

Livnat Jerby

# Conditional Auxiliary Verbs and the Subjunctive Mood

# Conditional Auxiliary Verbs

- May
- Might
- Can
- Could
- Should
- Would

# May vs. Might

- Almost always interchangeable
- Both express a possibility of some action taking place.
- Examples:
  - “It **may/might** rain this afternoon.”
  - “He **may/might** miss the train if he doesn’t hurry.”

# Might

- Lower probability/possibility than **may**
- The past tense of **may**
  - “He **might** have caught his train if he had left work on time.”

# May as a Polite Form

- Used to ask permission
- A common 'polite' form
  - **Correct:** "May I use your telephone?"
  - Less Polite: "Can I use your telephone, please?"
  - **Incorrect:** "Might I use your telephone?"
  - **Correct:** "May I smoke?"
  - Less Polite: "Can I smoke?"
  - **Incorrect:** "Might I smoke?"

# Should vs. Shall

- An alternative to **shall** in connection with requests for advice or instruction:
  - “What do you think I **should** do now? **Should** I write him a letter, send him an e-mail, or **should** I try to phone him up?”

# Should: Obligation

- To talk about obligation and duty as an alternative to **ought to**:
  - “You really **should** open a bank account. You **shouldn't** keep so much money in the house.”
  - “People with fierce dogs **should** keep them on a leash at all times.”

# Should: Possibility

- After **if** when a **slight** possibility is suggested:
  - “If you **should** see her at the anniversary concert, do give her my best regards.”
  - “If I **should** bump into Tony, do you want me to remind him that he still owes you one hundred pounds? “



# Could vs. Can

- Past form of **can**
  - “When I was living in Boston, I could walk to work.”
  - “He phoned to say he couldn't come.”
  - “I could see him clearly but I couldn't hear him and then the videoconference line went dead.”

# Could vs. Can

- Polite requests
- More polite than **can**
  - “Could you help me, please?”
  - “Could you lend me some money?”
  - “Could I have a lift?”
  - “Could I bother you for a moment?”

# Could vs. Can

- Reply:
  - **Could** - unwillingness
  - **Can** - agreement
- “Could you help me, please?”  
“Of course I **can**.”
- “Could you lend me some money?”  
“I **could** lend you some money but I'd need it back tomorrow without fail.”

# Could vs. Might

- Theoretical possibility
- Similar to **might**
  - It **could** rain later. Take an umbrella.
  - He **could** be there by now.
  - **Could** he be any happier?
  - It **could** be Sarah's.

# Would : Past Habits

- Contracted form: 'd
- An alternative to **used to** when discussing past habits:
  - When we were young, we **would** spend (we'd) every summer holiday at the sea-side.
  - You **would** find him sitting at the bar every lunchtime, drinking that strong black beer.

# Would: Polite Request

- **Would** is also used to make polite requests:
  - “**Would** you be prepared to do all this work by yourself without any assistance?”
  - “**Would** you (be so kind as to) pick Jennifer up from school on Monday?”

# Would: Conditional

- Associated with the conditional:
  - “I **would** definitely travel to Mexico with you, if I could afford it.”
  - “You **would** still be working for the World Bank, if you hadn't kicked up such a fuss.”
  - “I **would** have told you all about it, if you had phoned me.”
  - “If you wore smarter clothes, you **would** be invited to all the press conferences.”

# The Subjunctive Mood

- Expresses a condition which is doubtful or not factual
- Found in a clause
  - Beginning with **if**
  - Following a verb that expresses a doubt, a wish, regret, request, demand, or proposal.



# The Subjunctive Mood

- Typically follows
  - Ask
  - Demand
  - Determine
  - Insist
  - Move
  - Order
  - Pray
  - Prefer
  - Recommend
  - Regret
  - Request
  - Require
  - Suggest
  - Wish

# The Subjunctive Mood

- No difference between the subjunctive and normal, or indicative, form of the verb
- **Except**
  - The **present** tense **third person singular**
  - The verb **to be**

# The Subjunctive Mood

	Present	Past	Future	Present negative subjunctive
<b>to own</b> (example to regular verb)	that I <b>own</b> that <b>he/she/it own</b> that we/you/they <b>own</b>	if I <b>owned</b> if he/she/it <b>owned</b> if we/you/they <b>owned</b>	if I <b>were to own</b> if he/she/it <b>were to own</b> if we/you/they <b>were to own</b>	that I <b>not own</b> that he/she/it <b>not own</b> that we/you/they <b>not own</b>
<b>to be</b>	that I <b>be</b> that he/she/it <b>be</b> that we/you/they <b>be</b>	if I <b>were</b> if he/she/it <b>were</b> if we/you/they <b>were</b>	if I <b>were to be</b> if he/she/it <b>were to be</b> if we/you/they <b>were to be</b>	that I <b>not be</b> that he/she/it <b>not be</b> that we/you/they <b>not be</b>

# The Subjunctive Mood

- **Incorrect:** If I **was** you, I would run.
- **Correct:** If I **were** you, I would run.
- **Incorrect:** I wish he **was** able to type faster.
- **Correct:** I wish he **were** able to type faster.

# The Subjunctive Mood

- **Incorrect:** His requirement is that everyone **is** computer literate.
- **Correct:** His requirement is that everyone **be** computer literate.
- **Incorrect:** He recommended that each driver **reports** his tips.
- **Correct:** He recommended that each driver **report** his tips.

# The Subjunctive Mood

- Sometimes conditional auxiliary verbs of **could, should, or would** can be used instead.
  - **Subjunctive:** I wish he **were** kinder to me.
  - **Conditional:** I wish he **would be** kinder to me.

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Questions?