

THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FOR SLOVAK STUDENTS IN LEARNING THE SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD IN PORTUGUESE

OS MAIORES DESAFIOS NA APRENDIZAGEM DO MODO SUBJUNTIVO EM PORTUGUÊS PARA
ESTUDANTES COM O ESLOVACO COMO LÍNGUA MATERNA

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Abstract: The subjunctive mood is a particularly challenging issue for Slovak users of Portuguese, primarily because it doesn't exist in our language. Although university students learn subjunctive mood tenses for several years, we know from teaching experience that even students in their final semesters who have a good knowledge of Portuguese often have doubts about its correct use, and even try to avoid it in oral discourse out of fear of making mistakes. In this article, we therefore highlight the most prominent problems that Slovak students encounter when acquiring the subjunctive mood. We also provide a series of example sentences to help students better understand the particularities and subtleties of this verbal mood, and present exercise types that will help consolidate the knowledge they have acquired in practice.

Key words: Portuguese as a foreign language, subjunctive mood, indicative mood, Slovak students, example sentences

Resumo: O modo subjuntivo é uma questão particularmente desafiadora para os falantes eslovacos da língua portuguesa, especialmente porque esse modo verbal não existe na nossa língua. Os estudantes universitários aprendem os tempos do modo subjuntivo durante vários anos, e sabemos, por experiência de prática pedagógica, que mesmo os alunos dos últimos semestres, com bons conhecimentos de português, têm muitas vezes dúvidas quanto ao seu uso correto, tentando até evitá-lo no discurso oral por recearem cometer erros. Neste artigo, destacamos, pois, os problemas mais salientes com que os estudantes eslovacos se deparam na aquisição do modo subjuntivo. Ao mesmo tempo, fornecemos uma série de frases de exemplo para ajudar os alunos a compreender melhor as particularidades e as sutilezas desse modo verbal e apresentamos tipos de exercícios que os ajudarão a consolidar na prática os conhecimentos adquiridos.

Palavras-chave: PLE, modo subjuntivo, modo indicativo, alunos eslovacos, frases de exemplo

Introduction

Our aim is to highlight the most significant problems faced by students of Portuguese¹ – which have Slovak as their mother tongue – while acquiring the subjunctive mood. The system of verb tenses in Slovak is considerably simpler than in Portuguese and other Romance languages. Students of Portuguese come across a number of problems in learning the indicative tenses, but are even more challenged by the subjunctive, which does not exist in our language at all. Students of Portuguese at our university begin to study subjunctive mood tenses at the end of their second year², and it usually still takes them several semesters to learn the rules regarding the use of all its tenses.

The truth is that even advanced users of Portuguese encounter situations where they are unsure of the correct usage of the subjunctive mood. This also applies to those who can speak other Romance languages and are already familiar with the subjunctive in those languages when they start learning Portuguese, as this mood has its own specificities in each such language. We have already briefly outlined this issue in the chapter *As armadilhas do conjuntivo em português para estudantes com o eslovaco como língua materna* in a textbook dedicated to the subjunctive mood in Portuguese (to be published by the end of 2023). In this article, which is based on that chapter, we will explore this topic in greater depth. We will deal with the most problematic aspects of the subjunctive mood for students with Slovak as their mother tongue. While our observations are based on our experience from classes with Slovak students³, native speakers from many other Slavic countries might face similar problems; so our recommendations for the easier acquisition of the subjunctive mood are certainly not limited to Slovak students. We will provide example sentences that are likely to help students capture the nuances of the subjunctive. We will also introduce several types of exercises in order to help (mainly) Slovak students consolidate their acquired knowledge, understand the functioning of the different tenses of the subjunctive, and choose the right one for a given situation. There are, naturally, many excellent and

¹ At our university we focus primarily on the European variant of Portuguese, therefore in this article there might appear expressions and forms more common in this variant.

² Almost none of our students have previous knowledge of the Portuguese language, and they start learning it from the very beginning.

