>	I'll marry you unless you've changed your mind
<i>Íbamos de vacaciones en agosto salvo/a no ser que/como no fuera que yo estuviera/estuviese muy ocupado</i>	We took our holidays/vacation in August unless I was very busy
<i>No sé qué sugerir. Como no (sea que) vayamos al teatro...</i>	I don't know what to suggest, unless we go to the theatre

Excepto/salvo que and *con la salvedad de que* are followed by the indicative when they mean 'except for the fact that': *ella hablaba mejor, excepto que/salvo que/con la salvedad de que pronunciaba mal las eñes* 'she spoke better/best, except (for the fact) that she pronounced the eñes badly'.

16.12.9 Subjunctive with subordinators of concession

There are several ways of saying 'although', of which *aunque* is the most common:

<i>aunque</i> <i>así</i>	<i>siquiera</i> <i>aun cuando</i>	<i>si bien</i> <i>y eso que</i>
-----------------------------	--------------------------------------	------------------------------------

Words meaning 'despite the fact that' have a similar meaning:

<i>a pesar de que</i>	<i>pese a que</i> (literary)	<i>a despecho de que</i> (literary)
-----------------------	------------------------------	-------------------------------------

With the exception of *si bien que* and *y eso que*, which are always used with the indicative (see 33.6), these require the subjunctive if they point to an event which is or was still in the future. *Así* always requires the subjunctive when it means 'although'. Those that contain the word *de* may be constructed with an infinitive in the circumstances described at 16.12.2:

<i>Es un valiente, no lo confesará así/aunque le maten</i>	He's a brave man, he won't admit it even if they kill him
<i>No lo confesó aunque le ofrecieron dinero</i>	(S)he didn't confess although they offered him/her money
<i>No lo confesaría aunque le/lo mataran/matasen</i>	(S)he wouldn't confess it even if they killed him
<i>A estas alturas de la campaña nadie aguanta un rollo de estos así le den veinte duros</i> (M. Delibes, Sp., dialogue)	At this stage in the [election] campaign no one's going to put up with a lot of old nonsense like that even if they give them 100 pesetas
<i>...tienen que cumplir, así caminen bajo la lluvia</i> (La Jornada, Mex.)	They have to fulfil/US fulfill their mission, even if they walk in the rain
<i>Vendieron la finca, a pesar de que el abuelo se oponía</i>	They sold the estate, despite the fact that grandfather opposed it
<i>¿A pesar de que tus padres se opongan?</i> (A. Buero Vallejo, Sp., dialogue)	Even though your parents will/may be against it?
<i>...pese a que muchos de quienes iniciaron la tarea ya no están ahora</i> (Abc Color, Par.)	...despite the fact that many who began the task are no longer here now

(i) The subjunctive may be used with *aunque* to refer to past or habitual events. In this case it strengthens the concession, making it an equivalent to 'even though': *jamás culparé a Octavia, aunque lo haya intentado alguna vez* (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe., dialogue) 'I'll never blame Octavia, even though I may have tried to sometimes', *aunque no te gusten las películas ésta/esta te va a gustar* 'even though you don't like films you'll like this one', *aunque sea español no me gustan los toros* 'even though I'm Spanish I don't like bullfights'.

(ii) When *siquiera* is used to mean 'although' (literary style) it requires the subjunctive: *...dos fuentes independientes... a las que se aludirá, siquiera sea vagamente* (Libro de estilo de El País, Sp.) '...two independent sources, which will be mentioned, even if in vague terms'.

16.13 Translating 'whether... or', 'however', 'whatever', 'whoever', 'whichever' and 'the more... the more...'

The phrases discussed in this section are often translated by the *forma reduplicativa*, i.e. constructions in which a subjunctive verb is repeated, as in *pase lo que pase* 'whatever happens', *no hay salida para ti, hagas lo que hagas, vayas a donde vayas* (C. Fuentes, Mex., dialogue) 'there's no way out for you, whatever you do, wherever you go'. After a negative the second verb is sometimes omitted: *quieras o no* (*quieras*) 'whether you want to or not'.

