PROFESORES DE ENSEÑANZA SECUNDARIA · INGLÉS · JUNTA DE EXTREMADURA

TEMA

26

The Expression of Doubt, Condition, Hypothesis and Contrast

Expresión de la duda, condición, hipótesis y contraste.

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Material de elaboración propia a partir de las fuentes oficiales que se citan al final del tema. No es un temario oficial ni sustituye a la normativa publicada.

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1. INTRODUCTION

"Doubt thou the stars are fire, / Doubt that the sun doth move, / Doubt truth to be a liar, / But never doubt I love." So Hamlet writes to Ophelia in the love letter that Polonius reads aloud in Act 2, Scene 2 of Shakespeare's play. The verse is a small grammar lesson in itself: three imperatives that order doubt, one that forbids it, and a contrast marked by "But". Doubt, condition, hypothesis and contrast are the tools with which speakers refuse to accept the world as simply given: they ask whether something is true, under what circumstances it would be true, what would follow if it were otherwise, and how one fact stands against another. Welcome to Topic 26: The Expression of Doubt, Condition, Hypothesis and Contrast.

To address it, I will divide the topic into five main sections. Firstly, I will examine the expression of doubt and degrees of certainty. Secondly, I will study condition, from the classic conditional types to inversion and conditional conjunctions. Thirdly, I will turn to hypothesis and unreal time. Fourthly, I will analyse contrast and concession, and I will compare English with Spanish, reviewing the typical errors of Spanish-speaking learners. Finally, I will reflect on the pedagogical and didactic implications of this content within our educational framework.

Before moving on, I would like to mention the sources consulted for the preparation of this topic. These include: Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik's A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language (Longman, 1985); Huddleston and Pullum's The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language (Cambridge University Press, 2002); Palmer's Mood and Modality (Cambridge University Press, 2nd edition, 2001); and Swan's Practical English Usage (Oxford University Press, 4th edition, 2016), as well as the online British Council LearnEnglish grammar reference. I have also drawn on the LOMLOE (Organic Law 3/2020, of 29 December), Real Decreto 217/2022 and 243/2022, and Decreto 110/2022 and 109/2022 of the Autonomous Community of Extremadura.