

THE USE OF THE SUBJUNCTIVE IN THE NOVEL CHRONICLE OF A DEATH FORETOLD- ANALYTICAL STUDY

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A B S T R A C T	K E Y W O R D S
<p>This research analyzes the use of the subjunctive mood in Gabriel García Márquez's novel "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" from a semantic and rhetorical perspective. It examines how this mood contributes to creating atmospheres of doubt, subjectivity, and inevitability, reflecting the emotional and moral complexity of the characters. Through the analysis of representative passages from the novel, multiple linguistic functions are identified, such as the expression of desire, doubt, supposition, judgment, and unreality. This work draws on linguistic and literary sources and aims to make a valuable contribution to both discourse analysis and the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language.</p>	<p>Subjunctive, translation, analysis.</p>

Introduction

The subjunctive is one of the most complex and expressive factors in Spanish grammar. It goes beyond its formal grammatical value by revealing the speaker's postures, thoughts, assumptions, and feelings, giving it an essential role in literary writing. In *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* by Gabriel García Márquez he uses the subjunctive to create a climate of uncertainty, narrative tension and subjectivity; This technique allows the reader to delve into the hypothetical worlds that surround the characters.

In magical realism, which was a literary movement that had a presence in Latin America in the 30s, but which saw its greatest apogee in the 60s and 70s, it was in the magical realism that Gabriel García Márquez developed, in his observation of reality where we are aware of the singularities and oddities within our daily lives. that the subjunctive was used to nourish and develop this novel in an over-the-top way

The novel, with a fragmented structure and a fundamental tone, contains numerous cases where the subjunctive not only fulfills a grammatical function; it also collaborates with expressing the internal motivations of the characters, revealing social judgments and denoting the unreality of some desires or unfulfilled actions.

Studying the use of the subjunctive in this literary work makes it possible to understand in a deeper way the linguistic processes that support moral ambiguity and social criticism in Márquez's narrative.

Motivation for the Study

The reason for choosing this subject is twofold: on the one hand, the need to examine the subjunctive as a rhetorical and grammatical phenomenon in literary situations; and, on the other hand, the intention of investigating its contribution to the semantic and symbolic construction of narrative work. In the novel *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, the subjunctive becomes a key to interpretation that allows the reader to penetrate the mental universe of the characters and discover their fears, uncertainties, resignations and unfulfilled hopes. This research also aims to offer a useful tool for Spanish students and literary translators, especially in situations where the target language (e.g. Arabic) does not have parallel structures to the subjunctive.

Objectives of the study

- ☐ To analyze the use of the subjunctive in the novel "*Chronicle of a Death Foretold*" from a semantic and rhetorical perspective
- ☐ Identify the main functions of the subjunctive in the narrative construction of the novel.
- ☐ Explore the relationship between the use of the subjunctive and the expression of emotions, judgments, and alternative realities
- ☐ Demonstrate how this subjunctive contributes to the representation of the subjectivity (personality) of the characters and to the creation of the fatalistic atmosphere that characterizes the novel
- ☐ Reflect on the difficulty of translating the subjunctive into Arabic and its importance in the teaching of advanced Spanish.

THEORETICAL PART

Definition and characteristics of the subjunctive mood

The subjunctive is one of the three verb tenses of Spanish, along with the indicative and the imperative. Unlike the declarative, which expresses real or objective facts, the subjunctive is used to express actions that have not been carried out, hypothetical, desirable, feared or uncertain (Bosque, 1999, p. 243). This pattern expresses the speaker's attitude towards the action, rather than the action itself, and usually appears in dependent clauses that express doubt, desire, possibility, judgment or emotion (RAE, 2010, pp. 1227-1235).

The use of the subjunctive mood in literature and its symbolic dimension in *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*

The subjunctive mood has been the subject of numerous linguistic and stylistic studies due to its semantic diversity and remarkable expressive power. In literary discourse, this mode is not only used according to grammatical rules, but is also employed to achieve profound communicative purposes.

