

**Workshop on Mood Alternation in Adverbial Clauses,**  
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# Mood alternation in concessive clauses of Portuguese

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# Introduction

## Concessive clauses in Portuguese

- (1) a. Apesar da chuva recente, há falta de água  
*despite of-the rain recent is lack of water*  
'Despite the recent rain, there is lack of water'
- b. Apesar de ter chovido, a barragem tem pouca água  
*despite of to-have rained the dam has few water*  
'Even if it rained, the dam has few water'
- (2) a. A ilha avistava-se perfeitamente, não obstante o nevoeiro  
*the island see-one perfectly, not withstanding the fog*  
'The island could perfectly be seen, despite the fog'
- b. Continua a trabalhar, não obstante estar doente  
*continues to work, not withstanding be-<sub>INF</sub> ill*  
'(S)he continued to work, notwithstanding being ill'

# Introduction (Cont.)

(3) Não sabia nadar, embora fosse marinheiro.  
*not knew to-swim although was<sub>SUBJ</sub> sailor*  
'He couldn't swim, although he was a sailor'

(4) Ela fala japonês, ainda que nunca tenha ido ao Japão  
*she speaks Japanese even that never has<sub>SUBJ</sub> been to-the Japan*  
'She speaks Japanese, even that she never went to Japan'

⇒ Subjunctive occurs in (finite) concessive clauses.

However, sometimes Indicative is also heard:

(5) O pior já passou, se bem que ainda há perigo  
*the worst already passed if well that still is<sub>IND</sub> danger*  
'The worst is gone, although there still is danger'

# (Pure) concessives, conditional concessives / unconditionals

- (6) a. Ele não se demite mesmo que **tenha** sido acusado em tribunal, como foi  
*he not self resign even that has-SUBJ been accused in court as was*  
'He will not resign even if he was accused in court, as he was'
- b. Ele não se demite mesmo que **seja** acusado em tribunal  
*he not self resign even that be-SUBJ accused in court*  
'He will not resign even if he is accused in court'
- c. Ele não se teria demitido mesmo que **tivesse sido** acusado, que não foi  
*he not self has-COND resign even that had-SUBJ been accused that was not*  
'He would not have resigned even if he had been accused in court (which he wasn't)'

# Concessive and Adversative clauses

(3) a. Não sabia nadar, embora fosse marinheiro.  
*not knew to-swim although was<sub>SUBJ</sub> sailor*  
'He couldn't swim, although he was a sailor'

b. Era marinheiro, mas não sabia nadar.  
*was sailor but not knew<sub>IND</sub> to-swim*  
'He was a sailor, but he couldn't swim'

(4) a. Ela fala japonês, ainda que nunca tenha ido ao Japão  
*she speaks Japanese even that never has<sub>SUBJ</sub> been to-the Japan*  
'She speaks Japanese, even that she never went to Japan'

b. Ela nunca foi ao Japão, mas fala japonês  
*she never went to-the Japan but speaks<sub>IND</sub> Japanese*  
'She never went to Japan, but she speaks Japanese'

# Questions

1 – Why does Subjunctive occur in concessive clauses and Indicative in adversative clauses?

2 – Is the alternation between Subjunctive and Indicative in concessive clauses of Portuguese a matter of free choice?

# Conditions for Subjunctive or Indicative in Portuguese

- Hypothesis I – Subjunctive is the mood of *irrealis*
- Two major problems:
  - (i) Indicative occurs in several kinds of sentences that do not describe reality (e.g., complement clauses of fiction verbs, ...)
  - (ii) Subjunctive occurs in sentences that (are taken to) describe facts
    - Complement clauses of factive-emotive predicates (e.g., the equivalents of *to regret, to be curious, to surprise,...*)
    - Concessive clauses

# Subjunctive and *irrealis*

- (7) sonhei que {estava/ \*estivesse} a nevar  
*dreamed that {was-IND / \*was-SUBJ} to snow*  
'I dreamed that it was snowing'
- (8) o Pedro está convencido que a Terra {é / \*seja} plana  
*the Pedro is convinced that the Earth {is-IND / \*is-SUBJ} flat*  
'Pedro is convinced that the Earth is flat'
- (9) {lamento / é curioso / surpreende-me} que {\*está / esteja} a chover  
*{regret / is curious / surprises-me} that {\*is-IND / is-SUBJ} to rain*  
'{I regret / it's curious / I'm surprised} that it's raining'