³ For conciseness, we use the term “Slovak students” as the equivalent of “students with Slovak language as their mother tongue”.

useful textbooks about the topic; however, our goal was to look at the subjunctive mood from the point of view of foreigners with a Slavic native language and offer some ways to make this verb mood more understandable for those who study Portuguese.

Verb tenses in Slovak and Portuguese

As we have mentioned above, the set of verb tenses is much simpler in Slovak than in Romance languages. As Spišiaková (2012, p. 71) points out, Slovak only possesses the so-called chronological tenses, which express time from the speaker's point of view and correspond to the present, the past or the future. In Spanish (and the same is true for Portuguese), time is also expressed in relation to another verb tense (simultaneity, antecedence and consequence) and in relation to a reference point and distance from that point 0 (with 0 being the present) – the remote past, the past, the antepresent, the present, the future and the completed future.

The system of tenses in Slovak once used to be more extensive, enabling the expression of simultaneity, succession and antecedence by means of now extinct tenses. Yet now there are only three tenses – present, past and future. When learning Portuguese tenses, Slovak learners have the most difficulty in acquiring the Portuguese past tenses of the indicative mood, as there are five in Portuguese (imperfect, simple preterite, compound preterite, simple pluperfect and compound pluperfect) and only one in Slovak, not to mention the sequence of tenses, which is non-existent in Slovak.

As we have already mentioned, the subjunctive is an even more complicated grammatical phenomenon for Slovak learners than the complex system of past tenses. The complexity of the subjunctive mood in Portuguese lies in its diverse semantic values, the modality it can convey, the syntactic constraints on its use, and its correlation with other verb tenses, which necessitates choosing from six subjunctive tenses⁴ (present, compound preterite, imperfect, compound pluperfect, future,

⁴ The term *tense* is used here, following the usual terminology. However, as Marques (2010: 563) points out, the morphological forms, the paradigms of the subjunctive, “[do] not primarily express temporal information, but [are] rather modal operators, which point to the possible situations to be considered.”

compound future). For Slovak learners, the correct usage is made even more difficult by the fact that there is no sequence of tenses in their native language.

Like Sánchez Presa (2016, p. 352), we believe that with the subjunctive, gradual acquisition is important, and capturing the essence inherent to the phenomenon is preferable to the memorization of the rules. A number of concrete cases in different contexts contribute significantly to the understanding thereof.

Degree of certainty

In order to use the subjunctive mood correctly, it is important to understand the difference between presenting a situation as a state of reality or as an assumption, a wish, an emotional state, etc., which are aspects that our students do not always evaluate properly. In other words, it is important to differentiate between the speakers' attitudes towards what they are expressing, and their degree of knowledge of the situation or belief in its realisation. There are expressions such as *é natural* (it is natural), *é lógico* (it is logical), *é evidente* (it is evident), *é verdade* (it is true), and *é certo* (it is certain) which a Slovak speaker may expect to express certainty, and therefore be conveyed by the use of the indicative mood. But some of these expressions actually require the subjunctive mood, while others the indicative:

É natural que o Diogo esteja desapontado com o comportamento da sua irmã. (It is natural that Diogo be disappointed with his sister's behaviour.)

x

É evidente que o Diogo está desapontado com o comportamento da sua irmã. (It is evident that Diogo is disappointed with his sister's behaviour.)

É verdade que o Diogo está desapontado com o comportamento da sua irmã. (It is true that Diogo is disappointed with his sister's behaviour.)

É certo que o Diogo está desapontado com o comportamento da sua irmã. (It is certain that Diogo is disappointed with his sister's behaviour.)

If the speaker is not completely sure about the statement, which is shown by the use of moderating expressions such as *quase* (almost), *mais ou menos* (more or less), *praticamente* (practically), both the indicative and the subjunctive moods can be used, which is illustrated by these examples taken from the CETEMPúblico 1.7 corpus:

A carreira dos Warriors tem sido decepcionante e é quase certo que vão ficar fora dos «play off». (The Warriors' career has been disappointing, and they will almost certainly miss out on the play-offs.)

