Gentili Ascoltatori, Dear Listeners,
Here’s a transcript of “All’s Well that Ends” our recent show about the imperfect and pluperfect subjunctive, which you can hear by clicking on the following link: http://tltc.la.utexas.edu/ra/episode.php?p=06

Hanno partecipato (Featured in this podcast):
Esmeralda Moscatelli Colombine
Simone Sessolo Pantalone
Nevin Pecorelli Pulcinella

Buon divertimento!

Transcript

Dialogue 1 – italiano
Arlecchina: Vorrei che mi aiutassi con il mio abito.
Colombine: Va bene. Cosa devo fare?
Arlecchina: Speravo che mi potessi aiutare ad accorciare l’orlo di un centimetro.
Colombine: Sarebbe meglio che lo lasciassi così com’è. C’è il rischio che la gonna diventi troppo corta.
Arlecchina: Davvero? Allora sarebbe opportuno accorciarlo di due centimetri... In prima fila c’è un bel ragazzo biondo. Vorrei proprio che mi notasse!
Colombine: Fa’ come vuoi. Secondo me

Dialogue 1 – English
Arlecchina: I’d like you to help me with my costume.
Colombine: All right. What do I need to do?
Arlecchina: I was hoping you could help me raise the hem by a centimetre.
Colombine: It would be better for you to leave it the way it is. There’s a risk that the skirt will end up too short.
Arlecchina: Really? Then it would be a good idea to raise it two centimetres... There’s a goodlooking blond guy in the first row. I’d really like for him to notice me.
Colombine: Do what you want. For my
sarebbe giusto che ti **notasse** senza che tu gli **faccessi** lo spogliarello davanti.

**Arlecchina:** E secondo me, sarebbe meglio che tu **pensassi** agli affari tuoi.

**Dialogo 2 – italiano**

**Pantalone:** Allora, fatemi leggere. Qui il critico dice: "Era ridicolo che gli attori **avessero provato** così tanto, visto il risultato così misero".

**Arlecchino:** Lo sapevo. Abbiamo dato retta di nuovo a Pulcinella. Era già evidente nelle prove che tu non ne **avessi azzecata** una. Ora basta! Questa è l’ultima volta che gli diamo retta!

**Pulcinella:** Eppure sul palco avevo la netta impressione che **avessimo preso** la strada giusta.

**Pantalone:** Come no. Senti qua: "Quello chiamato Pulcinella sembrava che non **avesse mai recitato** in vita sua".

**Arlecchino:** Ma come? Dopo lo spettacolo dell’anno scorso ti diceva che sembrava **fossi nato** per fare il buffone.

**Pulcinella:** E qui c’è scritto che nessuno credeva che le Muse mi **avessero ispirato** ma che presto tutti vedranno i frutti del mio impegno e della mia creatività...

**Pantalone:** Now then, let me read this... Here the critic says, “It was ridiculous that the actors should have tried so hard, in view of the miserable outcome.”

**Arlecchino:** I knew it. We listened to Pulcinella again. It was already evident in rehearsals that you hadn’t got it right a single time. Now that’s enough! This is the last time we listen to him!

**Pulcinella:** And yet on the stage I had the distinct impression that we had chosen the right approach.

**Pantalone:** Oh sure! Listen to this: “It seemed that the one called Pulcinella had never acted in his life.”

**Arlecchino:** What’s the deal? After last year’s show, he was telling you that you seemed to have been born to play the clown.

**Pulcinella:** And here it says that no-one believed that the Muses had inspired me but that soon everyone will see the fruits of my dedication and creativity.

**Pantalone:** Now what critic wrote all that?

**Pulcinella:** Critico? This is my horoscope!
Nota Grammaticale

*Imperfetto e trapassato (piuchepeperfetto) congiuntivo*

At this point we should be familiar with the WHEIRDO verbs and how their use in the main clause triggers one of the subjunctive tenses in the subordinate clause when the subjects of the two clauses are different.

NOTE: Beside verbs that belong to the WHEIRDO category, the subjunctive mood can be introduced by conjunctions such as *bencé / sebbene / per quanto* (although), *affinché / perché* (so that), *a meno che non* (unless) and expressions as *come se* (as if), *magari* (I wish, if only)--for these last two, only *imperfetto* and *trapassato* of the subjunctive mood are used--as well as indefinite expressions such as *qualsiasi cosa* (whatever), *chiunque* (whoever), *nessuno* (nobody).