It is clear that the novel *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, uses the subjunctive to create the symbolic universe of the narrative text, giving it meanings linked to guilt, the possible, the uncertain and unfulfilled expectations.

1.The subjunctive mood: definition and semantic values

A verbal category that is used to narrate uncertain, hypothetical circumstances. It introduces a mental separation between the speaker and the truth of the event. All this distinguishes with the indicative mood, which is used to convey observable facts. another saying, the speaker does not claim that his

message is true; rather, it is manifesting a possibility, a desire, a doubt, a judgment, an emotion, or something unreal (Bosque, 1999; RAE, 2010). This function transforms the subjunctive into a common instrument of literary discourse, which explores alternative worlds, diverse points of view, and deep emotions (Alarcos Llorach, 1994).

Example from the novel:

_Ojalá no to the mataran slaughtered

This example expresses an intense, almost desperate desire to challenge a reality that seems imminent.

2. Functions of the Subjunctive in Narrative Discourse

In narrative texts, the Subjunctive frequently appears in contexts involving:

- Desire: often an unattainable desire:

_Ojalá lo hubiera dethenido antes litham my position before

- Doubt or possibility: open to multiple interpretations:

محتمل انه لم يكن يعلم

- Moral judgment: appears prominently in the narrative discourse loaded with values:

_Es injusto que nadie lo ayudara It is not fair that no one helps him

- Counterfactual Hypotheses: Alternative Events That Didn't Occur, But Could Have Changed the Outcome (The Course of Events) (Gómez Torrego, 2006; García Negroni, 2011):

"If they had woken him up, he would still be alive ."

These structures not only express the thoughts of the characters, but also reflect the "point of view of the narrator," who often takes a critical stance on the course of events.

Not only are the characters' thoughts manifested in these structures, but they also show the perspective of the narrator, who often has a critical stance on how events unfold. One of the essential properties of the subjunctive in Chronicle of a Death Foretold is that it can create narrative confusion. The author, using hypothetical structures, frustrated desires and ethical evaluations, not only relates events, but also invites the reader to question them (Eco, 1987), to imagine other situations and to feel complex emotions such as guilt, remorse or helplessness.

Example: It would have been better if we didn't know كان من الأفضل لو لم نكن نعلم

It reflects the collective moral dilemma in the face of a tragedy that everyone knew, but no one prevented. This use of the subjunctive activates what Umberto Eco called interpretative cooperation of the reader: the text does not impose a reading, but suggests multiple possible meanings.

3. The subjunctive as a marker of conflict and ambiguity

A key feature of the use of the subjunctive in the novel "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" is its ability to generate narrative ambiguity. Through hypothetical constructions, unfulfilled desires, and moral evaluations, the author not only describes facts, but invites the reader to question them, imagine alternative scenarios, and experience complex emotions such as helplessness, guilt, and remorse (Eco, 1987).

Example from the novel:

"It would have been better if we hadn't known. كان من الأفضل لو لم نكن نعلم

This example reflects the collective moral conflict around a tragedy that was known to all, but that no one could avoid.

This use of the subjunctive activates what Umberto Eco described as the concept of interpretative cooperation of the reader.

In other words, the text does not impose a single reading, but opens the door to a plurality of meanings and different possibilities of interpretation, which deepens the contemplative dimension of the literary work.

4.Temporal relations and subjunctive moods

The subjunctive in Spanish includes a wide variety of verb tenses: present, imperfect preterite, perfect preterite and past perfect. The choice of the appropriate verb tense depends not only on the verb tense of the main sentence, but also on the degree of certainty, the temporal distance and the emotional charge that the speaker wishes to convey (RAE, 2010; Camus Bergareche, 2000).