16.13.1 'Whether... or'

The *forma reduplicativa* is used:

Lo único que tengo que hacer es informar sobre unos hechos escuetos, que son los que son, guste o disguste a unos u otros (El Mundo, Sp.)
Escuchaba las conversaciones con sus amigas, repararan o no repararan en mí (S. Puértolas, Sp.)

The only thing I have to do is to inform about certain simple facts, which are what they are whether certain people like it or not
I listened to her (lit. 'the') conversations with her women friends, whether they noticed me or not

The second verb is sometimes replaced by *hacer* or, in negative phrases, omitted altogether:

trabaje en una red, o lo haga desde un PC en casa... (Spanish computer manual)
Estuviese o no enfermo, lo cierto es que no vino al trabajo
Estaré de tu parte, tengas razón o no (la tengas)

whether you work on a network or from a PC at home...
Whether he was ill/US sick or not, the fact is he didn't come to work
I'll be on your side, whether you're right or wrong

16.13.2 'However much/little...', etc.

Por mucho que/por más que + verb, *por mucho* + noun + verb, *por* (*muy*) + adjective + verb. Use of the subjunctive follows the usual rule: if the event referred to is or was a reality, the indicative is used: *por mucho que/más que se lo dijo, no lo hizo* '(s)he didn't do it however much she asked him/her', but *por mucho que se lo digas, no lo hará* '(s)he won't do it however much you ask him/her'. Further examples:

Por mucho calor que haga, no abrirán la ventana (the heat is still in the future)
Por más que las esperanzas de Eulalia y su padre crecían, no lograban contagiar a Andrés (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue; real event)
Por más que llueva no se le van a resucitar los novillos muertos (M. Puig, Arg.)

However hot it gets, they won't open the window
However much Eulalia's and her father's hopes grew, they didn't manage to inspire (lit. 'infect') Andrés
However much it rains, his dead steers won't come back to life

(i) The subjunctive may be used even for actions that are realities; the force of the concession is then stronger: *por mucho que/más que se lo dijera, no lo hacía* 'however often (s)he told him/her, (s)he didn't do it', *en Mendoza a esa hora cae el frío, por más sol que haya habido durante el día* (M. Puig, Arg., dialogue; subjunctive, because it happens whether there was sun or not) 'the cold sets in at that time in Mendoza, however sunny it may have been during the day'.

(ii) To translate 'however it is', 'however it was', etc., either the *forma reduplicativa* is used or *como quiera que* + subjunctive, e.g. *...pero como quiera que sea, yo he comprado...una media docena por lo menos* (J. J. Arreola, Mex.) 'but however it is/but all the same, I've bought at least a half a dozen', or *...sea como sea...*

16.13.3 'The more... the more', 'the less... the less'

Cuanto/a/os/as más... más and *cuanto/a/os/as menos... menos* are the standard formulas. The general rule is applied: if the event is a reality (i.e. has occurred or is occurring) the indicative is used:

Cuanto más comas más querrás
 Cuanto más comías, más querías
 Yo sabía que cuanto más bebiera/bebiese
 más me emborracharía
 Cuanto menos digas, menos se inquietarán

The more you eat the more you'll want
 The more you ate the more you wanted
 I knew that the more I drank, the
 drunker I would get
 The less you say, the less they'll worry

For the use of *mientras* instead of *cuanto* in this construction, and, in parts of Latin America (e.g. Mexico), of *entre*, instead of *cuanto*, see 5.11.

16.13.4 'Whatever'

The *forma reduplicativa* is normally used:

digan lo que digan
 hagan lo que hagan
 Den lo que den, siempre vamos al
 Metropolitan (E. Poniatowska,
 Mex., dialogue)
 Cómpralo sea como sea

whatever they say
 whatever you do
 Whatever's on (lit. 'whatever they
 give'), we always go to the
 Metropolitan cinema
 'Buy it whatever it looks like' or 'buy it
 whatever the cost'
 (S)he said she'd buy it whatever it was
 like

Dijo que lo compraría fuera como
 fuera/fuese como fuese

Comoquiera que sea and *comoquiera que fuera* could be used in the last two examples, but they are less usual. *Como quiera* is a less frequently seen alternative spelling.

