11 | Clause combinations

The last topic of this course involves the grammatical phenomena that result from expressing more than one situation in a single sentence.

11.1 | Discovery

In the previous chapters, we modified the opening line of a famous English novel in order to develop the foundations of phrase structure, syntactic functions and clause patterns. We can now return to the original version of that sentence to illustrate the final topic of this course, that of clause combinations:

(1) *Mrs Dalloway said she would buy the flowers herself.*

In contrast to all the sentences we have examined so far, which consisted of a single clause, the example in (1) actually expresses two predications about Mrs Dalloway in one sentence: the predication that she said something and the predication about her buying the flowers. There are consequently two clauses in (1) which are somehow nested inside one another, as illustrated in Fig. 1:

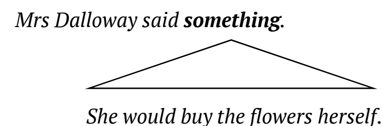


Figure 1 | *Nesting of clauses inside one another*

As is shown here, what Mrs Dalloway said is embedded in – or part of – another clause, and this is one way in which clauses can be combined with one another.

A second way of combining multiple predications in a single sentence is exemplified by the following line from the song "Priorities" by Plested:

(2) *I got these priorities, they always get on top of me, and they are weighing me down.*

In this example, three predications are packaged into the sentence, but they are not nested inside one another but arranged as a linear sequence or enumeration, and each of them could occur as a sentence on its own, which is not possible in (1) above. Therefore, a visual representation of (2) would be purely linear rather than hierarchical (Fig. 2):

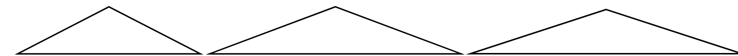


Figure 2 | *Clauses on the same level*

Finally, we can also have a combination of the arrangements in (1) and (2). This can be seen (or rather heard) in the chorus of Lewis Capaldi's song "Someone you loved":

(3) *Now the day bleeds into nightfall, and you're not here to get me through it all.*

On the surface, this sentence looks like the one in (2) above, with two independent clauses being arranged in a linear sequence. But when we look more closely at the second of these clauses, we detect that it is about two situations itself, namely the fact that *you are not here* and the purpose of why you should be here, namely *to get me through it all*. Clearly, these are two separate predications, but the second one is intimately connected to the first one and, grammatically, it could not appear on its own as an independent sentence:

(4) **To get me through it all.*

Therefore, this clause is again embedded in a another one, so that we have a combination of linear and hierarchical structures (Fig. 3):

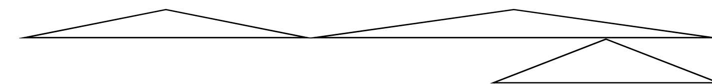


Figure 3 | *Multiple clauses in combination*

It is important to realize that clause combinations as in (1)–(3) are by no means a "luxury" that speakers of English occasionally indulge in; on the contrary, even everyday language use is full of these constructions, from colloquial language to cooking recipes and children's books. In (5) below, you can find a short excerpt from Chapter 1 of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*. Can you detect how many clause combinations this short passage contains and how they are lined up or nested inside each other? We are providing this passage as a bit of a teaser here, and we will reveal the solution at the end of the chapter, once we have established the relevant machinery for talking about these clause combinations in a less roundabout way. In other words, by developing the relevant terminology, we will have better and simply more efficient tools for referring to different types of clause combinations.

(5) *The Dursleys had everything they wanted, but they also had a secret, and their greatest fear was that somebody would discover it.* [...] *Mr Dursley was a big, beefy man with hardly any neck, although he did have a very large moustache.* [...] *As Mr Dursley drove towards town he thought of nothing except a large order of drills he was hoping to get that day. As he sat in the usual morning traffic jam, he* [*noticed*] *that there were a lot of strangely dressed people about. People in cloaks. Mr Dursley couldn't bear people who dressed in funny clothes. He supposed this was some stupid new fashion.* (Rowling 1997: 1–3)

11.2 | Systematization

Revision: Simple versus complex sentences

The main idea of the present chapter is to move from the **simple sentences** that we have seen so far – i.e. sentences consisting of a single clause – to sentences that contain two or more clauses. These are collectively referred to as **complex sentences**, so all of (1)–(3) above would be considered complex sentences.[1] From a communicative point of view, complex sentences allow us to establish a relationship between two or more predications in a single sentence. This is, of course, because each clause expresses exactly one predication, and so a complex sentence always expresses at least two predications that are related to each other in a specific way.