Para o candidato do PP, em Outubro, “é quase certo que não vai haver maioria absoluta de um só partido”. (For the People's Party candidate, in October “it's almost certain that there won't be an absolute majority for a single party”.)

x

E ajudou, a tal ponto que o caso está a dar a volta ao mundo e é quase certo que seja levado ao Congresso. (And it helped, to such an extent that the case is going round the world and is almost certain to be taken to Congress.)

Além disso, é quase certo que o Comité parlamentar se oponha aos planos de reformas que a Biblioteca vai anunciar. (What's more, the parliamentary committee is almost certain to oppose the reform plans that the Library will announce.)

The situation becomes more complicated by the fact that, when used in the negative form, the aforementioned expressions require the use of the subjunctive:

Não é certo que a Maria da Conceição tenha regado as plantas, como nos tinha prometido. (It's not certain that Maria da Conceição watered the plants, as she had promised us.)

Não é evidente que as novas medidas da câmara tragam os resultados esperados. (It's not clear that the town hall's new measures will bring the expected results.)

There are expressions that can be followed by both moods, depending on the speaker's point of view and degree of certainty (knowledge/conviction):

É lógico que a Fernanda não vai comprar um carro. Todos sabemos que faz tudo para reduzir a sua pegada de carbono e viaja sempre de transportes públicos. (It's logical that Fernanda isn't going to buy a car. We all know that she does everything she can to reduce her carbon footprint and always travels by public transport.) x *É lógico que a Fernanda não compre um carro. Investiu muito no apartamento e eu duvidaria que tivesse dinheiro para comprar um.* (It's logical that Fernanda isn't going to buy a car. She invested a lot in her flat and I doubt that she has money to buy one.)

In the case of the expression *é lógico*, the speaker draws a conclusion based on his knowledge of the situation. If what he knows leads him to certainty, he will choose the indicative mood. If he is not absolutely sure and the statement is more of an assumption, he will use the subjunctive.

Even verbs or expressions that normally require the use of the subjunctive mood, as, for example, *não acreditar* (not to believe), *não achar*, *não pensar* (not to think), can be followed by the indicative mood, depending on the veracity of the proposition:

O pai do Vasco não acredita que ele tenha lido três livros numa semana.

O pai do Vasco não acredita que ele leu três livros numa semana.
(Vasco's father doesn't believe that he's read three books in a week.)

In the first sentence, it is not certain whether Vasco has read the books or not. In the second one, the speaker of the utterance knows that Vasco read them.

On the other hand, some verbs or expressions that generally require the use of the indicative mood, such as *achar*, can be followed by the subjunctive mood, depending on the degree of uncertainty:

Acho que a nossa equipa ainda pode ganhar o campeonato. (I think our team can still win the championship.)
Acho que a nossa equipa ainda possa ganhar o campeonato. (I think our team could still win the championship.)

Temporal meanings of the subjunctive mood

The correct choice of the subjunctive tense is complicated by the fact that, after certain expressions, conjunctions and conjunctive locutions, the present tense refers to the future, as for example in these cases:

- 1) After expressions conveying doubt or uncertainty, such as *duvidar que* (to doubt that), *ser incerto que* (to be uncertain that), *não ser óbvio que* (not to be obvious that), after expressions voicing possibility or probability, such as *ser provável que* (to be likely that), *ser improvável que* (to be unlikely that), *ser possível que* (to be possible that):

Muitos jovens duvidam que sejamos capazes de acabar com as alterações climáticas nas próximas décadas. (Many young people doubt that we'll be able to stop climate change in coming decades.)
É provável que as ondas de calor se repitam com mais frequência no futuro. (Heatwaves are likely to recur more frequently in the future.)

- 2) After verbs or expressions voicing an assumption, when used in the negative form – for example, *não achar que* (not to think that), *não acreditar que*, *não crer que* (not to believe that), *não pensar que* (not to think that):

Não cremos que a afluência às urnas ultrapasse 50%. (We don't think the electoral turnout will exceed 50%.)

- 3) After temporal conjunctions, such as *antes que* (before), *assim que* (as soon as), *até que* (until), *logo que*, *mal* (as soon as):

Assim que apanhemos peixe suficiente, vamos começar a grelhá-lo. (Once we've caught enough fish, we'll start grilling them.)