Lo que + the subjunctive may also be used in some contexts:

Aquella novela o lo que quiera que fuese era
 muy difícilmente publicable (J. Marías, Sp.) That novel, or whatever it was,
 very unlikely to be publishable
 ...por temor, por pereza o por lo que sea... ..because of fear, laziness, or
 (S. Puértolas, Sp.) whatever...

(i) The English 'whatever' may mean 'whichever', in which case it is best translated by an appropriate tense of *sea cual sea*. . . . This construction is preferred in written and spoken language to the rather stilted *cualquiera que* and *comoquiera que*: *las camelias, cualquiera que/sea cual sea su color, son bonitas* 'camellias are pretty whatever their colo(u)r'. (For a general discussion of *cualquiera* see 9.8.)

(ii) When 'whatever' means 'everything' it will usually be translated by *todo lo que* or *cuanto*: *trae todo lo que puedas* 'bring whatever/everything you can', *aprenderé todo lo que/cuanto pueda* 'I'll learn whatever/everything I can'.

16.13.5 'Whichever'

When this word means 'which', 'whichever one' or 'the one that' it is usually translated by *que* or *el que* + subjunctive (for more details on the subjunctive in relative clauses, see 16.14):

Escoge la maceta que más te guste Choose whichever flowerpot you like
 most
 —¿Cuál me llevo? —El que usted quiera 'Which should I take?' 'Whichever (one)
 you like'

16.13.6 'Whenever'

Cuando with the subjunctive when the event referred to is or was still in the future, and the indicative in all other cases:

Vienen cuando quieren
 Vendrán cuando quieran
 Dijeron que vendrían cuando
 quisieran/quisiesen

They come whenever they like
 They'll come whenever they like
 They said they'd come when they
 wanted to

(i) *Cuando quiera que* is old-fashioned for *cuando*, but it is used as an occasional literary alternative for *siempre que*: *...cuando quiera que en la vida española se ponen tensos los ánimos...* (R. Pérez de Ayala, Sp., quoted Seco, 1998, 139) '...whenever passions are stirred in Spanish life...'

(ii) *Siempre que*, as well as meaning 'provided that' (see 16.12.8) may also mean 'whenever'; *cada vez que* can also mean the same thing: *yo la saludaba siempre que/cada vez que la veía* 'I said hello to her whenever I saw her'. However, when used with the subjunctive *siempre que* is assumed to mean 'provided that', so an alternative should be used for 'whenever': *no se te olvide saludarla cada vez que la veas* (future reference) 'don't forget to say hello to her whenever you see her'.

16.13.7 'Anyone who...', 'whoever...'

Cualquiera que 'anyone who... ' cannot be replaced by the *forma reduplicativa*:

Cualquiera que te vea pensaré que vas a una fiesta Anyone who sees you will think
 you're going to a party

If 'anyone who...' means 'those who...', 'people who...', a nominalizer (*el/la/los/las que* or *quien/quienes*) with the subjunctive is used: *el que/quien se crea eso está loco* 'anyone who believes that is mad'. *Quienquiera...* is also found. Seco (1998), 378, says that it is exclusively literary in Spain, but the following example suggests that it survives colloquially elsewhere: *quienquiera se crea eso está loco* (G. Cabrera Infante, Cu., dialogue; Spain *el que crea...* or *quien crea...*).

However, *quienquiera que sea* 'whoever it is' seems to alternate freely with the *forma reduplicativa*: *no abras la puerta, sea quien sea/quienquiera que sea* 'don't open the door whoever it is', *íntimo amigo del Jefe del Gobierno, fuera el que fuese* (M. Vázquez Montalbán, Sp., or *quienquiera que fuera/fuese*) 'a close friend of the Prime Minister, whoever he happened to be'.

16.13.8 'Wherever'

Dondequiera or *forma reduplicativa*:

Dondequiera que voy/Vaya donde vaya me Wherever I go I meet him
 lo encuentro
 Dondequiera que vaya/Vaya donde vaya me Wherever I go I'll meet him
 lo encontraré
 Dondequiera que fuese/Fuese donde fuese, me Wherever I went I met him
 lo encontraba (or fuera...)
 Estés donde estés, busca un teléfono público Wherever you are, look for a public
 (L. Sepúlveda, Ch., dialogue) phone

(i) The *que* is sometimes omitted, e.g. *dondequiera se encuentren* 'wherever they're found', but Seco (1998), 170, disapproves.

