

- **That-Clauses**

- That-clauses are so named because they usually begin with the subordinating conjunction *that*, as in the examples:
- (1) That coffee grows in Brazil is well known to all.
- (2) I know that coffee grows in Brazil.
- (3) He told his mother that coffee grows in Brazil.
- (4) My understanding is that coffee grows in Brazil.
- (5) His claim that coffee grows in Brazil is correct.
- (6) It is well known that coffee grows in Brazil.

- Form. We begin with the internal structure of the clause. The subordinating conjunction *that* which begins the clause has no function within the clause, but serves to connect the clauses. We say that it syntactically subordinates the second clause to, makes it dependent on, or embeds it in the first clause. That is thus a marker of subordination which we call a *complementizer* (Comp).

The remainder of the clause after that is a fully formed S:

- it has a finite verb;
- it may have any number of auxiliaries: that coffee might have been growing in Brazil;
- it may be passive: that coffee was grown in Brazil;
- it may be negative: that coffee doesn't grow in Brazil;

- Function. In all cases, the that-clause has a nominal function; it is functioning as an NP: it answers the question “what?”. In fact, that-clauses may serve virtually all of the functions served by NP’s. In the examples, we see a that-clause serving as:
 - (1) That coffee grows in Brazil is well known to all. - 1. subject
 - (2) I know that coffee grows in Brazil. 2. direct object

- (3) He told his mother that coffee grows in Brazil. 3. direct object after indirect object
- (4) My understanding is that coffee grows in Brazil. 4. subject complement
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- (5) His claim that coffee grows in Brazil is correct.
- The postnominal that-clause in (5) has a function, namely, as complement of the noun. Such that-clauses follow abstract nouns such as *claim*, *fact*, *idea*, *hope*, *notion*, *proposal*, and *lie* and express the content of the abstract noun. They bear a relation to the noun which is analogous to the relation a direct object bears to the related verb: His claim that coffee grows in Brazil ...= He claimed that coffee grows in Brazil.
- Note that because all of these are obligatory positions, if the that-clause is removed, the main clause becomes grammatically incomplete.

- Extraposition. There is a tendency in English not to like heavy elements, such as clauses, at the beginning of a sentence, but to prefer them at the end. This preference is a result of the basic Su-V-O structure of English, where objects are typically longer than subjects. Thus, while sentence 1. *That coffee grows in Brazil* is well known to all above is perfectly grammatical, it is much more natural to use the synonymous sentence 6. *It is well known that coffee grows in Brazil.*

- Because sentences (1) and (6) are synonymous and because the that-clause is logically functioning as subject in both sentences, we will derive sentence (6) from sentence (1) by a rightward movement transformation called extraposition. Such a transformation moves an element to an “extra” or added “position” at the end of the sentence. When the clause is extraposed, the original subject position, which is an obligatory position in the sentence that cannot be deleted, is filled by a “dummy” place-holder, anticipatory it; it has no lexical meaning here, but serves merely as a structural device.

- There is a small set of verbs where extraposition is obligatory, including *seem*, *appear*, *transpire*, and *happen*. Thus, you cannot say **That the world is flat seems*, but must say *It seems that the world is flat*.

- Finite and non-finite clauses
- Much contemporary analysis recognises a category of non-finite clauses – sequences of words which lack a finite verb but nonetheless are treated as subordinate clauses.

- Non-finite verb A verb form which is not finite, that is does not involve variation for past tense and present tense. The three nonfinite verb forms are (a) the infinitive, with or without to, (b) the -ing form (often called present participle or gerund) and (c) the -ed form (past participle):
 - (a)(to) be (b) being (c) been
 - (to) live (b)living (c)lived

Infinitive

- The base form of the verb (that is the form without any suffix or inflection) used as a non-finite verb. For example, be, have, do, see, regret are infinitives when they follow a modal auxiliary or do: may be, could have, can't do, might see, don't regret. Also, the infinitive is used as the verb (or first verb) of a non-finite clause, where it is often preceded by to:
- I came [to ask you a favour].
- They wanted [to be met at the station].
- [To have escaped alive] was an amazing achievement.

Gerund

- A traditional term used in reference to the -ing form of a verb when it has a noun-like function: They're fond of dancing.

Participle

- Participle is a traditional term for the nonfinite -ing form and -ed form of the verb. In *They heard the children laughing* and *They heard the window being smashed/broken, laughing* and *being* are present participles and *smashed* and *broken* are past (or passive) participles. They can also be called *-ing participle* and *-ed participle*.

NON-FINITE CLAUSES

- Examples are given in (1), with the non-finite clauses in italics.
- (1) a. Fanny regretted *talking to Mary*.
- b. Henry wanted *to marry Fanny*.
- c. *Mrs Bennet having taken the others upstairs*, Mr Bingley proposed to Jane.
- d. All Mr Collins does is *praise Lady de Bourg*.
- e. Lady de Bourg tried to persuade Elizabeth *to renounce Mr D'Arcy*.

- Such sequences were until recently treated as phrases – for instance, to marry Fanny in (1b) was described as an infinitive phrase, and talking to Mary in (1a) as a gerund phrase. There are, however, good reasons for treating them as clauses.

- Like the classical finite subordinate clauses, they contain a verb and a full set of modifiers – *marry* in (1 b) has *Fanny* as a complement, *talking* in (1 a) has *to Mary* as a directional complement, and *having taken* in (1 c) has *Mrs Bennet* and *the others* as complements and *upstairs* as a directional complement. They can have aspect, as shown by (2 a, c) which are Perfect and by (2 b) which is progressive.

