

SESSION 8

SUBORDINATED SENTENCES

I. CONTENTS:

1. Unreal conditional sentences with IF clauses
2. Modals auxiliary in past.

II. OBJECTIVES:

At the end of the SESSION, students:

- Will be able to write sentences and do exercises using subordinated sentences or conditional sentences in past and present.
- Will create a conversation interchanging information about an imaginary or hypothetical situation and the consequences of that action through the use of IF and Modals Auxiliary.

III. DISCUSSION:

Discuss the questions with your teacher and choose the most important ideas.

- How do you describe imaginary situations in Spanish? Give some examples.
- What are the words and concepts that tell us that someone is giving a condition?
- How are sentences expressed when we are communicating an unreal or hypothetical situation that happened in the past?

IV. INFORMATIONAL AND FORMATIVE TEXT

1.1. Unreal conditional sentences with IF clauses

It's normally called the unreal conditional because it is used for situations that are unreal - impossible or improbable. It provides an imaginary consequence for a given condition. If you came to my home, I would cook for you. If they lived close, they would use the bus. Note: when the verb to be is used in the 2nd conditional, it's always conjugated as were. If I were a doctor, I would work in a hospital.

Unreal Conditionals are formed with simple past in the -if clause (condition) followed by a comma, and would + verb (base form) in the result clause (consequence). You can also invert the position of the condition and the consequence: If you came to my home, I would cook for you, or, I would cook for you if you came to my home. If the result clause weren't sure to happen you should use *might* or *could* on the result clause for expressing it. You can also use *could* in the result clause for expressing ability. Example: If they lived close, they could use the bus. -It's possible for me to take yoga classes-. If you spoke English, You could translate this book for me. Remember that the two clauses, however this doesn't affect the meaning of the sentence. If I went to school, I would learn a lot. I would learn a lot if I went to school,. A sentence o both can also be used in negative form. If I didn't see a movie, I would be bored. If I had the power, I wouldn't provoke wars. If you didn't live in Mexico, I wouldn't be able to see you so often.

Conditional sentences have two parts: the if-clause and the main clause. In the sentence *If it rains, I will stay at university*, if it rains is the if-clause, and I will stay university is the main clause. The easiest way is to understand that both clauses (the if-clause and the main clause) can be real or unreal and refer to present, future, or past. Depending on these factors, the clause will look different. Real conditional describes real-life, possible situations. Unreal conditional describes imaginary situations. We'll deal with each clause separately.

If-clause:

First of all, you must decide if the situation in the if-clause is real or unreal. Examples of real if-clauses: If I wake up early I will take a big breakfast. It's a situation that happens very often. I will read the newspaper if I have time in the office.

Examples of unreal if-clauses. If I could fly, I go up a mountain, but that will never happen. If she told me about that... but she never tells me.

Once you've decided about that, it's time to choose the correct tense. As I mentioned, there are two choices: the present –future- or the past.

Examples of present if-clauses: If meet her again, I will tell her that. I will probably meet her soon. If you were a bit taller, you would be more attractive. But you're not taller.

Examples of past if-clauses: When my partner visited us, he would always help me with my homework. My partner visited us many times. If he had told me about that... But he didn't tell me.

If these examples have confused you a bit, don't worry — You'll see everything will become more and more obvious in just a moment.

The table below sums up what has been said about the if-clause.

| 1 | Real | | Unreal |
|---|------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2 | Present / Future | Simple Present If he says | Simple Past If he said |
| | Past | Simple Past If he says | Past Perfect If he had said |

Main-clause:

The main-clause is also formed in two steps: first decide if you're talking about a real or an unreal situation, and then choose the correct tense. If the main-clause is real, then it is exactly the same as a normal sentence. For example: If she's late again, I will fire her. The situation is real because it can happen at any time. If the weather was nice, he often walked to work. The situation is real because it happened -at least according to the speaker-.

If the main-clause is unreal, then it is formed in accordance with the example below:

Present / Future -Modal + Infinitive. Examples: would, might, should, could.

Past -Modal + Perfect Infinitive. Examples: would have, might have, should have and could have.

Examples of each one: If it weren't raining, they would go for a walk. But it is raining.

If she had been late again, I would have fired her. But she wasn't late.

1. If neither of you saw the dog, I might have had hallucinations. The if-clause is about a real situation. The main-clause is unreal because the speaker is unsure of the truth. Both clauses are about the past. If it were a part of conversation, it might look similar to this:

1: Have you seen that? Something has moved in the bushes.

2: Where?!

1: Over there. It's a dog!

2: We can't see anything there, Marcos. The next day –Marcos's conclusion-:

1: Well, if neither of them saw the dog, you might have had hallucinations.

2: You should not tell her about the letter, even if she asked them about it.

Both clauses are present/future. The questions that arise: why is the verb asked in the past form? The answer is: because in this way, the speaker tells us that the situation of him asking is unlikely — it is unreal.

3. If we were born in the United States, we wouldn't need a green card.

That's a simple sentence whose both clauses are real; however the if-clause is in the past. There are at least a couple of more variations and I strongly encourage you to find them. As you can see it's quite easy — all in all — to form the conditional sentences. It's important, however, not to forget about the basic conditionals because, as mentioned, they are used quite often.