But as we saw above, there are different structural configurations – flat or hierarchical (or both) – in which clauses can be combined, so this is the first issue about which we need further clarity.

[1] It is important to understand that the term 'complex sentence' is a technical term with a specific meaning, namely any sentence that consists of more than one clause. This must not be confused with an intuitive understanding of grammatical complexity. You may feel, for example, that the following sentence is particularly "complex": *Luckily, the ingenious master plan of the particularly ruthless villain was foiled by James Bond's courageous actions at the very end of the movie.* While it is true that this sentence is long and contains a whole lot of phrases nested in each other, it is NOT a complex sentence in a technical sense: It consists of a single clause. The impression of complexity arises because it contains extended noun phrases, several adjuncts and a passive construction, but none of them adds another clause to the sentence. Conversely, a rather short, frequent and seemingly "simple" sentence like *I want to go.* is a COMPLEX sentence because it contains two clauses (using main verbs to express a 'wanting' event and a 'going' event). This difference between a technical and a common-sense understanding of 'complex sentence' is very important to keep in mind!

Coordination versus subordination | 11.2.1

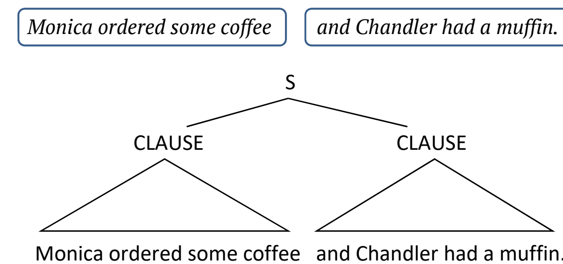
What we saw in (2) above is clauses being joined together in such a way that none of them is made dependent on the other. In other words, there is no hierarchical relationship between them; they are simply put side by side. Syntactically, they are thus treated as being of the exact same status. This structural relationship between two main clauses is called (main-clause) **coordination**.[2] If we wanted to link the two sentences in (6) into a complex sentence by coordination, the result would be (7):

Coordination

(6) *Monica ordered some coffee. Chandler had a muffin.*

(7) *Monica ordered some coffee* [*and Chandler had a muffin*].

We can illustrate this relationship schematically as in Fig. 4:



| **Figure 4**

Visual representation of coordinated clauses

As can be seen, the top node of our tree diagram is now labelled 'S' since we have to acknowledge that the sentence actually branches into completely separate clauses right away, i.e. at the same level of the tree, without one of them being somehow part of the other. The fact that coordinated clauses are both independent clauses of the same syntactic status is also reflected in their form: they both take the form of a fully-fledged, ordinary clause including a subject and a finite verb. As we shall see below, this is often not the case with subordinate clauses.

Subordination

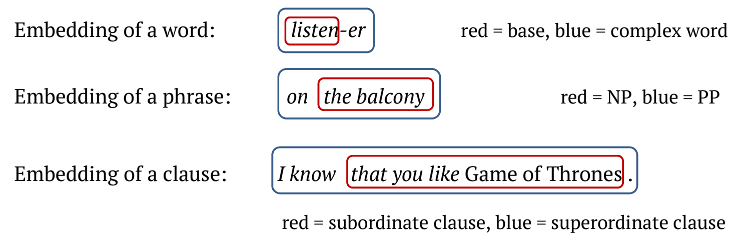
The defining property of **subordination** is that one clause is embedded as a constituent of another clause. This means that the clauses are not simply put side by side, but that one of them – the subordinate

[2] Coordination as a syntactic relationship between elements is not only applicable to main clauses. Phrases can also be coordinated, e.g. the NPs [[*the boy*] *and* [*the girl*]], or the VPs *Peter* [[*ate the chips*] *and* [*drank the beer*]]. In the present context, however, we are exclusively concerned with the combination of <u>main</u> clauses that each have their own subject and predicate.

clause – is actually made part of another clause. The relationship between them is thus hierarchical. This reflects the fact that the two predications are not seen by the speaker as independent and symmetrical; rather, one of them is presented as being dependent on the other.