Não solicite um empréstimo hipotecário até que te informem de todos os requisitos. (Don't apply for a mortgage before they inform you of all the requirements.)

- 4) After conditional conjunctions and locutions, such as *a não ser que*, *a menos que* (unless), *caso* (if):

Amanhã vamos ver o nascer do sol, a não ser que acordemos tarde. (Tomorrow we'll watch the sunrise, unless we wake up late.)

Students therefore need to be aware that the present subjunctive also expresses future. As Marques (2010, p. 556) states:

The conjunctive forms have the function of pointing to possibilities to be considered in the context of enunciation. The present and future of the subjunctive point to open possibilities in this context and are therefore deictic forms, while the imperfect past tense of the subjunctive points to other possibilities – possibilities accessible from a point in the past or possibilities that are not present in the context of enunciation.^{5,6}

As can be seen from the examples above, the present subjunctive is also used in cases where Slovak learners would expect it correct to use the future tense subjunctive. However, the future subjunctive has a relatively limited use in Portuguese. If students have prior knowledge of Spanish, the teacher can rely on the use of the present tense subjunctive expressing future in Spanish when explaining its functions in Portuguese. For example *É necessário que preenchas o formulário. = Es necesario que rellenes el formulario. (It is necessary that you fill in the form.)*

⁵ As formas de subjuntivo têm a função de apontar para possibilidades a considerar no contexto de enunciação. O presente e o futuro do subjuntivo apontam para possibilidades em aberto neste contexto, pelo que são formas dêicticas, enquanto o pretérito imperfeito do subjuntivo aponta para outras possibilidades – possibilidades acessíveis a partir de um ponto do passado ou possibilidades que não estão presentes no contexto de enunciação.

⁶ Translated by the authors of this article.

In the case of the sequence of verb tenses, the relationships between the situations described in the individual clauses are even more complicated. For example, the imperfect subjunctive, which Slovak students tend to immediately relate to the past due to their knowledge of the use of the imperfect past tense in the indicative mood⁷, can express simultaneity or posteriority of the situation of the subordinate clause in relation to that of the main clause:

Era provável que os seus filhos gastassem todo o dinheiro herdado. (It was likely that his children spent/would spend all the money they inherited.)

If we want to express unambiguously the antecedence of the action of the subordinate clause to that of the main clause, we need to use the compound plusperfect of the subjunctive:

Era provável que os seus filhos tivessem gasto todo o dinheiro herdado. (It was likely that his children had spent all the money they inherited.)

When learning the subjunctive mood, students need to be aware that some conjunctions or conjunctive locutions with equivalent meanings are followed by different subjunctive tenses. For example, the conjunction *se* (if), in a real and realisable conditional sentence, is followed by the future tense, while the conjunction *caso* (if), with a very similar meaning and in the same context, is followed by the present tense:

Caso queiras ir ao concerto, é melhor comprares o bilhete com antecedência. ≡ Se quiseres ir ao concerto, é melhor comprares o bilhete com antecedência. (If you want to go to the concert, it's best to buy your ticket in advance.)

The future subjunctive is used after the concessive conjunctive locution *mesmo se* (even if) in a sentence that expresses a probable situation in the future in relation to the situation mentioned in the main sentence; the present subjunctive must be used after the concessive conjunctive locution *mesmo que* (even if), which is very close in meaning:

⁷ Although the imperfect indicative can have the value of the conditional (*Era bom almoçarmos mais cedo hoje.* – It would be good to have lunch earlier today.), students associate it mainly with the past.

Mesmo se houver muita neve este inverno, não me apetece ir esquiar. ≡ Mesmo que haja muita neve este inverno, não me apetece ir esquiar. (Even if there's a lot of snow this winter, I don't feel like going skiing.)

At the same time, some conjunctions and conjunctive locutions allow the use of several subjunctive tenses with a very similar meaning. This is the case, for example, of the conjunctions and locutions *embora* (although, even if, even though), *logo que*, *assim que* and *mal* (as soon as).