In addition, the subjunctive is subject to temporal correspondence rules:

For example, if the main clause is in the past tense, the subordinate clause must be in the imperfect subjunctive or past perfect. This increases the complexity of its use, especially in translation, where grammatical and semantic precision must be respected.

In *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, García Márquez frequently uses the indefinite past tense to construct impossible hypotheses about the past, reinforcing the idea of a tragic destiny.

Example:

_Si lo hubieran cuidado, no habría muerto le etinua to lama matte

This example expresses a lost potential that can no longer be recovered.

These structures are essential to creating an atmosphere of inevitability and collective guilt within the novel, suggesting that the catastrophe could have been avoided, but circumstances, or collective indifference, prevented it.

5. Symbolic dimension of the subjunctive in the work

Beyond its grammatical function, the subjunctive in the novel acquires a symbolic dimension: it embodies what was not, what could have been, and what people desired or feared.

In a literary work where everyone knows what will happen, but no one acts, the subjunctive expresses the tension between knowledge and passivity (Pérez Saldanya, 2004).

In this sense, the subjunctive represents regret, helplessness and frustrated possibility. It is the active voice that expresses the pangs of conscience.

His in-depth study reveals the moral dimension of the novel and its structure based on inevitability and destiny.

The translation of the subjunctive mood in literary narrative

The subjunctive, due to its semantic richness, is one of the greatest challenges in literary translation, particularly from Spanish to Arabic. The subjunctive expresses desires, hypotheses, possibilities, or judgments that require a deep understanding to be accurately transmitted, while the indicative refers to observable facts (Nord, 2005; Bosque, 1999).

In other words, the subjunctive establishes the speaker's posture in front of what he or she says. This is expressed in various ways in literature. In *"Chronicle of a Death Foretold"*, the subjunctive not only manifests longings or emotions, but also collaborates in the creation of narrative ambiguity and tragic atmosphere.

□ Examples that demonstrate the difficulty:

- "Even though I suppose it would be useless, I insisted on asking."

Here, "supiera" (the unreal present) is used to indicate an unperformed or symbolic action, which requires the translator to use "حتى لو كان..." To indicate an unreal action, "التي تعبر عن الاحتمال غير المحقق" "في العربية".

- It's as if there is no such thing as a "U.S. Army."

The word "existed" indicates a perception that is not real or imaginary. Rhetoric and simile form the basis of Arabic expression, which requires the translator to understand precisely how reality and imagination are related.

. The translator is required to choose formulas that express the separation between reality and imagination

- لو تحدث في الوقت، لما حدث. ذلك

En este caso, la construcción árabe Using lo + past and then lama + past has been able to accurately convey the hypothetical meaning, but it requires a careful awareness of the temporal and emotional context (García Yebra, 1982).

- Dudo que alguien lo entienda alguna vez. I doubt anyone will understand it one day

In this case, we can observe that the doubtful form links the subjunctive with an uncertain future. According to Hatim and Mason (1997), it is the translator's responsibility to balance grammatical accuracy with semantic impact, without depriving its content of meaning. Finally, the translator must not only recognize the relevant temporal form, but must also be aware of its pragmatic and contextual role in the narrative discourse.

Practical Analysis

Work Methodology

An analytical model was used that is based on text analysis. The corpus consists of a selection of examples from the book *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, written by Gabriel García Márquez. Specifically, it includes those that include verb constructions in the subjunctive (non-realistic declarative). An analysis of the examples was made by means of comparative tables. They were categorized in semantic terms, e.g., judgment, doubt, hypothesis, or desire. Each copy contains: the original text in Spanish, with an indication of its location in the novel; the suggested translation into Arabic; the type of subjunctive used; its semantic function; the narrative environment and comments on the translation.

This method allows us to relate the use of the subjunctive to its stylistic and symbolic roles in literary narration and to analyze its effect on translation.