(ii) *Adondequiera* should be used when the meaning is 'wherever...to': *adondequiera que vayan* 'wherever they go (to)' or *vayan a donde vayan*. But *dondequiera que vayan* is common.

16.14 Subjunctive in relative clauses

In this section nominalizers like *el que* 'the one that', *quien* 'the one who', *aquellos que* 'those who' etc., are treated as relative pronouns. They are also discussed under Nominalizers at 36.1. See 16.13. for *cualquiera que*, *quienquiera que*, *cuandoquiera que*, *dondequiera*.

16.14.1 Subjunctive in relative clauses that refer to something not yet identified

Spanish uses the subjunctive in these cases to express a nuance that English usually ignores. Compare *los que digan eso* 'those who say that' (if anyone does) and *los que dicen eso* 'those who say that' (some do). The difference in Spanish is clear: contrast *me voy a casar con una mujer que tiene mucho dinero* 'I'm getting married to a woman who has a lot of money' (you've already met her) and *...que tenga mucho dinero* (you're still looking for her); *busco un médico que sepa acupuntura* (n.b. no personal *a*) 'I'm looking for a doctor (i.e. 'any doctor') who knows acupuntura', *conozco a un médico que sabe acupuntura* 'I know a doctor who knows acupuntura'. Further examples:

<i>Haz lo que quieras</i>	Do whatever you like
<i>Necesitamos a alguien que esté en el local</i>	We need somebody who'll be on the spot
<i>Cualquier reacción que uno pueda tener suena a sobreactuado</i> (C. Rico-Godoy, Sp.)	Any reaction one might have sounds like overacting/sounds overdone
<i>Me pregunto si hay alguien en el mundo a quien no le haya ocurrido lo mismo</i> (J. Marías, Sp.)	I wonder if there is anyone in the world to whom the same thing hasn't occurred (i.e. 'hasn't had the same thought')
<i>¿Sabes de alguien que tenga apellido en este país?</i> (E. Sabato, Arg., dialogue)	Do you know anyone in this country who has a surname (i.e. a famous name)?
<i>Dígame qué tienen que esté muy sabroso</i> (J. Ibarguengoitia, Mex., dialogue)	Tell me what you've got that tastes really good

NB: French uses the subjunctive in similar circumstances: *quiere comprar una casa que tenga piscina* = *il/elle veut acheter une maison qui ait une piscine*.

In literary styles, the subjunctive is common in relative clauses when the main clause is introduced by *como* 'like' or *como si fuera/fuese* 'as if it were...': *...como un ángel que perdiera/perdiese las alas* '...like an angel that had lost its wings', *el sol se pone súbitamente—como si fuera un interruptor que lo apagara* (J. Marías, Sp.) 'the sun sets suddenly—as if a switch had turned it off'.

16.14.2 Subjunctive in relative clauses that refer to non-existent things

If the relative clause refers to something that does not exist, the subjunctive must be used:

<i>No hay nadie que sepa tocar más de un violín a la vez</i>	There is no one who can play more than one violin at the same time
<i>Jamás la oí hablar de algo que mereciera la pena</i> (S. Puértolas, Sp., dialogue)	I never heard her talk about anything worthwhile
<i>No hay quien le entienda</i>	There's no one who can understand him/her
<i>En realidad no existen culturas "dependientes" y emancipadas ni nada que se les parezca</i> (M. Vargas Llosa, Pe.)	In reality there are no 'dependent' and emancipated cultures or anything like them
<i>¿A quiénes conoces que se vean feas esperando un hijo?</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue; <i>se vean</i> = <i>estén</i> in Spain)	What women do you know who look ugly when they're expecting a baby?

NB: The rule is similar in French: *il n'y a personne qui puisse* = *no hay nadie que pueda*.

