



Teaching of Spanish grammar in the Soviet secondary school (case of the Present Subjunctive)

Enseñanza de la gramática española en la escuela secundaria soviética (caso del presente de subjuntivo)

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Abstract

The present article analyzes the evolution of the teaching of Spanish grammar in the Soviet secondary school through the case study of the Present Subjunctive tense. Based on relevant legislation, the period of Spanish language instruction in schools have been divided into three periods: 1947-1955, 1961-1979, and 1980-1991. The treatment of the Present Subjunctive in the official textbooks from each period is compared, focusing on the method of introduction, the type of explanation provided, and the series of exercises proposed.

The analysis shows that the teaching of Spanish grammar – and the Present Subjunctive in particular – underwent a significant shift during the Soviet era: from the comparative-conscientious paradigm in the first period, through the transitional stage of the comparative-practical approach in the second period, to the communicative paradigm in the third period.

Keywords: Grammar teaching; Linguistic historiography; Subjunctive mood; Communicative approach

Resumen

El presente artículo analiza la evolución de la enseñanza de la gramática española en la educación secundaria soviética a través del estudio de caso del presente de subjuntivo. Con base en la legislación pertinente, el período de enseñanza del español en las escuelas se ha dividido en tres períodos: 1947-1955, 1961-1979 y 1980-1991. Se compara el tratamiento del presente de subjuntivo en los libros de texto oficiales de cada período, centrándose en el método de introducción, el tipo de explicación proporcionada y la serie de ejercicios propuestos.

El análisis muestra que la enseñanza de la gramática española, y en particular del presente de subjuntivo, experimentó un cambio significativo durante la era soviética: desde el paradigma comparativo-consciente en el primer período, pasando por la etapa de transición caracterizado por el enfoque comparativo-práctico en el segundo, hasta el paradigma comunicativo en el tercer período.

Palabras clave: Enseñanza de la gramática; Historiografía lingüística; Modo subjuntivo; Enfoque comunicativo

INTRODUCTION

Despite the popularity of the communicative approach in present-day Russian foreign language teaching, it is still possible to detect in the foreign language classroom some remnants of instruction from previous times. For example, Suárez García (1997), analyzing Soviet and contemporary university textbooks of Spanish, comes to the conclusion that “la inercia de muchos años y el que gran parte de los autores sigan siendo los mismos, hace que los manuales recientes conserven muchas de las características de los publicados antes de la caída de la Unión Soviética” (“the inertia of many years and the fact that most of the authors remain the same means that recent textbooks retain many of the characteristics of those published before the collapse of the Soviet Union”) (p. 43). These facts highlight the need to analyze the principles of foreign language teaching in Soviet schools in order to better understand and improve the current educational process.

The history of teaching foreign languages in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) has been investigated from various perspectives. First of all, the monograph by Mirolyubov (2002) offers a highly detailed description of the principles of foreign language teaching in Russia from the 1860s to the 1980s. Also, Naumova (2014), analyzing the evolution of foreign language teaching methods throughout the 20th century in Western Europe and Russia, traces the shift in Russian foreign language teaching from the grammar-translation method at the end of the 19th century, through the prevalent conscientious-comparative (1940s–1950s) and conscientious-practical (1950s–1970s) methods, to the communicative approach at the end of the 20th century. Apart from the methodological aspects of foreign language teaching, Mayofis (2014, 2016) and Pavlenko (2003) investigated its ideological content, paying attention to the relationship between the construction of learners’ identity and the political ideology present in the textbooks.

Some aspects of the institutional history of teaching Spanish in Russia have been described in Belousova (1996), Moyseenko and Romanov (2007), Santana Arribas (2009), and Torres Hernández (2021). Also, the axiological perspective of teaching Spanish in the Soviet era has been analyzed by Suárez García (1997), Lámina (1999), and Novoselova et al. (2022), who revealed how official Communist ideology and corresponding values were conveyed through textbooks, particularly in higher education. Novoselova et al., (2022) also described the shift from the grammar-translation method to the conscientious-practical method in the teaching of Spanish, based on an analysis of several university textbooks published from 1930 to 1980.

However, the teaching of Spanish in Soviet secondary schools has not been investigated to the same extent as at the level of higher education. This article examines the evolution of Spanish grammar instruction in Soviet secondary schools, using the Present Subjunctive tense as a case study. The study is guided by the following questions: How was the Present Subjunctive introduced in different periods of the Soviet era? What instructional methods were employed? And how did these reflect broader methodological paradigms, such as the shift from the grammar-translation method to the communicative approach?

METHODOLOGY

The main method applied in the present study is documentary research (Bowen, 2009; Scott & Marshall, 2015), within which a comparative descriptive analysis of the content of the documents from the research corpus was conducted. The research corpus consists of official Spanish textbooks for secondary schools published during different periods of the Soviet era.

Based on legislation related to the teaching of Spanish in the Soviet secondary school, we established the scope of investigation as spanning from 1947 to 1991. This time interval was further subdivided into three periods: 1947-1955, 1961-1979, 1980-1991. Each period is represented by one official series of textbooks of Spanish for secondary school. We carried out a descriptive analysis of how the Present Subjunctive tense (PS) was treated in the textbooks of each of these periods and then compared the obtained results.

The analysis was based on five key criteria:

- Method of introduction: Was the PS introduced inductively (through examples) or deductively (through explicit explanation)?
- Definition: Was the definition of the PS based on its place within the grammar system of Spanish or on its communicative function?
- Types of exercises: What types of exercises were used to facilitate students' acquisition of the PS?
- Speaking activities: Were speaking activities present in the textbooks to encourage pupils' use of the PS in oral production?
- Use of Russian: Was Russian used – and if so, to what extent – to organize didactic sequences for the PS?

For a better understanding of the pedagogical principles relevant for each period, we also consulted supplementary materials, such as:

- teaching guidelines for some textbooks from the first period,
- teacher's books for the textbooks from the third period, and
- general instructions from the Ministry of Education during the second period, due to the absence of special didactic guidelines or teacher books.

THE FIRST PERIOD

The first period begins with the publication, on October 4, 1947, of Decree No. 3488 of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, “Об улучшении изучения иностранных языков в средней школе” (“On the Improvement of Foreign Language Learning at Secondary School”), which introduced Spanish as a subject in secondary schools. However, due to the lack of competent teachers and the limited opportunities for students to continue studying Spanish at the university level, Order No. 2029-r of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, issued on March 17, 1955, “О прекращении преподавания испанского и латинского языков в средних школах” (“On the Cancellation of the Teaching of Spanish and Latin in General Education Schools”), removed Spanish from the study plan for the 1955/1956 academic year. That is why we set the end of the first period at 1955.

Foreign language teaching at secondary school was largely based on the principles of Lev Shcherba – one of the most prominent Soviet linguists – and his followers (Mayofis, 2016, p. 289), who advocated for fostering the cognitive activity of students in foreign language learning. This principle eventually came to be interpreted as the constant comparison between the linguistic systems of Spanish and Russian, giving birth to a so-called *conscientious-comparative* approach.

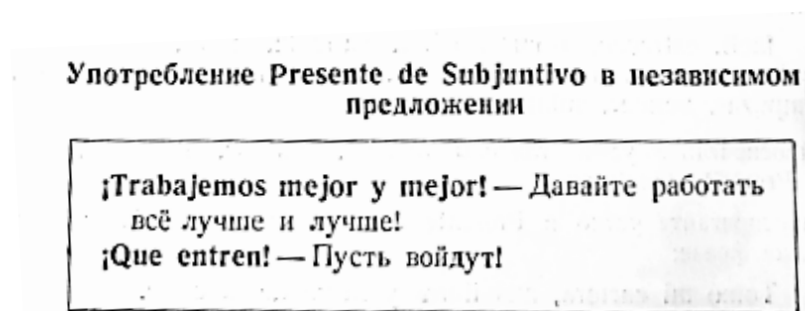
These ideas were reflected in the official programs for secondary schools: “Необходимо постоянно останавливаться на случаях различия и сходства между родным и иностранным языком” (“It is important to always pay attention to the cases of differences and similarities between the mother tongue and the foreign language”) (Ministry of Education of the USSR, 1949). Nelli Velikopolskaya, one of the authors of Spanish textbooks of this period, reiterates this idea: “Сравнение, под руководством преподавателя, испанского языка с русским языком будет иметь большое образовательное значение, так как углубит и расширит те понятия, которыми учащиеся владеют на родном языке” (“The comparison of Spanish and Russian, under the teacher's supervision, will have a

great educational value, because it will deepen and expand the concepts that pupils have mastered in their mother tongue”) (Velikopolskaya & Tsetlin, 1949, p. 3).