Embora a Leonor tenha/tivesse comprado três garrafas de vinho, não chegou para todos os convidados. ≡ Embora a Leonor comprasse três garrafas de vinho, não chegou para todos os convidados. (Although Leonor bought three bottles of wine, there wasn't enough for all the guests.)

Mal entres/tenhas entrado na casa, liga o ar condicionado. (As soon as you've entered the house, switch on the air conditioning.)

Assim que/Logo que passeies/tenhas passeado o cão, dá-lhe de comer. (As soon as you've walked the dog, feed it.)

The choice of the correct tense of the subjunctive after the conjunction *mal* is further complicated by the fact that the connecting expressions *assim que* and *logo que*, with very similar meanings, also allow the use of the subjunctive future tense and the subjunctive compound future tense, while this option is not available after the conjunction *mal*:

Assim que/Logo que passeares/tiveres passeado o cão, dá-lhe de comer. (As soon as you've walked the dog, feed it.)

Mal ~~passeares/tiveres passeado~~ o cão, dá-lhe de comer.

After some temporal conjunctions and conjunctive locutions, the subjunctive mood is used to express futurity, while the indicative mood is used to express the present and the past, which is closely related to the nature of the subjunctive, which usually expresses uncertainty, a lesser degree of knowledge or belief. While the realisation of a past or present action is or can be taken for granted, the realisation of a future action is not:

Quando vi o vizinho à janela, acenei-lhe com a mão. (When I saw the neighbour at the window, I waved to him.)

Quando vejo o vizinho à janela, aceno-lhe com a mão. (When I see the neighbour at the window, I wave to him.)

Quando vir o vizinho à janela, vou acenar-lhe com a mão. (When I see the neighbour at the window, I will wave to him.)

Enquanto estivemos de férias, acordávamos muito tarde. (When we were on holiday, we woke up very late.)

Enquanto estamos de férias, acordamos muito tarde. (When we are on holiday, we wake up very late.)

Enquanto estivermos de férias, vamos acordar muito tarde. (When we are on holiday, we are going to wake up very late.)

Se os clientes se registam online, recebem um desconto de 10%. (If the customers register online, they receive a 10% discount.)

Se os clientes se registarem online nos próximos 15 dias, receberão um desconto de 10%. (If the customers register online within the next two weeks, they will receive a 10% discount.)

Se os clientes se registaram online, receberam um desconto de 10%. (If the customers registered online, they received a 10% discount.)

In relative subordinate clauses, the subjunctive mood is used when the antecedent is indefinite or unknown; when the antecedent is known, the indicative mood is used.

Quero fazer uma entrevista com uma pessoa que colecionasse carros antigos. (I want to interview someone who collects vintage cars.)

Quero fazer uma entrevista com o senhor que coleciona carros antigos. (I want to interview the gentleman who collects vintage cars.)

When deciding between the present indicative and the present subjunctive, students can take advantage of the use of the article. While in the sentence that requires the subjunctive mood the antecedent is preceded by the indefinite article, in the sentence that requires the indicative mood it is preceded by the definite article.

This rule cannot be applied if the antecedent is known but does not yet exist:

O Fernando quer comprar uma casa de campo que tenha uma cozinha azul. (Fernando wants to buy a country house that has a blue kitchen.)

O Fernando quer comprar a casa de campo que tiver uma cozinha azul. (Fernando wants to buy the country house that will have a blue kitchen.)

In classes, it is important to draw attention to such nuances, which is why we always use semantically close sentences in contrast. In this case, in the first utterance, Fernando is interested in buying a country house with a blue kitchen, but has not yet

chosen a particular one. In the second utterance, he already knows that only one country house will have a blue kitchen and he wants that one, but it has not yet been built or is not yet on sale. It is always useful to emphasize the contrast with the indicative as well:

O Fernando quer comprar a casa de campo que tem uma cozinha azul. (Fernando wants to buy the country house that has a blue kitchen.)

Another specific case that needs to be emphasised in class is that of sentences with the modal adverb *talvez* (maybe), which requires the use of the subjunctive mood only when it precedes the verb form (otherwise, the indicative mood is used).