2.1. Modals auxiliaries in past

| | | |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Auxiliaries: be, have and do can be auxiliaries and full verbs. | | |
| Modals are: ought to, shall, should, will, and would. Examples: | | |
| We can play football. | We could play football. | We may play football. |
| We might play football. | We must play football. | We mustn't play football. |
| We shouldn't play football. | We ought to play football. | We shall play football. |
| We should play football. | We will play football. | We would play football. |

Note:

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Do not use modals for things which happen definitely. | The sun rises in the East. |
| 2. They do not have an -s in the 3rd person singular. | He can play tennis. |
| 3. Questions are formed without do/does/did. | Can he speak French? |
| 4. It follows a full verb in the infinitive. | They must read the lesson. |
| 5. There are no past forms (except could and would). | He was allowed to watch the video. |
| 6. When you use the past participle, you tell about things which did not happen in the past. | You should have told them. |

Grammatical Form:

| Positive | | Negative | |
|-----------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| Long Form | Contracted Form | Long Form | Contracted Form |
| Can | ----- | Cannot | Can't |
| Could | ----- | Could not | Couldn't |
| May | ----- | May not | ----- |
| Might | ----- | Might not | ----- |
| Ought to | ----- | Ought not to | Oughtn't to |
| ----- | ----- | Need not | Needn't |
| Shall | ----- | Shall not | Shan't |
| Should | ----- | Should not | Shouldn't |
| Will | 'll | Will not | Won't |
| Would | 'd | Would not | Wouldn't |

Modal Auxiliaries

The modal auxiliaries or modals include the following: can, could, may, might, must, should, will, would. . .

Modals are always followed by the base form of a verb or auxiliary verb.

Modals are always the same form no matter what the subject is.

In standard American English, a predicate verb phrase cannot contain more than one modal.

Not correct: He will can go. Correct: He will be able to go.

Below are examples sentences containing the modal may and the verb go. Notice that the form of the modal does not change. Also notice that the base form of a verb or auxiliary verb always follows the modal.

I may go. You may go. He may go. It may go. We may go. They may go.

He may have gone. They may have gone. He may be going. They may be going.

He may have been going. They may have been going.

| Modals and related verb phrases add meanings to verbs. Below are some of those meanings: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ability / Availability | Requests | Permission |
| future: will be able to present: can, am/is/are able to past: could, was/were able to | present/future: can, could, will, would | future: will be allowed to present/future: may, can, could, am/is/are allowed to past: could, was/were allowed to |
| Possibility | Impossibility | Advisability |
| present/future: may, might, could past: may have, might have, could have | present/future: couldn't, can't past: couldn't have | present/future: should, ought to, had better past: should have, ought to have, had better have |
| Expectation | Necessity | Lack of Necessity |
| present/future: should, ought to past: should have, ought to have | future: will have to present/future: must, have to, has to past: had to | future: won't have to present/future: don't have to, doesn't have to past: didn't have to |
| Prohibition | | Logical Deduction =Probability |
| present/future: must not, may not, cannot past: could not | | present: must, have to, has to past: must have, have to have, has to have |

| Modals of belief -beliefs about <u>past</u> time- The choice of modal depends partly on what the speaker or writer believes. | |
|---|---|
| Someone <u>was</u> knocking on the door. That could have been Fred. That might have been Fred. = It's possible. I'm less than 50% sure | That may have been Fred. = It's possible. I'm less than 60% sure. |
| That must have been Fred. That has to have been Fred. That has got to have been Fred. = It was probably Fred. I have a good reason to believe it was Fred. | That couldn't have been Mary. = It's impossible. I'm about 99% sure. That was Fred. = I know it was Fred. I'm 100% sure. |

Past time with modals:

We noted earlier that the pure modals do not change to show tense. Most of these modals do, in fact, have either present or future reference, but sometimes we need to refer back to the past. With the semi-modals there is little problem, but how can we do this for pure modal verbs? You may have picked up from some of the previous examples that one way to do this is to insert have immediately after the pure modal. But this is not always the case since can has its own past tense *could* when it refers to general ability. Some examples should help:

I can speak Spanish. I could speak Spanish when I was seven years old.
You should see this video. You should have seen this video.
Barra de Navidad must be hot.
Barra de Navidad must have been hot.
He could find his suitcase.
He could have found his suitcase.

Notice that in the third pair of sentences the meaning of must is logical deduction not obligation. If we want to use must for obligation then the past tense is had to.

She must visit her mother.
She had to visit her mother.

The past form of should:

Should have + -ed past participle. Not: should + present perfect.

Examples:

He should have waited a little bit.

She should not have wasted all this time.

The past form of ought to is ought to have + -ed

Had better has no past form.

In conversational:

Should have = should've or should'a

Should have not = shouldn't've = shouldn't'a

Progressive and past forms of May / Might and Must

Progressive form:

Modal + be + -ing in progress right now.

Example:

At this time, she may/might be sleeping. You had better not disturb her.

Past form:

Modal + have + -ed past participle in the past.

Examples:

He hasn't come yet. He may/might have forgotten this appointment.

Or maybe, he must have lost something.

Must, here means probability. The past of must is *must have to* when it means necessity.

Past progressive form:

Modal + have been + -ing past participle in progress at a time in the past.

Examples:

When we went to pick him up yesterday, we didn't find him.

He may/might have been working.

He must have been studying because he has a lot of exams coming soon.