The orientation of foreign language teaching toward written comprehension, which underlined the importance of theoretical analysis in grammar teaching, was reinforced after the publication of “Марксизм и вопросы языкознания” (“Marxism and the Problems of Linguistics”) by Joseph Stalin in 1950. In this brochure, Stalin stated that in the base of any language lie grammar and vocabulary, with the higher priority given to grammar, through which the language “wraps” thoughts in words (Stalin, 1953, p. 14). Stalin’s words led language teachers to place excessive emphasis on grammar and adopt translation as the principal method of teaching it. For example, L. Ronskaya, one of the authors of Spanish textbooks, gives the following recommendation to teachers: “Учитывая неразрывную связь языка и мышления, нужно строить обучение иностранному языку в сравнении с родным языком учащихся и уделять огромное внимание переводу для проведения этого сравнения” (“Given an inseparable relation that exists between language and thought, it is necessary to organize foreign language teaching on the basis of its comparison with the pupils’ mother tongue and to pay immense attention to translation in order to make this comparison possible”) (Ronskaya, 1953, p. 6).

The PS is introduced in Lesson 8 of the textbook for the 7th grade (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953) with two examples of its use in independent clauses (Figure 1) and a table illustrating the conjugational pattern for verbs of the first conjugation (Figure 2).

Figure 1. Introduction of the PS in the first period



Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 38).

Figure 2. Introductory table of conjugation

I спряжение		
trabajar	contar	
Modo Subjuntivo		
Presente		
trabaje	cuenta	a
trabajes	cuentes	
trabaje	cuenta	e
trabajemos	contemos	
trabajéis	contéis	
trabajen	cuenten	

Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 39).

Then there is a reference to the theoretical paragraph on the PS from the special grammatical section of the textbook, where pupils find preliminary information about the system of moods in Spanish, followed by possible translations into Russian, and finally the definition of the Subjunctive Mood in terms of its general use, with a corresponding translation into Russian.

As suggested by Figure 2, verbs with different conjugational patterns in the PS are treated separately in the textbook. For example, Unit 9 is dedicated to verbs of the first conjugation, Unit 12 to the second and third conjugation, and Unit 17 to irregular verbs.

After the introductory part, there is an exercise (Figure 3) on the use of the PS in independent clauses, with a reference to the corresponding paragraph in the grammar section of the textbook, which states: “*Presente de Subjuntivo* is used to express a desired action in the present or in the future and to express a motivation to action”. Then there are instructions on how it can be translated into Russian, with some examples: “When translating this type of sentences into Russian, various causative particles are usually used: ну, пусть, да, давай(-те)”.

Figure 3. Exercise on the use of PS in independent clauses

Упражнение

Переведите письменно на русский язык предложения, данные ниже, подобрав лучшие варианты переводов; найдите в тексте этого упражнения глаголы в Presente de Subjuntivo; определите Infinitivo этих глаголов:

Adornemos nuestra clase con flores y carteles para la fiesta de la gran Revolución Socialista de Octubre. Ayudemos a los alumnos que estudian mal. Preparemos bien todos nuestros deberes. Patinemos en el Parque de Cultura.

— Marina no quiere ir con nosotros. Tiene frío. ¡Que regrese a casa!

— Alguien llama a la puerta.— ¡Que entre! ¡Se puede!

(См. грамм. справ., § 21.)

Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 39).

In the exercise, the pupils are asked to translate several sentences by hand, choosing the best variant of translation, to find the verbs in the PS, and to say their infinitive form. After that, the pupils find a text which includes sentences with the PS in independent clauses (Figure 4, 5).

Figure 4. An illustrative text for the new case of the use of the PS (beginning)

Estudiemos lenguas extranjeras

En la escuela № 325 se estudia alemán y español. Los alumnos se interesan mucho por el estudio de las lenguas extranjeras. Se acuerdan de las palabras de Mijaíl Ivánovich Kalinin: "Todo komso-mol debe conocer alguna lengua extranjera".

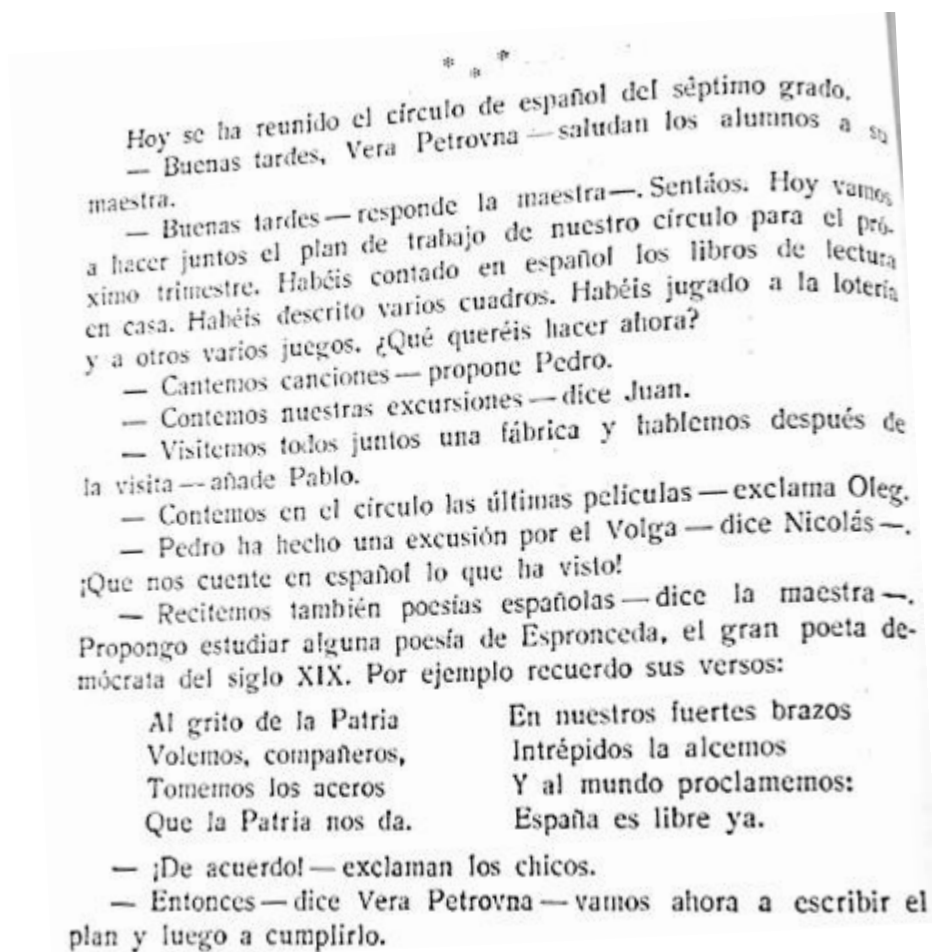
En la escuela № 325 hay varios círculos de alemán y de español, donde los alumnos que lo desean, aprenden la geografía y la historia, la literatura y el arte de los países cuya lengua estudian.

En la escuela hay también círculos de conversación, coros y círculos teatrales donde se cantan canciones y se representan obras de teatro en alemán y en español.

Los alumnos de español celebran fiestas, consagradas a la lucha por la paz y por la liberación nacional de los pueblos de España y de América Latina.

Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 39).

Figure 5. An illustrative text for the new case of the use of the PS (end)



Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 40).

The text is clearly intended to be read analytically; in other words, its aim is for pupils to understand the functioning of the current grammatical forms. There is no task that would require pupils to use the content of the text in their own speech. This is reflected in the system of exercises offered to the pupils after reading the text:

1. Conjugate the following verbs in the PS in writing: *tomar*, *cantar*, *bailar*, *levantarse*
2. Copy from the text the sentences where the PS is used and translate them in writing.
3. Translate the following sentences in writing.

It can be seen that the number of exercises proposed for the new grammar structure (the PS in independent clauses) is very low: one introductory exercise and three exercises after the text, the majority of which focus on translation.

