



Piazza della Grammatica 1 • Antonella Olson & Eric Edwards, Presentatori e Capocomici

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:

<https://coerll.utexas.edu/ra/episode/ep06.html>

Hanno partecipato (Featured in this podcast):

Esmeralda Moscatelli *Colombina*

Simone Sessolo *Pantalone*

Nevin Pecorelli *Pulcinella*

Buon divertimento!

Transcript

Dialogue 1 - italiano

Arlecchina: Vorrei che mi **aiutassi** con il mio abito.

Colombina: Va bene. Cosa devo fare?

Arlecchina: Speravo che mi **potessi** aiutare ad accorciare l'orlo di un centimetro.

Colombina: 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**!

Colombina: Fa' come vuoi. Secondo me

Dialogue 1 – English

Arlecchina: I'd like you to help me with my costume.

Colombina: All right. What do I need to do?

Arlecchina: I was hoping you could help me raise the hem by a centimetre.

Colombina: 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.

Colombina: Do what you want. For my

sarebbe giusto che ti **notasse** senza che tu gli **facessi** lo spogliarello davanti.

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

Dialogue 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: Ma quale critico ha scritto tutto ciò?

Pulcinella: Critico? Ma questo è il mio oroscopo!

money it would be best that he notice you without your doing a striptease in front of him.

Arlecchina: And for **my** money, it would be best that you mind your own business!

Dialogue 2 – English

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: Critic? This is my horoscope!

Nota Grammaticale

Imperfetto e trapassato (piuccheperfetto) 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 **benché / 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 **piuccheperfetto**. 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 **imperfect** 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 azzecata** 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:

1st conjugation: cantare

canta-ssi	canta-ssimo
canta-ssi	canta-ste
canta-sse	canta-ssero

2nd conjugation: chiudere

vende-ssi	vende-ssimo
vende-ssi	vende-ste
vende-sse	vende-ssero

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:

avessi cantato	avessimo cantato
avessi cantato	aveste cantato
avesse cantato	avessero cantato

avessi venduto, avessi sentito, etc.

Conjugation with essere as auxiliary verb:

fossi andato/a	fossimo andati/e
fossi andato/a	foste andati/e
fosse andato/a	fossero andati/e

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, *guai 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*”