

Parts of a sentence

2.2

Subject and predicate

In order to state general rules about the construction of sentences, it is constantly necessary to refer to smaller units than the sentence itself. Our first task must therefore be to explain what these smaller units are that we need to distinguish, confining our attention for the present to a few sentences which, though showing considerable variety, are all of fairly elementary structure.

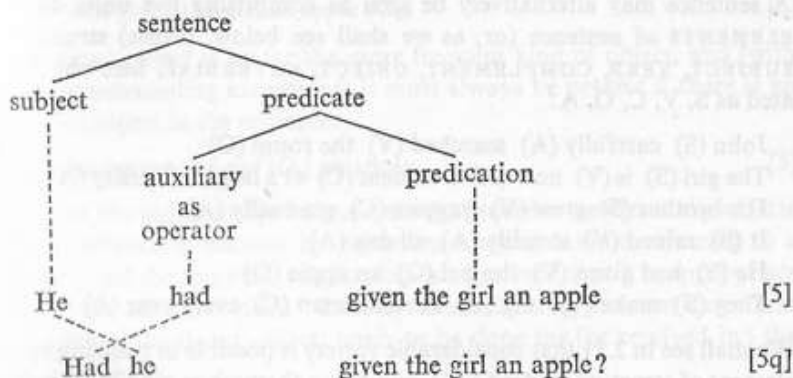
Traditionally, there is a primary distinction between SUBJECT and PREDICATE:

John	carefully searched the room	[1]
The girl	is now a student at a large university	[2]
His brother	grew happier gradually	[3]
It	rained steadily all day	[4]
He	had given the girl an apple	[5]
They	make him the chairman every year	[6]

2.3

Operator, auxiliary, and predication

In contrast with the subject, there are few generalizations that we can usefully make about the predicate since – as our examples have illustrated – it tends to be a more complex and heterogeneous unit. We need to subdivide it into its elements or constituents. One division has already been suggested; this distinguishes AUXILIARY as OPERATOR (as in [5q]) from what we may call the PREDICATION. The distinctions may be illustrated as follows:

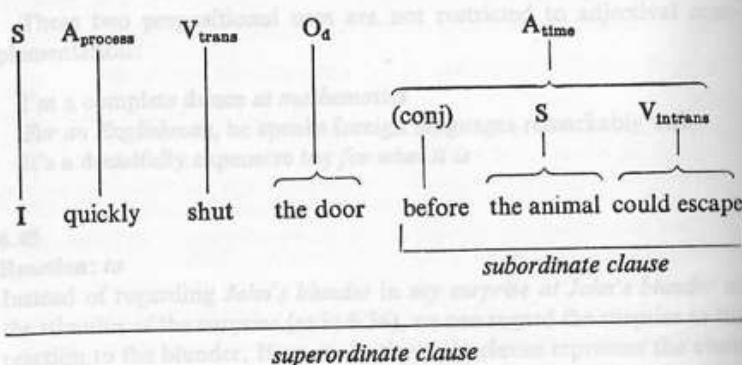


Clause patterns

7.1

Simple and complex sentences

It was pointed out in 2.4 that elements such as V(erb) and O(bject) were constituents of sentences and also of clauses within sentences. From now on, we shall speak of *clauses* and *clause structure* whenever a statement is true both for sentences and for the clauses of which it is composed:



Exercise: Find the subject, form questions

Operators

Exercise 4

Identify the whole of the subject of each of the sentences below. Then transform each sentence so as to form a *yes-no* question on the model:

Operator + subject + rest of the predicate,
and answer the question on one of the following models:

Yes + subject (pronoun) + operator;

No + „ „ + „ + *n't*:

- 1 Computers are fairly commonplace today.
- 2 We have a computer here. (*Give two different transforms*)
- 3 Full-scale computers use a large number of programs.
- 4 These programs have to be changed from time to time.
- 5 A special period will need to be set aside for this operation.
- 6 Thinking about this led us to an interesting conclusion.
- 7 Someone having a dream could be performing a similar operation.
- 8 Most people have had the experience of dreaming in a feverish state.
- 9 Then the sleeper sees dreams as a jumbled sequence of unimportant detail.
- 10 This jumbled sequence of detail keeps dancing in front of his eyes.
- 11 The speaker is seriously comparing dreams with what happens in a computer.
- 12 The process of changing a computer programme can be compared with human dreams.