The same logic is applied for the treatment of the next use of the PS – its use in the complement subordinate clauses (Figure 6).

Figure 6. An introductory table of the use of the PS in the complement subordinate clauses

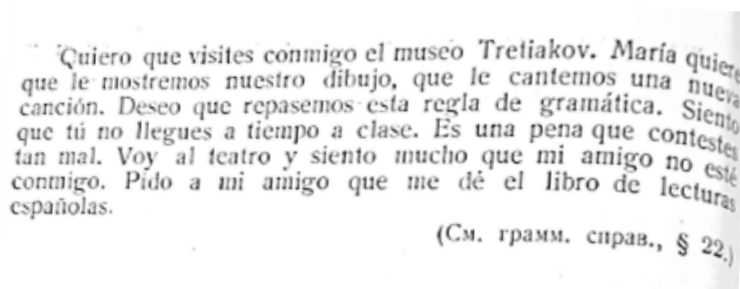
Употребление Presente de Subjuntivo в придаточном дополнительном предложении		
Главное предложение	Союз	Придаточное дополнительное предложение
Quiero	que	trabajes mejor.
Estoy contento de	que	trabajes mejor.

Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 41).

What captures our attention here is the perspective of theoretical grammar in the introduction of various uses of the PS, rather than a functional approach based on communicative situations that require a specific grammatical form. It is clear that “*quiero que*” and “*estoy contento de que*” refer to entirely different communicative situations; however, they are grouped together in the table and appear without distinction in the following exercises. The only reason for their integration in the same unit is their syntactical structure: both predicates require a complement subordinate clause with the conjunction “*que*”.

Below the instructive table, there is an exercise (Figure 7) which is structurally identical to the introductory exercise in the previous unit.

Figure 7. An introductory exercise on the PS in complement subordinate clauses



Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 42).

The pupils are asked to consult the grammar reference, translate several sentences into Russian, find the verbs in the PS and then explain the reason for the use of the PS in each case. Here, the volitional predicates *quiero*, *deseo*, *pido* are combined with the evaluative predicate *siento*. The aim of this exercise is clearly to help pupils understand the PS as a part of the grammatical system of Spanish.

As in the previous unit, the introductory grammatical exercise is followed by a text for analytical reading which contains examples of the current use of the PS (Figure 8).

It is curious that the only predicates used here that would require the PS – “*quiero*”, “*propongo*”, “*recomiendo*”, “*diles*” and “*pido*” – are volitional verbs, and there are no evaluative verbs in this syntactic function. We believe it was assumed that there was no need to include evaluative verbs because they reflect the same use of the PS as volitional verbs due to the same syntactic structure of the sentence. Therefore, pupils were expected to focus primarily on the syntactic context rather than the communicative context of the PS.

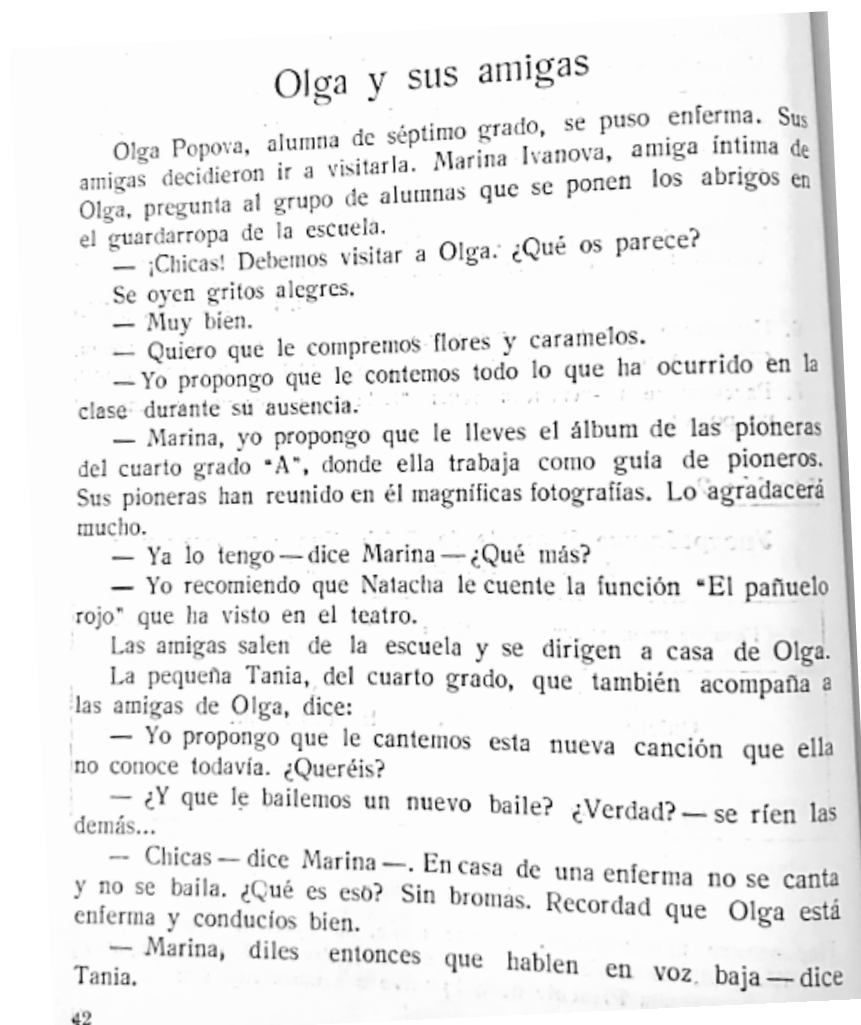
The system of exercises which follow this text is also strongly oriented toward mastering the grammatical system of Spanish:

1. Conjugate the following verbs in the PS in writing: *llevar*, *entregar*, *empezar*, *volar*
2. Find in the text verbs in the PS; explain the use of the PS in these cases.
3. Write 5 sentences containing complement subordinate clauses, using one of the following verbs as the predicate:

For the main clause: *querer*, *desear*, *pedir*, *aconsejar*, *temer*, *alegrarse*

For the subordinate clause: acompañar, buscar, comprar, empezar, etc.

Figure 8. An illustrative text for the new use of the PS



Source: (Ciutat & Ronskaya, 1953, p. 42).

Although Exercise 3 involves written production, no communicative context is provided. Moreover, the predicates for both parts of the sentences are explicitly indicated. This makes the whole exercise appear to be nothing more than an illustration of a grammatical structure. Its aim is to help pupils understand that after certain predicates the PS should be used. They are not expected to construct sentences with any communicative intent.

Other uses of the PS, such as with dubitative predicates (*no creo, no pienso, dudo, es poco probable*) or in temporal subordinate clauses (after the adverb "*cundo*"), are introduced in Lesson 8 and Lesson 9 respectively in the textbook for

the 8th grade (Rebblon et al., 1954). However, their treatment follows the same logic as the cases presented in the textbook for the 7th grade.

To summarize the main features of grammar teaching based on the treatment of the PS in the textbooks of the first period, we can mention, firstly, that there is a strong emphasis on theoretical aspects of grammar. The PS is introduced deductively and, although its definition is presented through an enumeration of its uses, some of these uses are introduced based on syntactic structure rather than communicative meaning. In addition, the explanation of the use of the PS consistently involves comparison with Russian. Nevertheless, some distribution of grammar with a pedagogical aim is made: the PS of verbs with different conjugational patterns is treated separately.

As for the exercises, they are largely similar in nature, with an abundance of translation, theoretical analysis, and conjugation tasks. Speaking activities are absent. Moreover, texts included in the units are generally used as illustrations of how the PS functions and do not provoke any speaking activity.

The main goal of grammar teaching was to foster pupils' reading competence and contribute to the development of their linguistic awareness by encouraging them to compare the systems of Spanish and Russian. At least as far as the official textbooks are concerned, the goal of fostering speaking competence was not sufficiently addressed.