# Subjunctive and heterogeneous modal space

- Hypothesis 2 – Subjunctive occurs in heterogeneous modal spaces ( $p$ -worlds + non- $p$  worlds); Indicative occurs in homogeneous modal spaces (only  $p$ -worlds or only non- $p$  worlds) (Giannakidou & Mari 2021, Godard 2012)

(10) É possível que {chova / \*chove}  
is possible that {rains-*SUBJ* / \*rains-*IND*}  
'It's possible that it will rain'

(11) (não) choveu  
(not) rained-*IND*  
'It rained / it didn't rain'

«the subjunctive mood is appropriate when the interpretation requires taking into account the possibility of *non-p* along with that of *p*.» (Godard 2012, p. 136)

# Negative sentences

- (12) a Ana não {está / \*esteja} em casa  
*the Ana not {is<sub>-IND</sub> / is<sub>-SUBJ</sub>} at home*  
'Ana is not at home'
- (13) ele saiu sem que a Maria {\*percebeu / percebesse}  
*he left without that the Maria {\*notice<sub>-IND</sub> / notice<sub>-SUBJ</sub>}*  
'He left without Maria noticing'
- (14) o mau tempo impediu que {\*saímos / saíssemos}  
*the bad weather prevented that {\*leave<sub>-IND</sub> / leave<sub>-SUBJ</sub>}*  
'Bad weather prevented us from leaving'

# Conditions for Subjunctive or Indicative in Portuguese

- Hypothesis 3 – [non- $p$  worlds  $\rightarrow$  Subjunctive]  
[only  $p$ -worlds  $\rightarrow$  Indicative]

## **Conditions for Subjunctive or Indicative in Portuguese (to be revised later):**

If the Modal Base contains at least one world where  $\varphi$  is false, the verb of  $\varphi$  inflects in the Subjunctive;

If the Modal Base contains only worlds where  $\varphi$  is true, the verb of  $\varphi$  inflects in the Indicative.

But, why Subjunctive in concessive clauses?

# Adversative clauses and concessive clauses

- Ducrot 1978:

- Direct opposition

p, but q



¬q

*It was Sunday, but he was working*

*Although it was Sunday, he was working*

[it was Sunday → he was not working]

- Indirect opposition

p, but q



r



¬ r

*We have a strong team, but they are also strong*

*We have a strong team, although they are also strong*

[we have a strong team → we will win the game]

[they have a strong team → we will not win the game]

# Adversative and concessive clauses (Cont.)

- Direct opposition

p, but q  
|  
|-----> ¬q  
(Ind.) (Ind.)

although p, q  
|  
|-----> ¬q  
(Subj.) (Ind.)

- The marked mood (Indicative) occurs in the proposition that is unexpected; in concessive constructions, choice of different moods for main and subordinated clauses is a strategy to focus on the unexpected
- But... in cases of indirect opposition concessive and adversative conjunctions might be replaced by one another...

# Adversative and concessive clauses (Cont.)

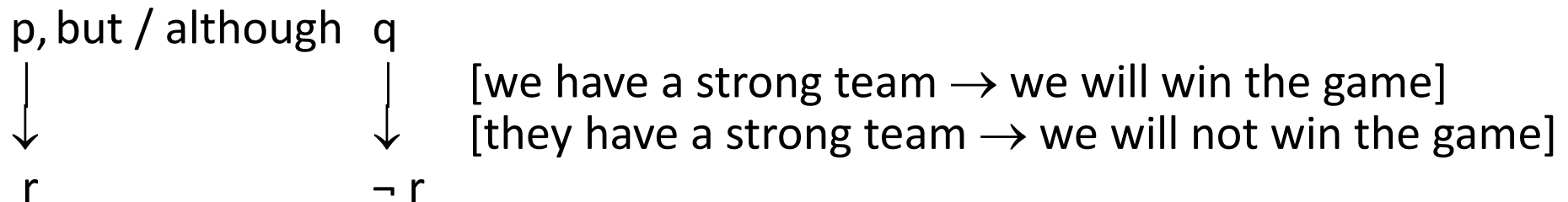
(15) a. somos fortes, **mas** eles também **são**  
*are strong but they also are-IND*

'we are strong, but so they are'

b. somos fortes, **embora** eles também **sejam**  
*are strong although they also are-SUBJ*

'we are strong, although they also are'

(15a) and (15b) have similar meanings, both expressing indirect opposition:



# Pragmatics

[p, but q]  $\rightarrow$  q

[p, although q]  $\rightarrow$  p

[we are strong  $\rightarrow$  we will win]

[they are strong  $\rightarrow$  we will not win]

(16) a. [We are strong, but so they are]  $\rightarrow$  [We will not win]

b. [We are strong, although they also are]  $\rightarrow$  [We will win]