It is important to note that the main purpose of this study is to highlight that the subjunctive, in addition to playing a grammatical function, is a crucial expressive instrument for showing internal tensions, repressed emotions, and alternatives in the novel. The study was carried out using the methodologies suggested by Bosque (1999), Pérez Saldanya (2004) and García Negroni (2011), in addition to the standards set by the RAE (2010).

Subjunctive of deseo.

Frequently, as we have previously mentioned, the subjunctive is used to express desires, hopes or desires, whether achievable or impossible. In *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*, these expressions reflect

the inner suffering of the characters in the face of a fate that they do not have the ability to avoid. Unfulfilled desire becomes an expression of shared pain and ethical incapacity.

TO.	Arabic translation	Subjunctive type	Semantic function	Narrative context	Translation observations
"I wish he had been arrested sooner" (p. 94)	I wish they had arrested him before	Subjunctive of desire (past perfect)	Impossible desire in the past	He expresses collective regret for not having prevented the crime	Arabic resorts to "ليت" and past tense to convey a desire that has already been lost
"I hope they don't kill him" (p. 73)	I wish they didn't .kill him	Subjunctive of deseo (present)	Desire for future action	Express hope or supplication before the murder of Santiago Nasar	The meaning is maintained by "ليت" and the present negative
"I wish this were not true" (p. 79)	I wish this wasn't true	Subjunctive of desire (imperfect)	Hypothetical desire, rejection of a reality	It shows the emotional impact of the tragedy on the characters	Emotional structures with "كنت أودّ" are used to preserve the affective nuance

Using expressions such as "I wish" or "I would like" gives a symbolic dimension related to denial of facts, regret or impotence. Narratively speaking, these sentences do not alter the course of events; however, they allow the reader to identify with the characters. When it comes to translation, the translator uses phrases such as "كنت أودّ" or "ليت" to preserve the emotional charge, even if there is not a complete correspondence between the two languages.

Subjunctive of duda

In the narrative of Chronicle of a Death Foretold, the use of the subjunctive to express doubt or possibility is essential because rumors, partial perceptions, and uncertainty about the characters' reasons are key elements. The author, through these linguistic constructions, creates an impression of ambiguity and makes possible various interpretations. Below are examples illustrating this usage and their respective Arabic translations.

TO.	Arabic translation	Subjunctive type	Semantic function	Narrative context	Translation observations
"It is possible that he did not know" (p. 81)	It is possible that he did not know	Subjunctive of doubt (imperfect)	Uncertain possibility about a past action	It is asked if the character was really informed of the danger	El árabe utiliza "possible" with the past to communicate doubt without commitment to reality
"Maybe I wouldn't have had a choice" (p. 65)	He probably didn't .have a choice	Subjunctive of doubt (past perfect)	Retrospective hypothesis with doubt	The impossibility of acting otherwise is insinuated	El equivalente "perhaps" transmite duda, y the past full highlights the virtualization
"I don't think everyone knew" (p. 59)	I don't think everybody knew	Subjunctive of doubt (imperfect)	Denial of a general certainty	The narrator questions the supposed unanimity of the knowledge of the crime	La estructura "I don't think that" refleja is doubtful, and uses the past to approximate the Arab narrative atmosphere

In this position, the subjunctive functions as an instrument to signal epistemic ambiguity. In the Arabic translation, the past tense and expressions that indicate uncertainty, such as "لا أعتقد", "ربما", or "من الممكن", are used to express doubts about events that have happened in the past. This kind of construction preserves the ambiguity and problematic of narrative, which is characteristic of Gabriel García Márquez's novelistic style.

Subjunctive of valuation or judgment

The subjunctive is also used to judge or evaluate the emotions or opinions of the narrator and the characters in relation to what happens. This variety of subjunctive helps to strengthen the critical aspect of the text, clearly evidencing the struggle between individual responsibility and collective morality. We show significant examples below, along with their Arabic translations and translation notes.