16.14.3 Subjunctive in relative clauses when the main verb is in the future tense

The subjunctive is used in relative clauses when the main clause refers to the future:

<i>Seré yo el que tenga que solucionar mis propios problemas</i> (cf. <i>soy yo el que tengo/tiene que solucionar...</i>)	I'll be the one who has to solve my own problems
<i>No será hasta el primer Consejo de Ministros cuando el Gobierno apruebe el proyecto de ley</i> (<i>La Vanguardia</i> , Sp.; for the use of <i>cuando</i> here see 36.2.3b)	It won't be until the first Council of Ministers (Brit. 'Cabinet meeting') that the Government will approve the draft law
<i>Pero serán las investigaciones las que determinen qué fue lo que sucedió</i> (<i>El Diario de Hoy</i> , El Salvador)	But the police investigation will discover what happened

16.14.4 Subjunctive after the relatives *donde* and *cuanto* (for *dondequiera* que see 16.13.8)

The subjunctive is used if the reference is to a yet unknown or to a non-existent entity:

<i>Comeré en el pueblo donde me pare</i>	I'll eat in whichever village I stop in
<i>Comí en el pueblo donde me paré</i>	I ate in the village where I stopped
<i>Buscó una zona donde el mar llegara debilitado</i> (M. Vázquez Montalbán, Sp.)	(S)he looked for an area where the sea was coming in with less force
<i>Te daré cuanto/todo lo que me pidas</i>	I'll give you anything you ask
<i>Le di (todo) cuanto/todo lo que me pidió</i>	I gave her/him everything (s)he asked

16.14.5 Subjunctive in relative clauses after superlative expressions

The subjunctive may appear in literary styles in relative clauses following superlative statements, but it is unusual in everyday written or spoken language:

<i>El mayor incendio que jamás se ha/haya visto</i>	The greatest fire ever seen
<i>La mayor transacción con divisas fuertes que se haya hecho en el Río de la Plata</i> (E. Sabato, Arg.)	The largest hard-currency transaction ever made in the River Plate region
<i>...y el aburrimiento general más importante que haya presenciado en mi vida</i> (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe.)	...and the greatest general boredom I've ever witnessed in my life

Compare these less literary examples:

<i>Eres la chica más simpática que he conocido</i>	You're the most likeable girl I've ever met
<i>Yo debía ser el extranjero más inteligente que madame Forestier había visto en su vida</i> (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe.)	I must have been the most intelligent foreigner Madame Forestier had seen in her life
<i>Dijo que era la mayor barbaridad que a nadie se le había ocurrido</i> (or <i>hubiera/hubiese</i>)	(S)he said it was the greatest stupidity anybody had ever thought of

The indicative is normal in affirmative sentences after words like 'first', 'only': *es la primera vez que se habla de esto* 'it's the first time people have talked about this', *es la única película que ha hecho* 'it's the only film (s)he's made'. French uses the subjunctive in these cases and after superlative statements in general.

16.15 Subjunctive in main clauses

The subjunctive is primarily a feature of subordinate clauses, but it may appear in a main clause in certain circumstances.

16.15.1 Subjunctive with the imperative

(a) The subjunctive is used to form all negative imperatives: *no me hables* 'don't talk to me', *no se vayan ustedes* 'don't go away'.

(b) The subjunctive is used for affirmative imperatives with the pronouns *usted* and *ustedes*: *guarden silencio* 'keep quiet', *váyase* 'go away'.

(c) The subjunctive is used to form first- and third-person imperatives, e.g. *sentémonos* 'let's sit down', *que entre* 'let him/her come in'.

The imperative is discussed in detail in Chapter 17.

16.15.2 Subjunctive to express wishes

The verb is usually preceded by *ojalá*, *quién* or simply by *que*—the latter is omitted in some set phrases. *Así*, used jokingly, parodies a typical gypsy curse and is frequently heard in colloquial language, at least in Spain:

<i>¡Ojalá nos toque la lotería!</i>	Let's hope we win the lottery!
<i>Ojalá se le queme el arroz</i> (A. Arrafut, Cu., dialogue)	I hope her rice burns
<i>...y pensé quién fuera escritor...</i> (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe.)	...and I thought: if only I were a writer...

NB: *Quién* in this construction should not be confused with the word meaning 'who'.