Talvez fosse tarde demais. \equiv *Era, talvez, tarde demais.* (Maybe it was too late.)

However, after the equivalent expression *se calhar*, the indicative is always used:

Se calhar era tarde demais. \equiv *Era, se calhar, tarde demais.* (Maybe it was too late.)

In the first semesters before students have mastered the subjunctive mood, we recommend them to use the expression *se calhar* (maybe), since the position of the modal adverb *talvez* before the verb form is perceived as emphatic. Naturally, students know the adverb *talvez* passively from the first semester onwards, but we recommend to include it in their active vocabulary only in upper years, when they've become familiar with the subjunctive mood.

Interference with Spanish

Currently, at our faculty most students of Portuguese combine it with Spanish Studies. In practice, we see that while Spanish helps students in the first stages of their learning of Portuguese, since they generally learn the basics of Portuguese faster than those who study it in combination with more distant languages such as English or Romanian, undesirable interferences naturally occur as well. While at the beginning such interferences are manifested at the level of genders, accent marking or position of pronouns, subsequently they also negatively affect the correct use of the subjunctive

mood. Students of Portuguese who already know Spanish often rely on its rules for using the subjunctive mood when they use this verb mood in Portuguese. Although in many cases the usage is the same, it cannot be said that it works in a completely identical way. A substantial part of the difference stems from the fact that, unlike current Spanish, the future subjunctive is still used in Portuguese.

PT: *Quando estiveres no centro, dá-me um toque.*

ES: *Cuando estés en el centro, dame un toque.*

(When you're in the centre, give me a call.)

There is also a difference in the use of the subjunctive mood between Portuguese and Spanish in relative subordinate clauses when the antecedent is implicit. While Portuguese uses the subjunctive mood, Spanish uses the indicative mood. When the antecedent is non-existent or indeterminate in the real world, although it can be formally explicit, both languages require the subjunctive mood.

Implicit antecedent⁸:

PT: *Há quem pense que passar as férias à beira-mar é aborrecido.*

ES: *Hay quien piensa que pasar las vacaciones junto al mar es aburrido.*

(Some people think that spending holidays by the sea is boring.)

Explicit antecedent, but unknown to the author of the utterance:

PT: *Não conhecemos ninguém que fale arménio.*

ES: *No conocemos a nadie que hable armenio.*

(We don't know anyone who speaks Armenian.)

Explicit indeterminate antecedent:

PT: *Precisamos de alguém que fale arménio.*

ES: *Necesitamos a alguien que hable armenio.*

(We need someone who speaks Armenian.)

The importance of contrastive exercises in teaching the subjunctive mood

⁸ These types of clauses are also called relative clauses without an expressed antecedent.

We know from practice that when teaching the subjunctive mood, it is helpful to provide students with plenty of examples translated into their primary language. Model sentences that systematically demonstrate different situations in which the subjunctive mood is used with certain expressions that require its use are very useful. For Slovak students, this is even more important given the aforementioned absence of sequence of times in our language. In our classes we have observed that students are afraid to use the subjunctive in speech and even avoid it, which they do not always manage to do correctly, since their attempt to rephrase the sentence(s) often disrupts the coherence of the speech.

Based on experience, we recommend that students memorize sets of model sentences at the introductory stage. Until they become more confident in the correct usage of the various subjunctive tenses, they can use these examples as a template for forming other sentences. For example:

Duvido que o Guilherme aceite o trabalho. (I doubt that Guilherme will take the job.) – consequence, simultaneity.

Duvido que o Guilherme tenha aceitado o trabalho. (I doubt that Guilherme took the job.) – antecedence.

Duvidei que o Guilherme aceitasse o trabalho. (I doubted that Guilherme would take the job.) – consequence, simultaneity.

Duvidaria que o Guilherme aceitasse o trabalho. (I would doubt that Guilherme would take the job.) – consequence.⁹

Duvidava que o Guilherme tivesse aceitado o trabalho. (I doubted that Guilherme had taken the job.) – antecedence.

Os tomates não amadurecem, embora a Sílvia os regue. (The tomatoes don't ripen, even though Sílvia waters them.) – simultaneity.