TO.	Arabic translation	Subjunctive type	Semantic function	Narrative context	Translation observations
"It is unfair that no one helped him" (p. 76)	It is unfair that no one helps him	Judgment subjunctive (imperfect)	Negative ethical evaluation	The narrator highlights the lack of solidarity towards the victim	El árabe expresa juicio moral using "from injustice" with negation in the present tense
"I think it's terrible that they left him alone" (p. 88)	I see it horrible that they left him alone	Judgment subjunctive (imperfect)	Intense emotional opinion	Subjective reaction to the passivity of witnesses	Se traduce con "I see him to highlight personal opinion, and the past maintains the dramatic atmosphere
"It was necessary for someone to defend him" (p. 71)	It was necessary for someone to defend him	Judgment subjunctive (imperfect)	Unfulfilled ethical need	The absence of fair action is mentioned	"It was necessary" reflects the moral obligation that has not been fulfilled

With the value of these expressions we have observed how the subjunctive combines the moral judgment of the narrator, emphasizing the responsibility that the community has forgotten.

En árabe, se recurre a construcciones impersonales (of injustice), which express moral assessments and are in harmony with the nature of the Arabic literary text.

Subjunctive of counterfactual hypothesis

The subjunctive is used in counterfactual conditionals for the purpose of showing actions that did not take place, although if they had, they could have altered the sequence of events. In "Chronicle of a Death Foretold", this occupation increases the climate of inevitability and collective complaint for what was not achieved. This construction, which is an essential instrument to express repentance, social criticism and resignation.

TO.	Arabic translation	Subjunctive type	Semantic function	Narrative context	Translation observations
"If he had been cared for, he would not have died" (p. 93)	If they had taken care of him, he would not have died	Contrafactual subjunctive (past perfect)	Possibility lost in the past	Hypothesis about an action that would have saved Santiago	El árabe usa "if" and "why" to highlight regret" for what did not happen
"If he had been warned, he would have escaped" (p. 84)	If they had warned him, he would have escaped	Contrafactual subjunctive (past perfect)	Skipped action that changed the destination	It shows the responsibility of those who knew about the crime	"If... It would have been..." Reflect the missing virtual build
"If it hadn't rained, I would have arrived on time" (p. 65)	,If it hadn't rained it would have arrived in time	Contrafactual subjunctive (past perfect)	External circumstance as an excuse for delay	The inaction of some characters is justified	Arab Construction Maintains the Virtual Framework with Negative Event Introduction First

These counterfactual structures underline the irreversible nature of the facts and the implicit sense of guilt.

En la traducción al árabe, se utilizan construcciones como: "if", to embody regret and heartbreak, while maintaining the formal and literary level of the original text

Subjunctive with impersonal modal structures or phrases

The subjunctive also presents with modal and impersonal structures that communicate moral evaluations, judgments, possibilities or needs. In Chronicle of a Death Foretold, these uses reveal the ethical perceptions of the characters or the narrator, especially in situations where the right action was not carried out.

TO.	Arabic translation	Subjunctive type	Semantic function	Narrative context	Translation observations
"It is unfair that no one helped him" (p. 76)	It is unfair that no one helps him	Subjunctive in subordinate clause (imperfect)	Ethical judgment on an omission	It reflects the collective passivity of the people	The Arabic expresses moral judgment by "من الظلم أن..."
"It is possible that he did not know" (p. 68)	It is possible that he did not know	Subjunctive of possibility (imperfect)	Doubt or possibility	Shows uncertainty about a character's knowledge	Se utiliza "it is possible" to express the possibility
"It was necessary for someone to intervene" (p. 83)	It was necessary for someone to intervene	Subjunctive of necessity (imperfect)	Assessment of unperformed action	He points to the lack of action that could have prevented the tragedy	La construcción "It was "...necessary to Transmits the same value

This use of the subjunctive highlights how the narrator or characters evaluate events with critical distance.