# Pragmatics (Cont.)

- Adversatives: remove from context all but the worlds where inferences following from  $\varphi$  are observed;
- Concessives: remove from context possible worlds where inferences following from  $\varphi$  are observed
- $[c + \text{but } \varphi] = c' \mid c'$  contains only worlds where inferences following from  $\varphi$  hold
- $[c + \text{although } \varphi] = c' \mid c'$  contains worlds where inferences following from  $\varphi$  do not hold



# Pragmatics (Cont.)

Indirect opposition:

Expectations: [We are strong → We will win]  
[They are strong → We will not win]

- (16) a. [We are strong, but so they are] → [We will not win]  
b. [We are strong, although they also are] → [We will win]

Direct opposition:

Expectation: [It was Sunday → He was not working]

- (17) a. [It was Sunday, but he was working] → [He was working]  
b. [Although it was Sunday, he was working] → [He was working]

# Overview

## Conditions for Subjunctive or Indicative in Portuguese:

If the Modal Base contains at least one world where  $p$  is false or where an inference following from  $p$  is not verified, the verb of  $p$  inflects in the Subjunctive;

If the Modal Base contains only worlds where  $p$  is true and where inferences following from  $p$  are verified, the verb of  $p$  inflects in the Indicative.

That is, Subjunctive signals the consideration of  $\neg p$  worlds or worlds where inferences following from  $p$  do not hold.

⇒ Subjunctive in Concessive clauses

⇒ Indicative in Adversative clauses

# Indicative in concessive clauses of Portuguese

	Indicative	Subjunctive
Se bem que	119	1551
Embora	22	11 819
Apesar de	7	0
Conquanto	2	70
Ainda que	1	261
(CETEMPÚBLICO)		

- Question 2 – Is mood alternation in concessive clauses a matter of free choice?

«O acordo [entre Israel e o Hamas] prevê a libertação de membros do Hamas, **embora** nesta fase inicial **serão** libertadas sobretudo mulheres e crianças.» (Sic Notícias, 23/01/2024)

‘The agreement [between Israel and Hamas] foresees the liberation of members of Hamas from Israeli prisons, **although** at this first stage it will **be**<sub>(INDICATIVE)</sub> mostly women and children that will be released.’

# Mood alternation

- A case of Indirect opposition ( $[p \rightarrow r] ; [q \rightarrow \neg r]$ ):

[liberation of members of Hamas]  $\rightarrow$  Danger!

[mostly women and children that will be released]  $\rightarrow$  No problem!

(18) (...) embora (...) serão (...)

(...) *although* (...) *be*<sub>IND</sub>

Alternatives:

(19) (...) embora (...) sejam (...)

(...) *although* (...) *be*<sub>SUBJ</sub>

(20) (...) mas (...) serão (...)

(...) *but* (...) *be*<sub>IND</sub>

# Mood alternation (Cont.)

[liberation of members of Hamas] → Danger!

[mostly women and children that will be released] → No problem!

[p, although q] → p

[p, but q] → q

Alternatives:

[p, embora q<sub>-SUBJ</sub>] ('[p, although q<sub>-SUBJ</sub>])

(Remove from context inferences from *q*)

⇒ **Danger!**

[p, mas q<sub>-IND</sub>] ('[p, but q<sub>-IND</sub>])

(Remove from context inferences from *p*)

⇒ **Relax!**

[p, embora q<sub>-IND</sub>] ('[p, although q<sub>-IND</sub>])

⇒ **Be alert, but don't panic!**

(concessive conjunction: Keep in context inferences from *p*;

Indicative: Keep in context inferences from *q*)

# Conclusion

- Pragmatics plays a role in mood selection in Portuguese
- Indicative signals the consideration of only  $p$ -worlds and worlds where inferences following from  $p$  hold.
- Subjunctive signals the consideration of  $\neg p$  worlds or worlds where inferences following from  $p$  do not hold.
- Adversative and concessive conjunctions are adequate tools to express a solved conflict between two opposite propositions; “ $p$ , but  $q$ ” indicates that  $q$  wins; “ $p$ , although  $q$ ” indicates that  $p$  wins.
- The fact that Subjunctive is the preferred mood in concessive clauses and Indicative is the only mood accepted in adversative clauses is coherent with that.
- Resort to Indicative in concessive clauses is a pragmatic strategy to equilibrate propositions that point to opposite directions, keeping in discourse inferences that follow from both of them.

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**THANK YOU!!!**

**VIELEN DANK!**

**OBRIGADO!**