<i>¡Que no se vaya! —pensaba —¡que no eche a volar!</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	'Please don't let him leave!' I thought, 'don't let him fly away!'
<i>Bendita seas, cuñada...</i> (A. Mastretta, Mex., dialogue)	God bless you, sister-in-law...
<i>¡Dios se lo pague!</i>	May God repay you!
<i>Así se te pegue mi catarro!</i>	I hope you get my cold!

There is a less common expression with the same meaning as *ojalá*: *fuera(n)* (or *así/ya fuera(n)*) *como tú todas las mujeres...* 'if only all women were like you...'

16.15.3 Subjunctive in some common set phrases

(a) *O sea que* 'in other words':

<i>Ha dicho que tiene que trabajar, o sea que no quiere venir</i>	(S)he said (s)he had to work, in other words (s)he doesn't want to come
---	---

(b) In the phrases *que... sepa/que... recuerde*:

<i>Que yo recuerde es la primera vez que le/llo veo</i>	As far as I remember it's the first time I've seen him
<i>Nada que yo sepa</i> (J. Madrid, Sp.)	Nothing, as far as I know
<i>Que se sepa nadie lo ha hecho antes</i>	As far as anybody knows, it hasn't been done before

(c) In a few other set phrases:

<i>¡Acabáramos!</i>	Now I see what you're getting at!
<i>Otro gallo nos cantara si le hubiéramos/hubiésemos hecho caso</i>	It would have been another story if we had listened to him/her
<i>¡Cómo tiras el dinero! Ni que fueras millonario...</i>	The way you throw money around anyone would think you're a millionaire...
<i>¡Vaya tontería!</i>	What nonsense!

16.16 Tense agreement: subjunctive

Despite the claims of many traditional grammars, there are no rigid rules of tense agreement between main and subordinate clauses, but the following patterns are the most usual combinations:

(a) Main clause in Present Indicative Tense

(1) Present subjunctive: *me gusta que hable* 'I like her/him to talk', *quiero que dejes de fumar* 'I want you to stop smoking'.

(2) Perfect subjunctive: *me encanta que hayas venido* 'I'm really glad you've come'.

(3) Imperfect subjunctive (see note i): *es imposible que lo dijera/dijese* 'it's impossible that he said it'.

(b) Main clause in Future Tense

Present subjunctive: *nos contentaremos con que terminen para finales del mes* 'we'll be content with them finishing by the end of the month', *¡jamás soportaré que mi sobrina se case con un tipo que va por el mundo vestido de profesor en vacaciones!* (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe., dialogue) 'I'll never tolerate my niece marrying a guy who goes around dressed like a teacher on vacation!'

(c) Main clause in Conditional or Conditional Perfect Tense

Imperfect subjunctive: *nos contentaríamos con que terminaran/terminasen para finales del mes* 'we'd be content with them finishing by the end of the month', *yo habría preferido que se pintara/pintase de negro* 'I'd have preferred it to be painted black'.

(d) Main clause in Perfect Tense (see note ii)

(1) Present subjunctive: *le he dicho que se siente* (A. Gala, Sp., dialogue; perfect of recency) 'I told you to sit down'.

(2) Perfect subjunctive: *ha sido un milagro que no te hayan reconocido* 'it was a miracle they didn't see you'.

(3) Imperfect subjunctive: *ha sido un milagro que no te reconocieran/reconociesen* 'it was a miracle that they didn't recognize you'.

(e) Main clause in Imperfect, Preterite or Pluperfect Tense (see notes iii and iv)

(1) Imperfect subjunctive: *La idea era que cobrarais/cobraseis los viernes* 'The idea was that you'd get paid on Fridays', *me sorprendió que fuera/fuese tan alto* 'it surprised me that he was so tall', *yo te había pedido que me prestaras/prestases cien dólares* 'I'd asked you to lend me 100 dollars'.

(2) Pluperfect subjunctive: *me sorprendía que hubiera/hubiese protestado* 'I was surprised that (s)he had protested'.

(3) Present subjunctive. This is common, especially in newspapers, when the main clause refers to the past and mentions an action that has still not taken place in the reader's or hearer's present: *el secretario de Naciones Unidas pidió ayer a Estados Unidos que no actúe unilateralmente contra Irak (El País, Sp.)* 'The UN secretary asked the US yesterday not to act unilaterally against Iraq'. It is also common in popular Latin-American speech where standard language requires the past subjunctive. See note (iv).