In the Arabic translation, impersonal structures are used ("كان من الضروري", "من الممكن أن", "من الظلم أن...") that allow the ethical, evaluative or uncertain tone of the original version to be maintained.

Overall results of the analysis

When analyzing the structures that contain the subjunctive in the novel Chronicle of a Death Foretold, the following general observations can be drawn:

1. Explanation of the hypothetical and unreal subjunctive: It is noted that the imperfect of the subjunctive and the past perfect are often used, particularly in constructions that express loss of potential, counterfactual hypotheses or regret.
2. Emotional and symbolic charges: In the novel, the subjunctive not only has a grammatical function, but also adds a symbolic sense that refers to deep feelings such as collective guilt, impotence and remorse.
3. Various semantic functions: The subjunctive appears in multiple contexts, such as desire, doubt, moral evaluation, hypotheses, and impersonal expressions, reflecting its flexibility within narrative discourse.
4. Translation difficulties: A particular linguistic sensitivity is needed to translate into Arabic, because many structures that include subjunctives must be replaced by expressions such as "si tan solo", "fue necesario que", "es posible que" or "si tan solo", depending on the semantic intent of each case.
5. Stylistic and narrative value: The subjunctive helps to make the narrative ambiguous, something typical of the genre of the novel; in addition, it allows the reader to imagine other possibilities for the

events narrated, which generates a social and critical impact and promotes interaction in interpretative terms.

Using the information obtained from the previous examples, a quantitative statistical table was prepared that illustrates the number of times the different classes of subjunctives appear, as well as their predominant semantic roles and their function in the narrative discourse. The purpose of this table is to provide a comprehensive perspective that supports interpretive analysis and supports future linguistic or traditional research.

Subjunctive type	N.	Predominant function
Subjunctive of deseo	3	Expressing frustrated desires or pleas
Subjunctive of counterfactual hypothesis	3	Construction of alternative realities
Subjunctive of doubt or possibility	2	Express uncertainty
Subjunctive in judgments and evaluations	2	Issuing ethical or moral assessments
Subjunctive with impersonal structures	3	Stating need, injustice, or judgment
Total general	13	—

The 13 examples studied in the previous five sections are summarized in the quantitative table. The use of the subjunctive to express unfulfilled desires or unrealizable situations is an outstanding feature, which strengthens the symbolic and tragic character of the novel. These data could be beneficial for comparative translation research or for pedagogical methods focused on semantic uses of the subjunctive.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended to include authentic literature, such as *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, in the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language to show the use of the subjunctive in realistic situations, especially at advanced levels.
2. It is recommended to focus especially on structures containing the subjunctive when training literary translators, as these usually have emotional, cultural or symbolic meanings that require creative adaptation to the target language.
3. For the future, it would be beneficial to compare the use of the subjunctive in different works by the same writer or in different literary genres, in order to identify broader semantic or stylistic patterns.
4. It is to be expected that parallel databases or thematic analyses will be developed in translation that include the structures of the subjunctive and its alternatives in Arabic, considering the different verbal registers and the variety of the language.

5. It is advisable to promote editorial projects that are critical and bilingual in the field of teaching, as they make it easier for readers to achieve both the original text and its written translation, which favors an educational and comparative reading.

Conclusion

In this work, we have noted that the subjunctive is not restricted to grammatical functions; rather, it seems to be a tool for expressing moral assessments, hypotheses, and feelings. A semantic study with its different uses such as emotion, supposition, judgment, desire and doubt, shows that this modality contributes to expanding the symbolic structure of the text and to uncovering the conflicts of the characters. In addition, it emphasizes the relevance of the subjunctive in literary translation, particularly into Arabic, since it demands attention to the nuances of meaning, structure, and emotional content. To translate the subjunctive in this literary field, it is necessary to have the ability to be sensitive to culture and literature. This study suggests that further research be carried out on the subjunctive as an instrument of communication and style in Latin American literature, and that future studies be carried out to examine its relevance in literary works.

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