THE SECOND PERIOD

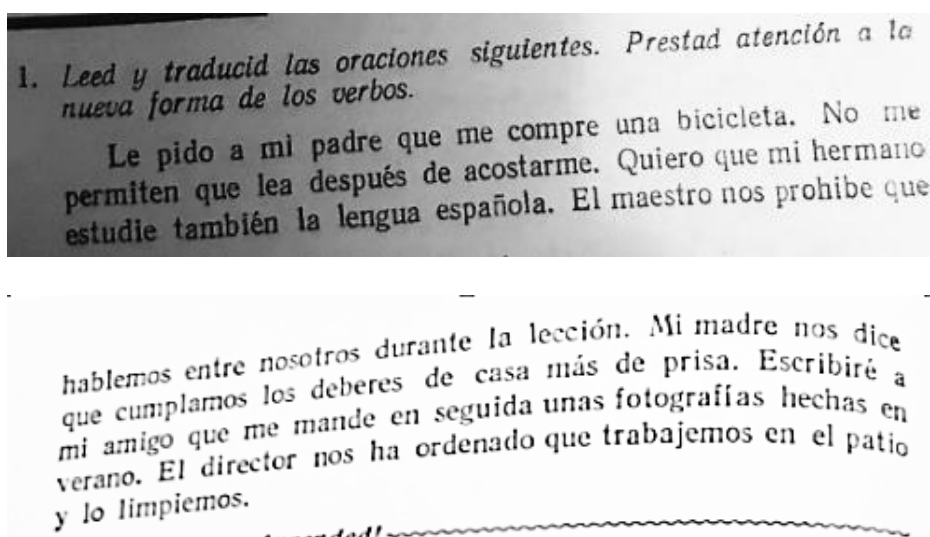
By the end of the 1950s, it became evident that the results of foreign language teaching at secondary school were not satisfactory. The main problem was declared to be the lack of pupils' ability to use the foreign language they had studied. This is why, on May 27, 1961, the Council of Ministers of the USSR issued Decree No. 468 "Об улучшении изучения иностранных языков" ("On the Improvement of Foreign Language Learning"), which placed special emphasis on the need to teach pupils how to use a foreign language. In response, the Ministry of Education of RSFSR ordered the development of the official program for teaching Spanish and the publication of new textbooks. The development of oral production skills has become one of the main goals of foreign language teaching, as reflected, in the series of official programs for foreign languages (Ministry of Education of the USSR, 1960, 1964) and in the specific draft program for Spanish: "Практическая цель заключается в том, чтобы научить учащихся самостоятельно читать иностранные тексты и вести беседы по определённой тематике и в связи с

прочитанным текстом” (“The practical goal is to teach pupils to read foreign texts independently and to engage in conversations on specific topics and in connection with the texts they have read.”) (Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR, 1967, p. 1). Such a shift required changes in the methods of grammar instruction, for example, introduction of the activities that would encourage pupils to use grammar structures in oral production.

Let us now consider if there were any changes in the treatment of the PS compared to the first period.

The PS is introduced in Unit 9 of the textbook for the 8th grade (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969). The first thing that catches the eye is that the unit begins with an exercise without explicit mention of the new grammatical form or any reference to the grammar section of the textbook (Figure 9).

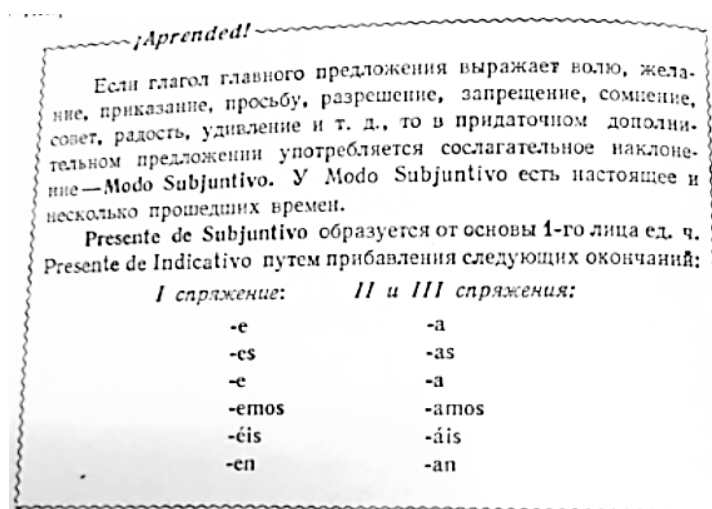
Figure 9. An introductory exercise on the PS of the second period



Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, pp. 57-58).

The pupils are asked to read and translate the sentences into Russian, although they have not yet read any information on the PS. Only after this exercise is a grammatical explanation of the PS provided (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Grammatical explanation for the PS



Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 58).

Although it is not clearly indicated how the teacher was supposed to work with this exercise and the subsequent grammar rule, it seems to us that the order in which they appear in the textbook reflects the *inductive* approach: first, pupils are expected to guess what the new grammatical form means, and only afterwards do they encounter the rule. However, sometimes rules are provided to pupils explicitly, as in the case of stem-changing verbs.

As for the definition proposed for the Subjunctive Mood, it is based on an enumeration of its uses and its position in the subordinate clause of the sentence (Figure 10):

If the verb of the main clause expresses will, desire, order, request, permission, prohibition, doubt, advice, joy, surprise etc., in the subordinate clause the Subjunctive Mood should be used. The Subjunctive Mood has the present tense and various past tenses.

This definition can be qualified as functional, although some theoretical information about the place of the Subjunctive Mood within the verbal system of Spanish is also provided. In contrast to the first period, no Russian equivalent is given for the PS. Pupils are presented only with a paradigm of the PS for both the verbs of the first conjugation and those of the second and third conjugation. Although all three conjugation types are unified in one table, the cases of irregular and stem-changing verbs are treated separately in the corresponding units, e.g. stem-

changing verbs are covered in Unit 10, the verbs *ser* and *ver* in Unit 11, the verb *ir* in Unit 14, etc.

The first use of the PS introduced in the textbook is the same as in the first period (use after volitional verbs), however here we observe an important difference. While in the first period the volitional and evaluative verbs requiring the PS were treated together in the same unit, in the second period they are presented as separate cases (Unit 9 and Unit 10, respectively). This distinction can also be explained by the growing communicative orientation of foreign language teaching.

Following the definition, there is a system of exercises related to the formation of the PS (Figure 11-12).

Figure 11. A system of exercises for the PS (beginning)

2. *Lee la conjugación de los verbos:*

	Presente de Subjuntivo		
	tomar	comer	escribir
que yo tome	coma	escriba	
que tú tomes	comas	escribas	
que él tome	coma	escriba	
que nosotros tomemos	comamos	escribamos	
que vosotros toméis	comáis	escribáis	
que ellos tomen	coman	escriban	

3. *Nombrad los verbos en Presente de Subjuntivo en las oraciones del ejercicio 1. Decid en qué persona y número están.*

4. *Conjugad los verbos de las expresiones siguientes en Presente de Subjuntivo:*
 formar un círculo técnico; esperar a Pedro; describir un grabado; cumplir los deberes de casa; recoger trofeos de guerra.

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Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 58).

It is interesting that in Exercise 2, the forms of the PS are given with the conjunction *que*. This could serve not only as an indication of the place of the PS in a sentence but also as a mnemonic technique to remind pupils that the PS should be used after *que*.

Exercise 3 focuses on students' ability to recognize the PS forms of verbs and is similar to the exercises from the first period.

One of the important differences compared to the first period can be seen in Exercise 4, where pupils are asked to conjugate not isolated verbs, but meaningful phrases in the PS. This technique not only helps pupils automatize the formation of the PS but also demonstrates connections between words within syntagms, which is essential for speech production.

Figure 12. A system of exercises for the PS (end)

5. *Decid la oración siguiente para cada persona en singular y plural:*
El profesor me pide que escriba bien (a ti, a él, a ella, a nosotros, a vosotros, a ellos, a ustedes).

6. *Poned las terminaciones necesarias de los verbos en Presente de Subjuntivo:*
El maestro de historia nos recomienda que visit... los museos y exposiciones. Mi amigo me aconseja que tom... parte en el círculo de química. Yo pido a mi hermano mayor que me llev... consigo al estadio. No nos permiten que pase... hasta muy tarde. Le decimos que ayud... a su amigo a traducir el texto. La madre prohíbe a su hijo que se bañ... todo el día en el río. Deseo que mi amigo ingres... en el Komsomol. El guía de pioneros les ordena que se reun... en la sala. Quiero que me mand... al campamento de pioneros el verano que viene. Propongo a mis compañeros que organic... una velada.