Exercise: Dependent clauses

Subordinate or dependent clauses

Exercise 6

Pick out the *subordinate or dependent clause* in each of the sentences below. Label the constituent parts, both of the main clause and of the subordinate clause, and indicate the relationship between the two clauses, thus:

S V O S V O A
/You/must add/the raisins/after /you/'ve poured/the syrup/over the crumbs/
(A)

- 1 I don't believe that those bookshelves are popular anywhere yet.
- 2 What that advertisement says is not true.
- 3 What that advertisement says, I simply don't believe.
- 4 I'll believe it when I see the results.
- 5 Can you tell us when we shall see the results?
- 6 I was saying could you come next Saturday?
- 7 I guess I've eaten chicken six or seven times.
- 8 You didn't leave the tap open after you shut off the water supply.
- 9 Where the plane crashed, the snow is still falling heavily.
- 10 Where the plane crashed is still not known.

That [*she* (S) *answered* (V) *the question* (O) *correctly* (A)] (S)
 pleased (V) him (O) enormously (A) [9]

object { direct object (O_d)
 indirect object (O_i)

complement { subject complement (C_s)
 object complement (C_o)

The direct object is illustrated in

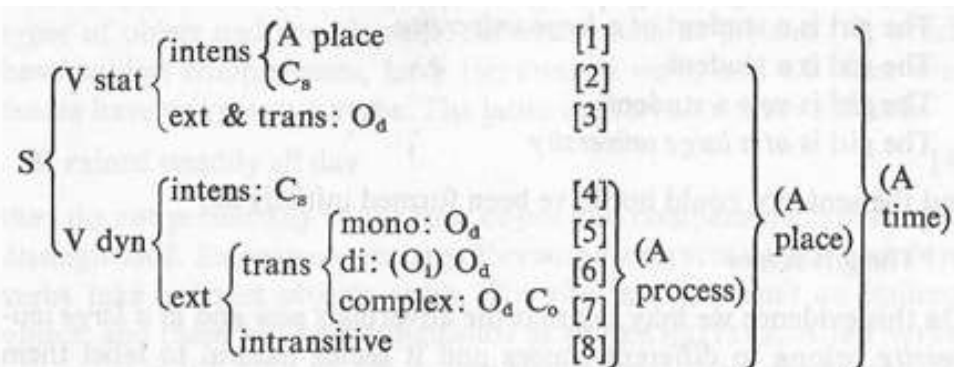
John carefully searched *the room* (O_d) [1]
 He had given the girl *an apple* (O_d) [5]

The direct object is by far the more frequent kind of object, and (with certain outstanding exceptions) it must always be present if there is an indirect object in the sentence:

He had given *the girl* (O_i) an apple [5]

Turning to complements, we may illustrate first the subject complement:

The girl is now *a student* (C_s) at a large university [2]
 His brother grew *happier* (C_s) gradually [3]



She is in London (now) [1]
 She is a student (in London) (now) [2]
 John heard the explosion (from his office) (when he was locking the door) [3]
 Universities (gradually) became famous (in Europe) (during the Middle Ages) [4]
 They ate the meat (hungrily) (in their hut) (that night) [5]
 He offered (her) some chocolates (politely) (outside the hall) (before the concert) [6]
 They elected him chairman (without argument) (in Washington) (this morning) [7]
 The train had arrived (quietly) (at the station) (before we noticed it) [8]

Clause types

(1) <i>SVA</i>	S	V _{intens}	A _{place}	Mary is in the house
(2) <i>SVC</i>	S	V _{intens}	C _s	Mary is {kind a nurse
(3) <i>SVO</i>	S	V _{monotrans}	O _d	Somebody caught the ball
(4) <i>SVOA</i>	S	V _{complex trans}	O _d	A _{place} I put the plate on the table
(5) <i>SVOC</i>	S	V _{complex trans}	O _d	C _o We have proved him {wrong a fool
(6) <i>SVOO</i>	S	V _{ditrans}	O _i	O _d She gives me expensive presents
(7) <i>SV</i>	S	V _{intrans}		The child laughed