- (2) a. Henry wanted to have married Fanny before Edmund returned.
- b. Mrs Bennet taking the others upstairs, Mr Bingley gave a sigh of relief
- c. Fanny regretted having talked to Mary.
- d. What Mr Collins is doing is praising Lady de Bourg.

- The non-finite constructions do allow some modality to be signalled, that is, events can be presented as necessary, or requiring permission, or requiring ability, as in (4 a–c).
- (4) a. Fanny regretted having to talk to Aunt Norris. [necessity]
- b. Julia and Maria wanted to be allowed to perform a play. [permission]
- c. Edmund wanted Fanny to be able to ride a horse. [ability]

- The presentation of an event as possible is excluded, or at least very rare
- (5) *Henry wanted to possibly marry Fanny.

- In a given sentence, finite subordinate clause have their own set of participants independent of the participants in the main clause. This is not true of most non-finite constructions. Consider (6), which brings us to the traditional concept of the understood subject.
- (6) Henry wanted to marry Fanny.

- The infinitive construction *to marry Fanny* has no overt subject noun phrase, but *Henry* is traditionally called the understood subject of *marry*. That is, traditionally it was recognised that *Henry wanted to marry Fanny* refers to two situations – Henry's wanting something, and someone's marrying Fanny. Furthermore, it was recognised that *Henry* is the person doing the wanting, so to speak, and also the person (in Henry's mind) marrying Fanny.

- It is rather condensed relative to the semantic interpretation, since there is only one finite clause but two propositions, one for each situation. In contemporary terms, the notion of understood subject is translated into that of control. The subject of want is said to control the subject of the verb in the dependent infinitive. That is, there is a dependency relation between the infinitive and the subject of wanted.

- Remember that the heads of phrases were described as controlling their modifiers, in the sense of determining how many modifiers could occur and what type. In connection with *Henry wanted to marry Fanny*, the noun phrase *Henry* determines the interpretation of another, invisible, noun phrase, the subject of *marry*. The technical term for this relationship is ‘control’; it is important to note that ‘control’ has these different uses.

- In (7), a similar analysis is applied to the gerund, the -ing phrase that complements loved, where the understood subject of talking is Fanny. In contemporary terms, the subject of LOVE is held to control the subject of the dependent gerund – here, the subject of loved controls the subject of talking to Mary.
- (7) Fanny loved talking to Mary.

- With respect to (8), traditional analysis recognises one clause but more than one potential situation: Lady de Bourg tried to do something, Lady de Bourg persuade Elizabeth, and Elizabeth renounce Mr D'Arcy. The subject of tried controls the subject of the dependent infinitive, here to persuade. To persuade in turn has a dependent infinitive – to renounce. The object of persuade, Elizabeth, controls the subject of to renounce.
- (8) Lady de Bourg tried to persuade Elizabeth to renounce Mr D'Arcy.

- Why then do contemporary analysts see the non-finite sequences in as clauses?

- The answer is that they give priority to the fact that non-finite and finite sequences have the same set of complements and adjuncts. Verbs exercise the same control over the types and number of their complements in finite and non-finite constructions; for example, PUT requires to its right a noun phrase and a directional phrase, in both *The child put the toy on the table* and *The child tried to put the toy on the table*.

- The non-finite constructions have understood subjects.

- What are called free participles, adjuncts containing -ing forms, pose interesting problems. Consider (8 a, b), which are the same construction as exemplified by (1 c).
- (8) a. Knowing the country well, he took a short cut.
- b. Slamming the door, he ran down the steps.

- The problem is this. The non-finite constructions in (1) can be straightforwardly correlated with finite clauses, Henry marries Fanny, Fanny talks to Mary, Mrs Bennet had taken the others upstairs and so on. Example (8a) contains knowing, but in spite of this being called a free participle, know does not have -ing forms that combine with be, as shown by (9).
- (9) *He was *knowing the country well*.

- *Slamming* the door in (8 b) is equally problematic. The free participle sequence cannot be related to *When/while he was slamming the door* but only to *When he had slammed the door*. That is, the path from the free participle to the time clause would involve the introduction of a different auxiliary, HAVE. In general, free participles are best treated as a non-finite type of clause with only a very indirect connection, whatever it might be, with finite clauses.

- Functions of Nonfinite Clauses
- Subject and subject complement. Both to-infinitives (including wh-infinitives) and –ing participles (gerunds) can function as subject of the sentence. Like finite clauses, nonfinite subject clauses freely extrapose to the end of the sentence. Examples are as follows:
 - S [To run a small business] is difficult.
 - eSu It is difficult [to run a small business].
 - –Su [For him to be well prepared] is important.
 - eSu It is important [for him to be well prepared].

- Su [Running five miles] is exhausting.
- eSu It is exhausting [running five miles].
- Su [Jane('s) running five miles] is impressive.
- eSu *It is impressive [Jane's running five miles].
- Su S [What to do with her money] preoccupied her.
- eSu It preoccupied her [what to do with her money].

eSu extraposed subject

Extraposition is not always possible when the gerund has an explicit subject (as in the fourth example above).

- Object of P. Only -ing participles (gerunds) can serve as objects of prepositions.
- – We talked [about [going to a movie]].
- PP is complement of V
- – You will find the answer [by [turning the page]].
- *PP prepositional phrase*

- Adverbial. To-infinitives may function as adverbials
- 1. To get ahead, you need to work hard.
- 2. [For him to win the election], his campaign workers will need to work very hard.
- 4. [To judge by her reaction], she must be angry.
- 5. [To tell you the truth], I haven't completed my assignment.
- 6. [To change the subject], what are you doing tomorrow night?

- Summary
- What were traditionally regarded as infinitive and gerund phrases are now treated as clauses on the ground that they express propositions and, like finite clauses, consist of a verb plus complements and adjuncts.