7. *Elegid del ejercicio 6 y escribid los verbos después de los cuales se emplea el Modo Subjuntivo.*

8. *Terminad las oraciones siguientes según vuestro parecer (no os ayudéis y os ayudéis):*
Queremos que ... El profesor me pide que ... El padre no le aconseja a su hijo que ... Deseo que ... Los mayores nos recomiendan que ... Le permiten que ... Os ordenan que ... No te prohíben que ... Me dicen que ...

Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 59).

Exercise 5 continues this logic on the level of sentences. Pupils are asked to “say the sentence for every person in singular and in plural”.

Exercise 6 concludes this group of tasks related to the automatization of PS formation. Besides, this exercise introduces some new verbs which require the use of the Subjunctive Mood. These verbs are meant to be identified by the pupils themselves in Exercise 7.

In the final exercise of this series, Exercise 8, pupils are asked to complete the sentences using given predicates in the main clause. These predicates are expressed by verbs from Exercises 6 and 7. No verb is suggested for the subordinate clause, so pupils have more freedom in composing their sentences than they did during the first period.

It is clear that the exercises of this series are interconnected and presented in a logical progression, beginning with recognition of the grammatical form, moving through automatization exercises, and ending with a task involving relatively free speech production. Besides, some exercises (at least Exercises 2, 3 and 5) are intended to be performed orally and not in writing, which was the predominant format of exercises during the first period.

Looking at other units related to the PS, we find a certain variety of types of exercises. For example, in Unit 10, Exercise 2, pupils are asked to construct sentences combining different fragments (Figure 13). The appearance of such exercises is a clear sign of a shift in grammar teaching towards more practical language use.

Figure 13. Exercise on combining fragments of the sentence

2. Componed oraciones, empleando las palabras de cada columna:

Te piden	que digas	la radio
Te proponemos	que lo hagan	tan tarde
Les aconsejamos	que oigamos	más pronto
Os prohíben	que se ponga	la verdad
Nos permiten	que tengas suerte	el gorro
Te deseamos	que vengáis	en este trabajo

Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 60).

However, not every case of the use of PS is treated with such a large number of exercises. For example, evaluative predicates are given only one exercise (Unit 10, Ex. 4), in which pupils are asked to read the sentences and compose their own using the provided ones as an example (Figure 14).

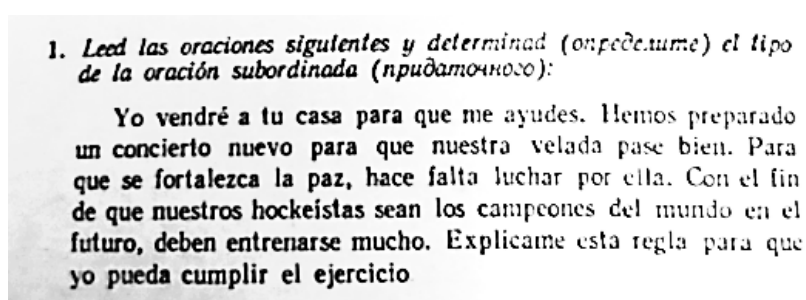
Figure 14. Exercise on the use of the PS in evaluative predicates.

- 4. Lee las oraciones siguientes; componed oraciones parecidas con los verbos en negrilla:**
- Me alegro de que vengas a mi casa esta tarde. Tiene miedo de que llueva y no pueda ir a pasear. Estoy contento de que mi amigo reciba buenas notas. Esperamos que termines el trabajo rápidamente.

Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 67).

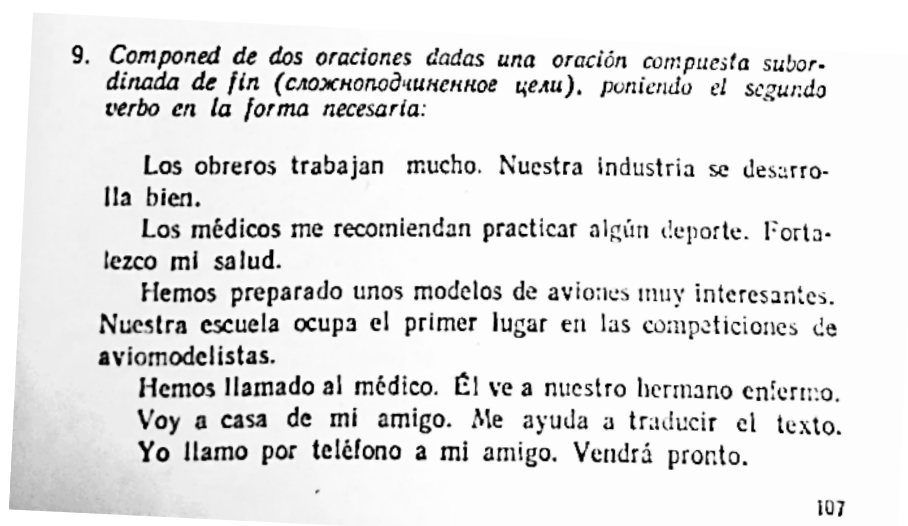
The subordinate clauses with the conjunctions *para que*, *con el fin de que*, *a fin de que* (Unit 16) are accompanied by only two exercises: one that asks pupils to determine the type of clause (Ex. 1, Figure 15), and another that asks them to construct a complex sentence from two simple clauses (Ex. 9, Figure 16). No communicative task is proposed. We assume this can be explained by differentiated treatment of various uses of the PS due to the limited number of class hours: some uses (e.g. after volitional predicates) were studied in detail, whereas others were merely introduced for recognition without expecting pupils to actively produce them.

Figure 15. Exercise on determination of the type of clause



Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 104).

Figure 16. Exercise on building complex sentences out of two simple ones



Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 107).

As for the exercises on translation from Russian to Spanish, they do appear in the textbook, however they cannot be considered the predominant type of exercises and often conclude other series of tasks.

In the textbook of the second period, we observe for the first time dialogues which illustrate the functioning of the grammatical form in specific communicative situations. For example, in Unit 10 there is a dialogue full of sentences with the PS (Figure 17).

Figure 17. A dialogue including the PS

Nuestro consejo de redacción

— Hoy celebramos la primera reunión del nuevo consejo de redacción—dice la maestra. Tenemos que decidir de qué vamos a escribir en nuestro periódico y cuántas veces al mes lo publicaremos. ¿Quién quiere proponer algo?

— Yo creo que en el periódico tenemos que escribir sobre lo siguiente: en los artículos de fondo—sobre las fechas memorables de nuestro país e internacionales y sobre los éxitos de nuestra Patria en la construcción del comunismo.

— Yo propongo que escribamos también sobre la vida de nuestra escuela y de la amistad con los escolares de otros países y que publiquemos en él las cartas de nuestros amigos extranjeros.

— Yo pido la palabra. Los chicos también quieren que en el periódico escribamos sobre los éxitos de la técnica y la ciencia y sobre los diferentes fenómenos de la naturaleza, cogidos de los periódicos y revistas de nuestro país.

— ¿Y habrá en nuestro periódico sitio para el humor y las caricaturas? Petrov puede llevar esta parte, él sabe dibujar muy bien, además a él le gustan mucho los chistes.

— Me gusta que vosotros habéis comprendido bien las tareas del periódico mural. En cuanto al título ¿qué pensáis?

— Yo creo que ahora lo podemos titular “El joven comunista”, porque ahora casi todos somos miembros del Komsomol.

— ¿Todos están de acuerdo con este título? Bien. ¿Cuántas veces al mes lo publicaremos y cómo vamos a dividir los deberes de cada miembro de la redacción?

— ¿Qué os parece como responsable de la redacción del periódico Ivanov?

61

Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 61).

The assignment preceding the dialogue is formulated as: “Read the text paying attention to the new forms”, which suggests that such dialogues serve a dual purpose – illustrating the new grammar and providing a thematic context for building a conversation afterwards. Such dialogues are followed by exercises where pupils are asked to perform a conversation within a certain communicative situation (Figure 18). The content of this situation is related to that of the previous dialogue, but it is not identical.

Figure 18. A communicative exercise based on the dialogue

6. *Representad unas escenas:*

- 1) Usted pide a su hermana mayor que le ayude a dibujar el título del periódico. Su hermana le hace unas preguntas en cuanto a vuestro periódico mural.
- 2) Imagínesse que está usted delante de un periódico mural escrito en ruso. A Ud. se acerca un chico que no sabe leer en ruso. Le interesa de qué se trata en los artículos, cómo los habéis preparado, etc.