(f) Main clause in Imperative Mood

Present subjunctive: *díganles que se den prisa* 'tell them to hurry'.

(i) The combination present + imperfect or perfect subjunctive occurs when a comment is being made about a past event. There seems to be little difference between the perfect and imperfect subjunctive in this case, and occasionally the present subjunctive can also be used: *algunos niegan que Cristóbal Colón fuera/fuese/haya sido/sea el primer descubridor de América* some deny that Christopher Columbus was the first discoverer of America'.

(ii) The perfect (*ha dicho, ha ordenado*, etc.) is strictly speaking classified as a present tense for the purposes of agreement, but the imperfect subjunctive is occasionally used with it when the event in the subordinate clause is also in the past. Compare *ha dado órdenes de que nos rindamos* '(s)he's given orders for us to surrender' and *el clima que se está creando ha llevado a que se hablara de intervención del Ejército (Cambio16, Sp.; also hable)* 'the climate that is being created has led to talk of Army intervention'.

(iii) The combination past indicative + present subjunctive is optionally possible when the subordinate clause refers to a timeless or perpetual event: *Dios decretó que las serpientes no tengan/tuvieran/tuviesen patas* 'God decreed that snakes should have no legs' (*las piernas* is used only for human legs).

(iv) Use of the present when both verbs refer to the past is common in popular Latin-American speech but is unacceptable to Peninsular speakers: *el inspector aduanero le pidió a la muchacha que le muestre su casaca (La Prensa, Pe.; Spain mostrara/mostrase*. In Spain *la casaca* = 'dress coat') 'the Customs inspector asked the girl to show him her coat', *Eva abogó por Perón, pidió, clamó, imploró, para que entiendan lo que quería decirles (A. Posse, Arg.; normally entendieran or entendiesen)* 'Eva pleaded

for Perón, asked, clamored, implored them [i.e. the Communists] to understand what he was trying to say to them', *logró impedir que frases como ésta destruyan mi vida (A. Bryce Echenique, Pe.; for destruyeran/destruyesen)* 'she managed to prevent phrases like this from destroying my life'. This construction seems to be spreading to the media in Spain and it is not unknown there in spontaneous speech, a tendency that may indicate that the imperfect subjunctive will one day become obsolete, as it has in French.

(v) After *como si* 'as if', *igual que si/lo mismo que si* 'the same as if', the verb is always in the imperfect subjunctive: *le hablaré como si yo no supiese/supiera hablar bien el castellano* 'I'll talk to him as if I didn't know how to speak Spanish well'. See also 16.12.5c for *como si*.

16.17 The future subjunctive

The future subjunctive (see 13.1.10 for its forms) is nowadays obsolete in everyday Spanish, except in a few literary variants of set phrases such as *sea lo que fuere* (more usually *sea lo que sea*) 'whatever it may be', *venga lo que viniere* (usually *venga lo que venga*) 'come what may': the present or imperfect subjunctive is used instead. But it is still used in legal jargon and official documents:

APUESTA: *Contrato bilateral en el que se acuerda que el que acertare un pronóstico o tuviere razón en una disputa recibirá del perdedor lo pactado (legal dictionary)*

'BET': A bilateral contract whereby it is agreed that a person who makes an accurate forecast or wins an argument shall receive an agreed sum from the loser

It occasionally appears in flowery language to indicate a very remote possibility:

... *lo cual ofrece amplísimas ventajas en la extracción del motor o en reparaciones, caso de que las hubiere (advert., Sp., hubiera/hubiese more normal).*

...which offers very wide advantages when removing the engine or in repair work—should such a thing ever arise

It is also quite common in Latin-American newspapers in some regions:

Sólo la aplicación de un plan de estrictas medidas, aun cuando éstas resultaren antipopulares, permitirá salir de la actual situación (La Nación, Arg.)

Only the application of a plan of strict measures, even if these were unpopular, would allow us to get out of the present situation

Kany, 225, notes examples in written usage from nine republics.