Here we will talk about the *imperfect* and the *pluperfect subjunctive*, the *imperfetto* and the *trapassato*, or *piuchepeperfetto*. So, if the verb in the main clause is in a past tense or in a tense of the conditional we will use either the *imperfetto* or the *pluperfect subjunctive*. How do we choose between the two of them?

Once again it’s all a question of when the two actions take place in relation to each other: if the *action in the subjunctive* happens at the *same time or later* we use the *imperfect*.

Speravo che mi *potessi* aiutare ad accorciare l’orlo di un centimetro.
I hoped you could help me to shorten the hem by one centimeter.

Vorrei che mi *aiutassi* con il mio abito
I would like you to help me with my dress

And if the *action in the subjunctive* took place earlier we’ll need the *pluperfect subjunctive*.

Era già evidente nelle prove che tu non ne *avessi azzeccata* una.
It was already clear during the rehearsal that you hadn’t guessed any correctly.

Avrei voluto che tu ti *fossi nascosto* meglio
I would have liked that you had hidden yourself better. Or,
I would have liked for you to have hidden yourself better.

Remember that when the two clauses have the same subject, you’ll continue to use the *infinitive* instead of the *subjunctive* in the subordinate clause. The *subjunctive* has four tenses, but we only have the *simple* and the *past infinitives*, so we will “recycle” them when our main verb is in a *past* or a *conditional* tense:

Arlecchina sperava di *attirare* l’attenzione del giovanotto in prima fila.
Arlecchina hoped she would attract the attention of the young man in the first row.

Colombina sperava di non aver fatto male ad Arlecchina con l’ago. Colombina hoped that she had not hurt Arlecchina with the needle.

The formation of the imperfect follows this pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st conjugation: cantare</th>
<th>2nd conjugation: chiudere</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>canta-ssi</td>
<td>canta-ssimo</td>
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<tr>
<td>canta-ssi</td>
<td>canta-ste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>canta-sse</td>
<td>canta-ssero</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3rd conjugation: sentire

| senti--ssi               | senti-ssimo              |
| senti-ssi                | senti-ste                |
| senti-sse                | senti-ssero              |

As you’ll notice, the endings are the same in all three conjugations. Don’t forget to pay attention to the irregular verbs such as bere, dire, fare, porre, trarre, tradurre. The imperfect subjunctive of these verbs is based on the same stem as the imperfect of the indicative: bere, bevevo, bevessi; dire, dicevo, dicessi; porre, ponevo, ponessi, etc.

The conjugation of the pluperfect follows the rules of any compound tense, in this case: the imperfect subjunctive of the auxiliary, avere or essere, + the past participle of the main verb.

Conjugation with avere as auxiliary verb:  Conjugation with essere as auxiliary verb:

| avessi cantato           | avessimo cantato         |
| avessi cantato           | aveste cantato           |
| avesse cantato           | avessero cantato         |
| avessi venduto, avessi sentito, etc. | fossi nato/a, fossi uscito/a, etc. |

In Episode 7 we’ll briefly summarize the WHEIRDO use of the subjunctive and introduce one other special way in which the third-person singular of the present subjunctive is used.

Vocabolario: recensioni

Often times, un critico teatrale (a theatre critic) assists alla prima (the opening night) to write una recensione (a review). He/she notes how the actors hanno recitato (have recited), how the music è stata eseguita (was performed), how la scenografia (stage set) was realized and how il regista/la regista (the director) was able to merge the elements together. If il critico is happy with what he/she saw, he/she will write parole meravigliose (beautiful words) about the actors.
and the performance. *Li loderà* (he will praise them) and *li innalzerà* (he will rise them) to the sky. If *il critico* is not happy with what he/she saw, he/she will write *parole terribili* (terrible words) and *causerà molti guai e tribolazioni* (he will cause difficulties and tribulation) to the actors. But, *guài ai vinti!* (Woe to the vanquished!). A true actor will never be defeated by the words of *un critico teatrale* and *continuerà imperterrito per la sua strada* (he will continue on his/her way undaunted).

Thanks for listening! And be sure to tell your friends that you heard it here on Radio Arlecchino!

Your hosts with the most – grammar, Antonella Olson & Eric Edwards

“Out of our minds ... into your ears”