Source: (Krichevskaya & Alfonso Moran, 1969, p. 62).

To conclude our analysis of the treatment of the PS in the second period, we can affirm that, compared to the first period, grammatical competence began to be developed in a much more systematic and communicatively oriented way. Greater attention was paid to the use of grammatical structure in speech rather than to their theoretical conceptualization. This is why new grammatical structures were introduced inductively and according to the principle of functionality, which treats separately the uses of a certain grammatical structure corresponding to different communicative situations.

Secondly, the textbooks contain a more developed and diversified system of exercises. Even though the official program for Spanish in secondary schools classified the PS as grammar material intended for listening and reading comprehension (Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of the USSR, 1967), speaking tasks also began to appear. Moreover, the number of translation exercises related to the grammatical structure is low, and all the assignments are formulated in Spanish, which marks a reduction of reliance on Russian in teaching grammar. In general, the exercises are logically connected to one another, although the system of exercises for communicative grammar teaching does not yet seem to be fully developed.

On the other hand, despite the shift toward a more communicative approach in the second period, most assignments are still formulated from the linguistic perspective and the number of speaking activities remain quite limited. Although the texts for reading included in the units contain new grammatical structures, they are not accompanied by activities that would require pupils to actively use those structures. Nevertheless, the second period in the teaching of Spanish grammar can be characterized as significantly more progressive than the first.

THE THIRD PERIOD

The third period in teaching of Spanish began in 1980, following the publication of the new official curriculum and updated programs for secondary schools. The new program changed the starting year for studying foreign languages from the 5th to the 4th grade, which required the publication of a new series of textbooks of foreign languages. This new series was intended to meet the demands of contemporary society and to incorporate the achievements of Soviet foreign language didactics.

The program for foreign languages declared the main goal of language learning at school as the development of pupils' ability to use the foreign language in practice: "В средней общеобразовательной школе закладывается основа практического владения иностранным языком учащимися." ("In secondary school the foundation for pupil's practical use of a foreign language is laid.") (Ministry of Education of the USSR, 1980), and the utmost importance was given to speaking competence: "Учебный процесс должен строиться на устной основе." ("The educational process should be built on the basis of speaking") (Ministry of Education of the USSR, 1980).

The authors of the textbooks from this period divided the use of the PS into cases for active use and for passive comprehension: "Часть грамматического материала – *Presente* и *Imperfecto de Subjuntivo* в придаточных дополнительных и подлежащих – учащиеся осваивают не только рецептивно, но и употребляют в учебном разговоре." ("A part of the grammar material - *Presente* and *Imperfecto de Subjuntivo* in complement and subject clauses – is learned not only receptively but also used in conversation. These forms are necessary for pupils to express their personal attitude.") (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985b, p. 7).

In this period, the PS is introduced in Lesson 2 of the textbook for the 9th grade (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a). However, it is preceded by exercises on Affirmative and Negative Imperative (Figure 19-20). The teacher's book states: "Объясняя образование *Presente de Subjuntivo*, учителю следует предложить учащимся вспомнить образование *Imperativo Negativo*." ("When explaining the formation of the PS, the teacher should ask the pupils to recall the formation of the Negative Imperative.") (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985b, p. 13).

Figure 19. A preliminary exercise on the Affirmative Imperative



* 7. Pide a tu vecino que haga (чтобы он сделал) lo siguiente.

(Hablar) más bajo. (Leer) el texto desde el principio. (Escribir) un artículo para vuestro periódico mural. (Repetir) su pregunta una vez más. (Darte) su lápiz. (Levantarse) más temprano, (lavarse) con agua fría y (hacer) gimnasia. (Acostumbrarse) a pensar antes de hacer algo. (Tener cuidado) cuando atraviesa la calle. (Decir) su opinión y (explicar) su punto de vista. (Ir) a la escuela más temprano. (Venir) a casa a las siete. (Poner) sobre la mesa las flores que ha traído.

Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 5).

Figure 20. A preliminary exercise on the Negative Imperative

* 8. Pide a tu vecino que no haga lo siguiente usando el modelo dado.

Modelo: No (llegar) al cine antes de las cinco.
No llegues al cine antes de las cinco.
No (discutir) este problema.
No discutas este problema.
No (contestar) sin pensar.
No contestes sin pensar.

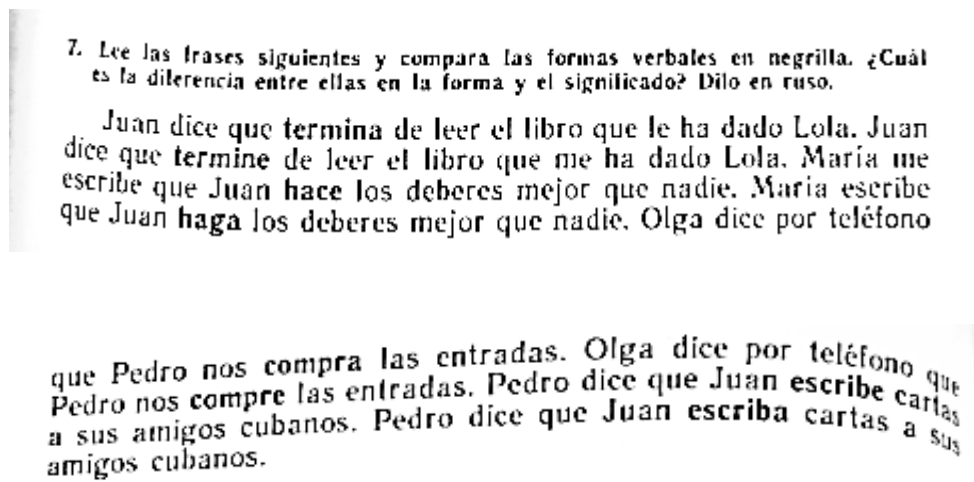
No (abrir) la ventana. No (decir, tú) nada de eso. No (hacerlo) por favor. No (venir) a tu casa, porque estarás todo el día en la biblioteca. No (irse) tan pronto. No (salir) a la calle sin abrigo. No (portarse) como un niño mal educado. No (explicarte) su conducta. No (descubrir) ese secreto. No (sentarse) en frente de ti. No (quedarse) aquí durante el día.

Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 5).

After the revision of the Imperative, the PS is introduced. In the introductory exercise (Ex. 7, Figure 21) pupils are asked to read and compare pairs of complex sentences that differ only in the mood of the predicate in the subordinate clause. They are then expected to explain in Russian the difference between the predicate

in the *Presente de Indicativo* (PI, hereafter) and the *Presente de Subjuntivo*. This constitutes a purely inductive method of introducing grammatical structure.

Figure 21. An introductory exercise on the PS



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 7-8).

After listening to the pupils' hypotheses, the teacher tells the name of the tense (the PS) and explains that it is used to express a desired or probable action that refers to the present or the future, when the action of the main clause is expressed by a verb in the *Presente de Indicativo*, the *Pretérito Perfecto de Indicativo*, or the Imperative. Compared to the explanations provided in the previous two periods, this one is much more precise and limited to a single case of PS usage. It also focuses on the use of the PS rather than its place within the grammatical system of Spanish.

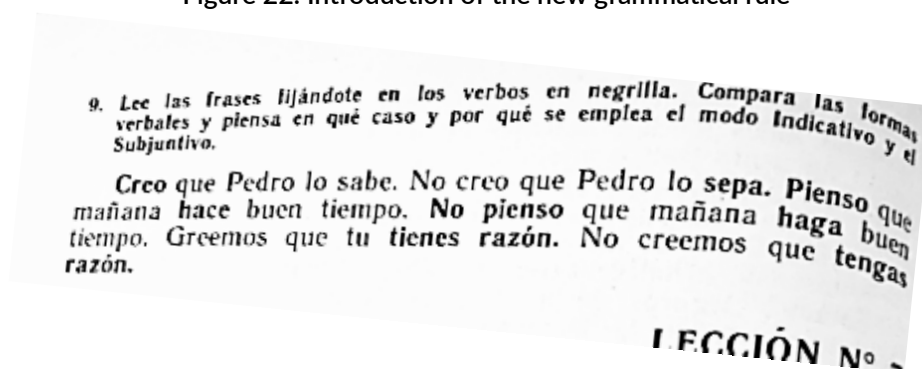
However, the first case of the PS use presented in the textbook is slightly different from those in the first and second periods. Although it also deals with the expression of will and volitional predicate, it is limited to the verbs *decir* and *escribir*, both of which can be followed by the PI, as well as by the PS. As a result, the distinction between the Indicative and Subjunctive Mood becomes clearer.