Exercise: clause types

Clause types

Exercise 98

Indicate, by *a, b, c, etc.*, to which of the following clause types the sentences below belong:

- a S V intens. Cs
- b S V intens. A place
- c S V intrans.
- d S V monotrans. Od
- e S V complex trans. Od Co
- f S V complex trans. Od A place
- g S V ditrans. Oi Od

- 1 George's father greeted the headmaster.
- 2 The headmaster put George into the second class.
- 3 That made Stanley angry.
- 4 His annoyance did not last.
- 5 He was really a lawyer.
- 6 But he proved himself a great soldier.
- 7 The manager is not in.
- 8 May I offer you a cup of coffee?
- 9 After the war, M. gave him back his saddle-bags.
- 10 He threw himself from his horse.

Parts of speech

2.12

The structures realizing sentence elements are composed of units which can be referred to as *parts of speech*. These can be exemplified for English as follows:

- (a) *noun* – John, room, answer, play
adjective – happy, steady, new, large, round
adverb – steadily, completely, really, very, then
verb – search, grow, play, be, have, do
- (b) *article* – the, a(n)
demonstrative – that, this
pronoun – he, they, anybody, one, which
preposition – of, at, in, without, in spite of
conjunction – and, that, when, although
interjection – oh, ah, ugh, phew

Exercise: Parts of speech

Parts of speech

Exercise 12

Classify the underlined words as parts of speech. If a word is underlined more than once, eg right, refer to the first occurrence as right (1), the second as right (2), and so on.

- 1 Is it right to say that right wrongs no man?
- 2 One cannot right all the wrongs in the world.
- 3 Cure that cold with a drink of hot lemon before you go to bed.
- 4 Drink this quick! Don't let it get cold.
- 5 Before the Fire, there had been a plague, the like of which had not been known before and has not been seen since.
- 6 It is a common failing to suppose we are not like other men, that we are not as other people are.
- 7 As your doctor, I must warn you that the results of taking this drug may be very serious.
- 8 Growth in weight results in the development of muscles and fat.
- 9 Warm pan, sift dry ingredients and stir well.
- 10 Dry hair thoroughly with warm towel and comb.

Exercise: Wh-questions

Wh-questions

Exercise 15

Form *Wh*-questions which will precisely elicit, as answers, the underlined parts of the following questions.

- 1 DDT was sprayed over the area.
- 2 Samuel Pepys wrote an account of the fire.
- 3 He wrote an account of the fire.
- 4 He wrote an account of the fire.
- 5 The fire started in a bakery.
- 6 It burnt furiously.
- 7 It burnt for four days.
- 8 That happened in 1666.
- 9 Pepys' account of it is the best.
- 10 Fires broke out every night during the war.
- 11 Twenty people were killed on the roads yesterday.
- 12 Three inches of rain fell last night.
- 13 It is four miles from here to the station.
- 14 It will only take you ten minutes to get there by car.
- 15 This castle was built during the fifteenth century.
- 16 The Aswan Dam was built to provide a reservoir for the Nile valley.

Exercises: Negation

Negation

Exercise 107

Negate the finite verb in each of the following sentences and make other changes that then become necessary:

- 1 We have enough evidence already.
- 2 There is someone doing research in this field.
- 3 Smoking has something to do with cancer of the lung.
- 4 Tar from cigarette tobacco, painted onto the skin of mice, produced skin cancer on some of them.
- 5 This applies to some of the people here already.
- 6 This experiment has revealed something of importance.
- 7 It helps us in our daily work, to a certain extent, too.
- 8 We must go a long way to find someone as good as this.
- 9 Robertson is still living at this address.
- 10 He has been away from home a very long time.

Exercise 108

Note the following model:

A There are some people in the auditorium already.

B Oh, I'd say there are very few.

C I agree. There are very few people in the auditorium.

Then, from each of the statements below made by A, produce a suitable comment by C, on the lines of the model above, agreeing with B's rejoinder:

1 A Smoking has something to do with cancer.

B Ferguson denies that.

2 A We must always go a long way to find someone interested.

B Oh, I would say seldom.

3 A The experiment has revealed something of importance.

B Hm, scarcely.

4 A We have all had some experience of real hunger.

B Surely only two of us have.

5 A I am in favour of making some concessions to the other side.

B Well, I am against it.