

The present study tries to point out the most important differences between the Portuguese and the Spanish subjunctive mood. The purpose was not a statistical list of the distribution of particular expressions as the extent of the study does not permit it. Therefore, we also had to leave out some topics such as for example the sequence of tenses or temporal issues. This one is mentioned only marginally. Nevertheless, there are no substantial differences between the two languages in this respect. Although it might be relatively difficult to separate temporal and modal aspect, we mainly focused on the modal alternation.

We can consider three possible meanings of the subjunctive mood in both languages. The first one has its own modal value and is in the opposition with the indicative mood. This happens mainly in the subordinate adjectival clauses, after some expressions in noun clauses and after some prepositional expressions in circumstantial clauses.

In the second case, the subjunctive mood depends on another modal expression and only repeats redundantly the modal value of the head element. This happens especially in main clauses, in noun clauses and in circumstantial clauses.

The last case represents the subjunctive form having assertive value, while losing its functional value. It comprises only the formal aspect of this verbal mode.

By a closer analysis, we can state that the most important difference between both languages is in use of the future subjunctive mood and the possibility to replace the subjunctive mood with the personal infinitive in Portuguese. Nevertheless, in case of personal infinitive it is relatively difficult to define on which basis the speaker decides to use the infinitive or the subjunctive mood. The main point is probably the language economy and the stylistic aspect. In the section dedicated to noun clauses, we tried to draw up a brief survey of this alternation in Portuguese in selected expressions. However, it is obvious that the use of this verbal form depends on a particular expression, on a particular speaker and on a particular situation. For a more detailed analysis a more extensive corpus and a larger study would be necessary.