In the third period, regular verbs of all conjugation groups are introduced in the same unit. However, along with explaining the formation of the PS for the regular verbs of the first conjugation, it is also recommended to explain the peculiarities of PS formation for stem-changing verbs, using *hacer* as an example.

The same inductive approach is applied to other uses of the PS in the following units. For example, in Exercise 9 of Lesson 6, pupils are asked to compare

sentences with verbs of thought *creer*, *saber*, and *pensar* in both affirmative and negative forms, and to come up with the rule which governs the use of the Indicative and the Subjunctive Moods in such cases (Figure 22). This represents a significant change from the second period, in which pupils were still frequently provided with explicit rules concerning new grammatical structures.

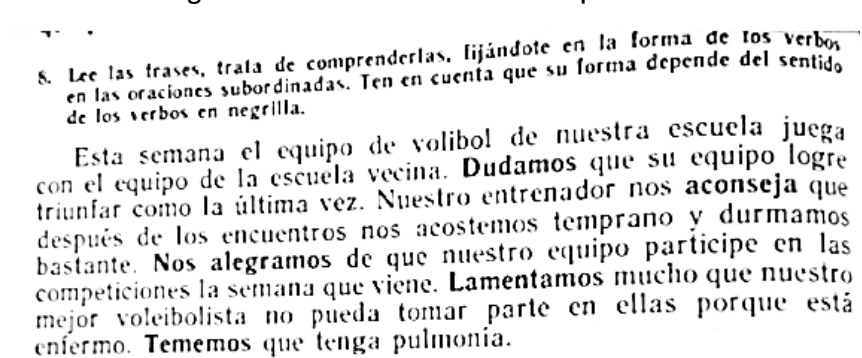
Figure 22. Introduction of the new grammatical rule



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 20).

As in the second period, the different uses of the PS are distinguished primarily on functional grounds. For example, evaluative verbs are not grouped together with volitional verbs but are treated separately. In the assignment of the Exercise 8 of Unit 8, which serves as the introductory activity, pupils are specifically asked to pay attention to the meaning of the verbs in bold (Figure 23).

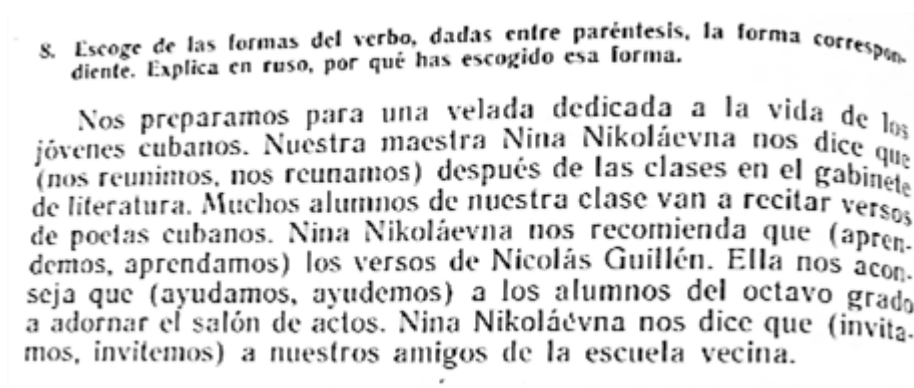
Figure 23. Treatment of evaluative predicates



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 26).

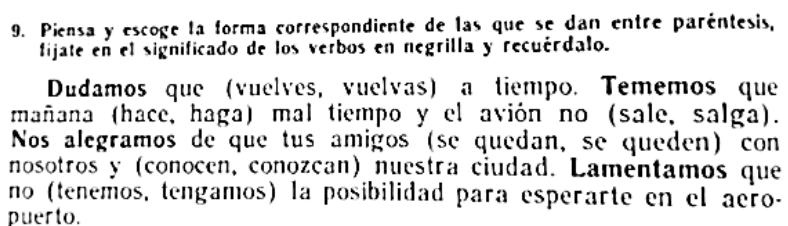
The introductory exercises aimed at understanding the meaning of the new forms are followed by exercises on the differentiation between the PI and the PS. The same sequence can also be observed in other cases of the usage of the PS (Figure 24-25).

Figure 24. Exercise on differentiation between PI and PS in volitional predicates



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 8).

Figure 25. Exercise on differentiation between PI and PS in evaluative predicates



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 26).

As in the second period, the texts that follow grammatical exercises sometimes contain the new grammatical structure, but illustrating the use of that structure does not appear to be their main goal. We did not find many sentences containing the PS in the texts of the corresponding units. These texts are intended to be read synthetically, that is with primary attention to their content, as suggested by the questions that follow them.

The speaking activities proposed to pupils in the textbook of the third period are more genuinely communicative than those of the second period. Their assignments reflect real-life situations. For example, in the assignment for Exercise 7 in Lesson 4, pupils are asked to imagine that they are seeing off a friend who is about to travel for the autumn holidays, and to say something to them using one of the phrases with the PS (Figure 26).

Figure 26. Exercise on the use of the studied case of the PS in a communicative situation

7. Imaginate que te despidas de tu(-s) amigo(-s) que va(-n) de viaje en las vacaciones de otoño. ¿Qué le(-s) puedes decir? Utiliza el inicio de las frases siguientes:

Quiero que ...
 Te (Os) aconsejo que ...
 Deseo que ...
 Te (Os) recomiendo que ...
 Te (Os) pido que ...

Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 14).

In the teacher's book, it is suggested to change the person and the number of pupils whom a request, advice or a recommendation are addressed to. There is also a recommendation to maximize student participation and to encourage the extensive use of relevant vocabulary within the given communicative context. This suggests that in the third period the concept of a communicative situation had acquired significant importance, and that practical language use was increasingly mastered through interaction in Spanish within such contexts.

Even exercises aimed at the automatization of grammatical structures with predetermined content are formulated in a communicative manner, rather than in terms of sentence structure, as was the case in the first or the second periods. Consider, for example, Exercise 7 from Lesson 6 (Figure 27). Pupils are explicitly asked to perform a communicative act – to express a desire, a possibility, or a necessity using the given sentence openings. They are also provided with a model that demonstrates how the PS should be used. Although this exercise is somewhat mechanical in nature, this type of instruction helps the pupils associate the use of the PS with a communicative goal that must be achieved.

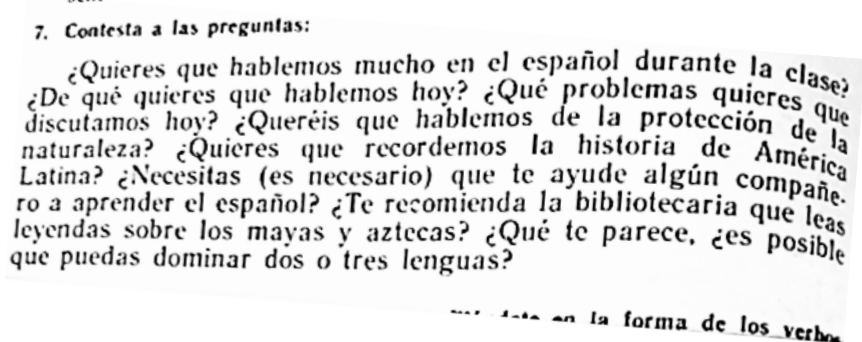
Figure 27. Exercise on the automatization of the new case of the use of the PS

7. Expresa tu deseo, la posibilidad o la necesidad según el modelo. Puedes consultar el Apéndice gramatical si lo necesitas.
- Modelo:* Pablo tiene razón. Quiero que Pablo tenga razón.
 Es posible que Pablo tenga razón. Es necesario que Pablo tenga razón.
- Todos lo saben. Mañana hará buen tiempo. Mi hermano viene a tiempo. Los alumnos saben bien esta regla. Los niños hacen este ejercicio. Mi madre está bien. Es verdad.

Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 19).

