Lesson 9

Grammar: Subjunctive

When a verb is used in the subjunctive mood, this is rather a visualised then a reality event. A verb in the subjunctive is also not marked by tense because it does not mark the time of the action.

Morphological the subjunctive ends in ‘-e’ in the positive and the subject concord for class 1, 1(a) (3rd person singular) is ‘a-’ instead of the ‘u-’.
After ‘kufanele’ (should / ought), kuhle (it is good), etc always use the subjunctive.
(especially those with the impersonal concord ‘ku-’)
‘Kufanele aye ekhaya manje.’ He should go home now.
‘Kuhle ukuthi abakhelwane basizane. It is good that neighbours help each other.

The negative ‘-nga-’ is inserted after the subject concord.
Kufanele angayi ekhaya manje. He should not go home now.
Kufanele ngingawadli amaswidi amaningi.
I should not eat many sweets.

Consecutive actions (and then) are formed by using the subjunctive.
Abantwana bangena esikoleni, bahlale phansi.
The children go into the school and then they sit down.
Namuhla sizoya edolobheni, sithenge ukudla siphuze ikhofi.
Today we will go to town, buy some food and drink some coffee.

Multiple commands in the imperative are formed by using the subjunctive. Only the first verb is used in the imperative mood.
Hamba manje, ubuye ntambama, ungiphekele ukudla.
Go now, and come back late afternoon and (then) cook for me.
Yiyani esitolo ningithengele itiye nobisi.
Go (plural) to the shop and buy me some tea and milk.

When adding an object concord to the verb in the imperative, the subjunctive is used.
Mtshele uDudu eze (a + (i) + za = eze) (afike) kimi.
Tell (her) Dudu to come here.
Babuze abantwana ukuthi bayibonile inja yethu.
Ask (them) the children whether they saw our dog.

Although ‘bese’ has the meaning of ‘and then’, this word is not followed by the subjunctive.
Ngiya emsebenzini bese ngiya edolobheni ukubona umngane wami.
I am going to work and then I go to town to see my friend.