

Uses of the Greek Subjunctive Mood

Uses in Independent Clauses

Usage	Description	Structural Formation	Translation	Other Important Elements	Examples
Hortatory Subjunctive *(pp. 464-465)	This is a statement urging others to join in some action (commanding oneself and one's associates). (It is roughly the same as first person imperative, which does not exist in Greek.)	- Will always be the first person plural form of the subjunctive mood. - Will often come near the beginning of the sentence.	'let us ...'		Heb 10:22 ' <u>let us come forward</u> to the holy of holies' 1 John 4:7 ' <u>let us</u> love one another'
Deliberative Subjunctive (pp. 465-467)	Used to ask a question. The question usually involves deliberating about a certain course of action, not a question of fact. It may be a real question or simply a rhetorical one.			- Typically not asking 'What?' or 'Who?', but rather 'How?', 'Whether?', or 'Where?' ('Could or Should I?'). - Use of the subjunctive indicates some uncertainty about the answer.	Real: John 19:15 ' <u>shall I crucify</u> your king?' Rhetorical: Mark 8:37 ' <u>What can</u> a person <u>give</u> in exchange for their soul?'
Emphatic Negation Subjunctive (pp. 468-469)	Strongly denies that something will happen. Strongest way to negate something in Greek.	- Double negative (οὐ μή) with an aorist subjunctive verb. - Sometimes uses future indicative instead of aorist subjunctive.	'certainly not' or 'never', with English future tense	Found primarily in reported sayings of Jesus and in quotes from the Septuagint. Otherwise used only rarely.	Matthew 24:35 'my words <u>will certainly not pass away</u> ' Hebrews 13:5 'I <u>will certainly not fail</u> you, <u>nor will I ever leave</u> you'
Prohibitive Subjunctive (p. 469)	Used to forbid in advance the initiation or occurrence of an action.	- Negating adverb (μή) with aorist subjunctive, typically in second person. - Equivalent to imperative after μή.	'don't ever...' or 'do not...'. Does <u>not</u> have the sense that 'You should not...'	- Usually seen with the aorist tense, rather than the present tense - In second person verb forms, subjunctive takes the place of imperative mood. In third person, either subjunctive or imperative may be used.	Matt 6:34 ' <u>don't ever worry</u> about tomorrow' John 3:7 ' <u>do not marvel</u> that I said to you, ...'

* Page numbering refers to the major section where this topic is discussed in "Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics" by Daniel B. Wallace.

Uses of the Greek Subjunctive Mood (continued)

Uses in Dependent (Subordinate) Clauses

Usage	Description	Structural Formation	Translation	Other Important Elements	Examples
Conditional Sentences	Helps to form protasis of 3 rd class conditional sentence. Please see reference sheet on 'Conditional Sentences' for complete explanation and examples.				
Subjunctive with ἵνα (and ὅπως)	Use most common use of the subjunctive is in a clause formed in conjunction with ἵνα. This use comprises about 1/3 of all subjunctive uses in the NT. See separate page for details.				
Indefinite Relative Clause (pp. 478-479)	Referring to an indefinite/generic (or sometimes an uncertain) 'person' or 'thing'.	Clause starts with relative pronoun ὅς or ὅστις, followed by the particle ἄν (or ἕάν) followed by a verb in the subjunctive mood.		- The clause often operates as a substantive within the structure of a sentence. - It is the person/thing that is 'uncertain', not the verbal element.	Matt 20:27 ' <u>whoever wants to be first among you</u> will be your slave' Rom 9:15 'I will have mercy on <u>whom I have mercy</u> '
Indefinite Temporal Clause (pp. 479-480)	Indicates a future contingency relative to the time of the main verb in the sentence.	Subjunctive will be used after a temporal adverb meaning 'until' (e.g. ἕως, ἄχρι, μέχρι) or after a temporal conjunction like ὅταν, meaning 'whenever'.			Temp Adverb: Gal 3:19 '(the law) was added ... <u>until the seed should come</u> ' Temp Conj: 2 Cor 12:10 ' <u>whenever I am weak</u> , then I am strong'
With Verbs of 'Fearing' (p. 477)					
Indirect Questions (p. 478)					

Uses of the Greek Subjunctive Mood (continued)

** Uses of the Subjunctive in ἵνα Clauses (pp. 471-477)

Usage	Description	Structural Formation	Translation	Other Important Elements	Examples
Purpose ἵνα Clause (p. 472)	Used to show purpose or intention of the action of the main verb. This construction is meant to show intention, not to state whether something actually happens or not. "Intended Result"	- ἵνα or ὅπως plus verb in subjunctive mood. - For 'negative purpose' ἵνα μὴ or ὅπως μὴ is used, translated "in order that ...not" or "lest". Indicates that the intention of the action of the main verb is in order that something else would not happen.	'in order that'	- Answers the question 'why?' or 'for what reason?' rather than 'what?' - Not indicating that something 'may' or 'might' result from a given action, but is stating the 'purpose of' or 'reason for' an action.	Positive: John 10:38 'believe the works <u>in order that you might know</u> ... that the Father is in me' Negative: 1 John 2:1 'I write ... <u>in order that you may not sin</u> '
Result ἵνα Clause (p. 473)					
Purpose-Result ἵνα Clause (pp. 473-474)					
Epexegetical ἵνα Clause (p. 476)					
Complementary ἵνα Clause (p. 476)					
Imperative ἵνα Clause (pp. 476-477)					
Substantival ἵνα Clause (pp. 474-476) (No use here is especially frequent.)	Subject Clause				
	Predicate Nominative Clause				
	Direct Object Clause				
	Apposition Clause				

** This is the most common use of the subjunctive, comprising about 1/3 of all subjunctive uses in the NT. Its use has increased in the Koine period over the Classical period as it came to be used as a periphrasis for the simple infinitive.