Os tomates não amadurecem, embora a Sílvia os tenha regado. (The tomatoes don't ripen, even though Sílvia has watered them.) – antecedence.

Os tomates não amadureceram, embora a Sílvia os regasse. (The tomatoes didn't ripen, even though Sílvia watered them.) – simultaneity.

Os tomates não amadureceram embora a Sílvia os tivesse regado. (The tomatoes didn't ripen, even though Sílvia had watered them.) – antecedence.

It is also very useful to provide students with exercises in which they practise the various subjunctives, alongside exercises where they have to decide whether to use one of the tenses of the subjunctive, the indicative or the personal infinitive. These are

⁹ In the case of a non-point action, simultaneity of actions is also possible. For example: *Duvidaria que o Guilherme estivesse no escritório.* (I would doubt that Guilherme is in the office.)

some examples taken from the exercise book included in the above-mentioned textbook:

1.
 - a) A: Imagina, hoje o meu irmão vai escalar o Monte Branco.
B: Oxalá ele _____ (ter) sorte com o tempo!
 - b) A: Imagina, hoje o meu irmão vai escalar o Monte Branco.
B: Oxalá ele _____ (ter) mais sorte com o tempo do que nós aqui, mas a previsão para lá também não é nada boa...
 - c) A: Imagina, o meu irmão foi escalar o Monte Branco. Ainda não tenho notícias dele, mas a esta altura já deve ter descido.
B: Oxalá ele _____ (ter) sorte com o tempo!
 - d) A: Imagina, o meu irmão foi escalar o Monte Branco, mas o tempo estava péssimo e teve de desistir a meio.
B: Que pena! Oxalá ele _____ (ter) mais sorte com o tempo!
2.
 - a) A: O Mauro vai ter de pintar a sala e o quarto este fim de semana. Vai levar imenso tempo!
B: Talvez o Fernando _____ (poder) ajudá-lo. Ele sempre o ajudou quando foi preciso.
 - b) A: O Mauro vai ter de pintar a sala e o quarto este fim de semana. Vai levar imenso tempo!
B: Se calhar o Fernando _____ (poder) ajudá-lo. Ele sempre o ajudou quando foi preciso.
 - c) A: O Mauro vai ter de pintar a sala e o quarto este fim de semana. Vai levar imenso tempo!
B: Talvez o Fernando _____ (poder) ajudá-lo, mas parece-me que viaja no sábado.
 - d) A: O Mauro teve de pintar a sala e o quarto no fim de semana passado. Deve ter levado imenso tempo!
B: Talvez o Fernando o _____ (ajudar), já que esteve livre durante o fim de semana.
3.
 - a) A: O Edgar tem de entregar o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* até amanhã.
B: É impossível que _____ (cumprir) o prazo.
 - b) A: O Edgar tem de entregar o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* até amanhã.
B: É impossível ele _____ (cumprir) o prazo.
 - c) A: O Edgar tinha de entregar o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* ontem.
B: É impossível que _____ (cumprir) o prazo.
 - d) A: O Edgar tem de entregar o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* até amanhã.
B: Ele é extremamente preguiçoso. É impossível que _____ (cumprir) o prazo.
 - e) A: O Edgar teve de entregar o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* ontem.
B: Seria impossível que _____ (cumprir) o prazo.
 - f) A: O Edgar entregou o ensaio sobre *Os Maias* ontem.
B: A sério? Pensei que era impossível que _____ (cumprir) o prazo.

Conclusion

As the article indicates, the subjunctive mood needs to be given special attention in classes of Portuguese as a foreign language. Slovak students, like those with some other Slavic language as their mother tongue, cannot find an equivalent for the subjunctive mood in their own language and experience difficulties in learning and mastering it, often even coming under pressure when using it in speech. In this article, we focus on the difficulties that we perceive as the most significant in our pedagogical practice and try to offer ways to make them more understandable to students. In the classes of Portuguese as a foreign language, we have found it most useful to reinforce the different subjunctive tenses through a number of model sentences that clearly show their use in different contexts.

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