One novel aspect of the textbook is the inclusion of questions that incorporate the PS, prompting pupils to respond using the PS while discussing their personal experiences. In the corresponding units of the textbooks of the previous periods, no such questions were posed to encourage pupils to actively use the PS (Figure 28).

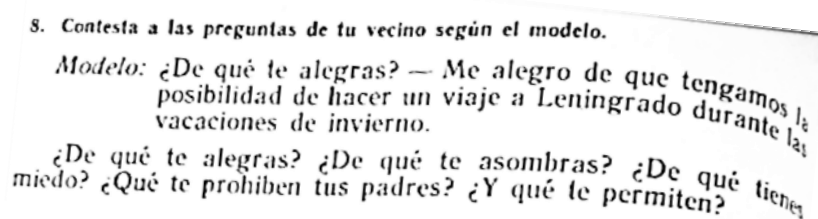
Figure 28. Questions for the pupils to use the PS in the speech



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 26).

Compared to the previous periods, the textbook also includes activities for pair work. Through these exercises, pupils learn basic dialogical exchanges and become able to use the PS in dialogical speech (Figure 29).

Figure 29. Exercise for pair work



Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 32).

Dialogical speech is presented much more frequently in the textbook of this period. For example, in Exercise 2 from Lesson 5, it appears the dialogue “*Visita a un terapeuta*”, although it does not include any verbs in the PS. Nevertheless, in the following Exercise 3, pupils are asked to retell the content of this dialogue using the PS (Figure 30). This reflects the orientation of the teaching of the PS toward practical use. Finally, in Exercise 4, pupils are asked to imagine the communicative situation of a visit to the doctor and tell the mother the doctor’s recommendations

(Figure 30). This exercise is supported by the initial parts of some sentences that include the PS and can be used in their speech.

Figure 30. Exercises based on a dialogue and which include the PS

3. Cuenta el contenido del diálogo en forma monologada. Fijate no sólo en el contenido sino también en la forma verbal.
 4. Imaginate que estás enfermo(-a) y has ido a ver al médico. Cuenta a tu madre lo que te ha dicho el médico y lo que te ha recomendado. Puedes usar los inicios de las frases siguientes, fijando tu atención en la forma correcta del verbo:
- El médico me ha dicho que (quitarse la camisa) para poder
 Me ha pedido que (sacar) la lengua y El médico me ha recomendado que (quedarse) en casa. Después de recetarme las medicinas necesarias me ha dicho que las (tomar) Me ha aconsejado también que (guardar) cama El médico me ha exigido que (acostarse y levantarse) a tiempo. El me ha prohibido que (salir) cuando hace viento. Me ha permitido que me (visitar) mis amigos.

15

Source: (Belousova & Solovtsova, 1985a, p. 15).

In summary, the teaching method for Spanish grammar during the third period adopts a clear communicative orientation. The main focus is placed on the practical use of grammar rather than its theoretical analysis. Grammar rules are introduced inductively, and pupils are expected to formulate hypotheses about the meaning of new grammatical structures and to reflect on their formation and function. Each use of the PS is often accompanied by a large number of exercises, arranged in a logical sequence that forms a coherent system. The types of exercises are quite diverse, and there are communicative tasks that encourage pupils to use the PS in specific real-life communicative situations. Furthermore, pair activities are introduced, giving pupils the opportunity to apply new grammatical structures in basic dialogical interaction.

However, despite the presence of dialogues in the textbook, their appearance is relatively sporadic and there remains a lack of sustained dialogical activities that require the use of the new grammatical structures. Additionally, not every case of the use of the PS is supported by communicative activities.

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis for each period are shown in Table 1, from which it becomes clear that the treatment of the PS varies from period to period reflecting the shift in methodological principles underpinning each of them.

Table 1. The evolution of grammar teaching across the three periods (the case of the PS)

	The first period	The second period	The third period
Method of introduction	Deductive	Mixed, leaning towards inductive	Inductive
Definition	Focused mainly on the grammar system	Mixed: mainly functional, but grammatical for some cases	Functional
Types of exercises	Gap-filling, mechanical drills, grammar-focused sentence analysis, translation, sentence construction.	Gap-filling, pattern drills, sentence transformation, translation, sentence production, short dialogues.	Contextualized gap-filling, dialogues and pair activities, question-and-answer exercises, transformation and expansion, oral practice exercises.
Speaking activities	Absent	Present; limited communicative intent	Present; focused on real-life situations.
Use of Russian	Extensive (comparative and translation-based)	Reduced, mostly limited to grammatical explanations	Minimal to none

The teaching of the PS during the first period aligns with the conscientious-comparative paradigm prevalent during the Stalinist era (1947-1955). Given that the main instructional goal was to foster pupils' reading competence, the absence of speaking activities seems logical. The deductive method of introducing the PS, combined with the definition of the PS based on its place in the grammatical system of Spanish, as well as the theoretical analysis in exercises reflects the emphasis placed on understanding the verbal system of Spanish and its comparison with Russian.

In contrast, the second period (1961-1979) reveals a shift toward more practical language use. The PS is introduced predominantly in an inductive manner. There is a notable reduction in exercises related to pure theory, a diversification of language exercises and the emergence of activities which encourage pupils to use the Present Subjunctive in contexts close to real-life situations. These developments reflect an increasing awareness of the teaching community of the communicative nature of language teaching. This is a clear shift from the conscientious-comparative paradigm in teaching of Spanish to the conscientious-practical one. The latter emphasizes understanding grammatical principles for their subsequent application to the spoken production. The reduction of the use of Russian also indicates a shift towards more communicative teaching. Nevertheless, it would be premature to describe this period as fully communicative, as speaking activities are rare and their communicative intent, while present, is limited.

The third period (1980-1991) marks a significant departure from the first and the second periods and can be considered as a period when the communicative approach began to flourish. The introduction of the PS is conducted in a fully inductive manner, and its definition is based on the functioning of the PS in communication. Textbooks of this period include exercises that foster pupils' speaking activity. Furthermore, some exercises are supposed to be carried out with the partner. Such attention towards a dialogical speech appears for the first time. Although there were dialogues consisting of sentences which included the PS in the textbooks for the second period, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the fostering of dialogical competence did not go any further. In contrast, the dialogical form of speaking activity is much more present in the third period, since even grammar-focused tasks are often formulated within imagined situations of real communication, thereby encouraging productive use of the PS. The absence of translation exercises further enhances the communicative nature of the textbooks.

This evolution from communicative-conscientious paradigm, through communicative-practical stage, to the communicative approach mirrors developments observed at the university level (Novoselova et al., 2022). This reflects broader processes in Soviet foreign language education. Moreover, some authors of the textbooks for secondary school were employed at the same time at the institutions of higher education, facilitating a transfer of methodological ideas across levels. Furthermore, similar methodological shifts have been documented in the teaching of other foreign languages in the Soviet secondary school, underscoring the dynamic nature of the foreign language education in the USSR (Mirolyubov, 2002).

However, the present study has certain limitations. It focuses exclusively on the PS, which is introduced in the higher grades of secondary education. While this delimitation facilitates the observation of the treatment of newly introduced grammar forms across time, the volume of information related to such forms is limited. On the other hand, more frequent grammar structures, such as the tenses of the Indicative Mood, appear in the textbooks for different grades and thus are supported by a more extensive system of exercises. A comparative analysis of such forms could provide a more precise picture of the evolution of the teaching of Spanish grammar in the Soviet secondary school.

CONCLUSIONS

Our analysis has shown that throughout the Soviet era the teaching of Spanish grammar in the Soviet secondary schools shifted from the application of the conscientious-comparative paradigm, through the conscientious-practical paradigm, to the implementation of the communicative approach.

As demonstrated by the case of the Present Subjunctive, during the first period (1947-1955) the teaching focused on conveying linguistic knowledge related to this verbal tense and its main goal was to make pupils able to identify it in written texts and translate it into Russian. During the second period (1961-1979) we observed a reduction in linguistic theory surrounding the Present Subjunctive and an increase in attention to its functioning in speech. The third period (1980-1991) presents more communicative tasks which encourage pupils to use the Present Subjunctive in their own speech.

The evolving approach in Spanish language education, moving away from treating it solely as a linguistic subject of study towards its application in real-life communicative scenarios, appears to parallel the historical evolution seen in the teaching methodologies of other foreign languages at the Soviet secondary school, from one hand, and at the university level, from another.

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