

Conditional Sentences (ch. 33)

You all have had conditional sentences before, so what you were studying was the range of conditional sentences that are used with subjunctives. Chapter 33 gives an overview of the different sentences, giving them all categories and scary names.

The Bottom Line:

There are two types of conditional sentences:

1. Those you think are likely to happen: Simple fact sentences. (These use the indicative)
2. Those you think are not likely to happen or actually didn't happen. (These use the subjunctive).

Recognition:

- *sī* or *nisi*. If you have one of these, then it is a conditional sentence.
- there will be 2 clauses: one that begins with *si*, and the other one. I'll call them the IF clause (with *si* or *nisi*) and the THEN clause (the other one).

Simple Fact conditional sentences

Simple fact conditional sentences can be past, present or future.

- For the present, you use the present tense in both clauses.
 - *sī aliquis amīcus est, eī crēdō. If someone is my friend, I trust him.*
- For the past, you use a past tense in both clauses.
 - *sī eō tempōre Wilmingtone aderātis, procellam Fran passi sitis. If you were in Wilmington at that time, then you experienced hurricane Fran.*
- For the future, you use the future or future perfect in the IF clause, and the future in the THEN clause.
 - *Sī tē crās viderō, librum tibi dābō. If I see you tomorrow, I will give you the book.*

Remember

- All of these are things that either did happen, or are/were very likely to happen.

Subjunctive sentences.

These can be present or past (present contrary to fact and past contrary to fact), and future ("future less vivid"):

- Present contrary to fact: use imperfect subjunctive for both clauses.
 - *sī eum cōgnōscerem, apud mē eum invitārem. If I knew him, I would invite him to my house.*
- Past contrary to fact: use pluperfect subjunctive for both clauses.
 - *sī rex benignus fuisset, populus numquam eum subvertisset. If the king had been benevolent, the people would never have overthrown him.*
- Future Less Vivid: use present subjunctive in both clauses.
 - *sī Catullus Lesbiam amāre dēsinat, fēlicior sit. If Catullus were to ever stop loving Lesbia, he would be more fortunate.*

Comparison:

<i>Time</i>	<i>Simple fact</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
<i>past</i>	any past tense in both clauses	pluperfect subj. in both.
<i>present</i>	present tense in both	imperfect subj. in both
<i>future</i>	fut. perf. in IF clause, future in THEN clause	present subj. in both.

Remember:

- If the sentence is subjunctive, it's about unlikely things or things that did not happen or are not happening.
- The subjunctive sentences are all sort of “racheted back” one tense from the time fframe they represent (i.e. the present situation is shown with the imperfect tense, while the past tense is shown by the pluperfect ...)