We encountered such hierarchical structures in other parts of this course: they also apply when (morphologically complex) words and phrases are formed. This parallel is illustrated in Fig. 5, where the blue boxes represent the larger linguistic unit of which the red box is a constituent:

Figure 5 | *Visual representation of hierarchical (= embedded) structures in language*



Taking the predications from (6) above again, it is easy to see that in

(8) *Monica ordered some coffee* [***after*** *Chandler had a muffin*].

the second predication does not have an independent existence. It spells out a time at which the action in the first situation is carried out and, grammatically, it could not stand alone as a meaningful and complete utterance (whereas the first situation could):

(9) **After Chandler had a muffin.*

Because of this semantic and syntactic dependency, the two clauses are not of the same syntactic status within the complex sentence. As we saw in Fig. 5, the subordinate clause is actually *part of* a larger clause, i.e. a constituent of that other clause. And as a constituent of another clause, it also fulfils a syntactic function in that clause. In (8), for example, the subordinate clause *after Chandler had a muffin* behaves like an adjunct in a simple sentence: it provides circumstantial information on Monica's order that is not vital for the sentence to be grammatical, just as in *Monica ordered some coffee after lunch*. This is reflected in the appropriate tree diagram for (8):

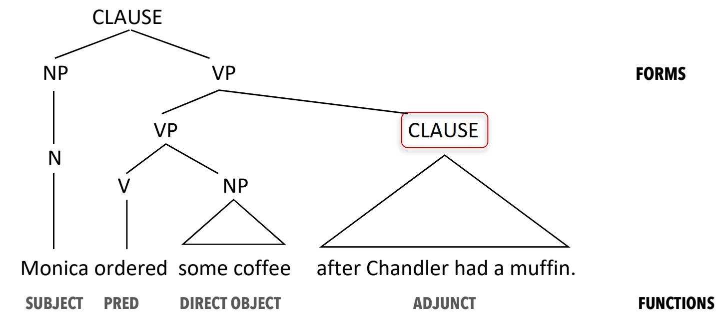


Figure 6 | *Tree diagram containing a subordinate clause*

The hypothesis that subordinate clauses form a syntactic constituent of a higher clause is even more transparent in cases like our initial example in (1) above or in (10) below:

(10) *I believe* [*that Mark cheated on Karen*].

All of our classic constituency tests (e.g. substitution (*I believe it*), sentence fragments, etc.) suggest that the subordinate clause in (10) is a syntactic constituent of the sentence. More specifically, it takes on the syntactic function of the direct object in (10), just like *it* in *I believe it*. Therefore, we have good evidence that subordinate clauses are always *part of* another clause.

Superordinate, subordinate and main clause

The terminology we are going to use to capture this state of affairs is as follows: a **subordinate clause** is always a syntactic constituent within a **superordinate clause**. The more important part of the superordinate clause (i.e. the part that remains when the subordinate clause is removed) is traditionally known as the **main clause**.[3] In Fig. 7 below, we take the tree diagram from above and add these technical labels to it, so that the terms become clearer:

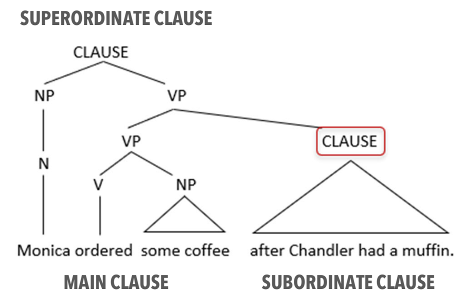


Figure 7 | *Superordinate, subordinate and main clause*

[3] 'Main clauses' in this sense are typically independent clauses that could form a sentence by themselves (as we said in Chapter 6), but this is actually not always the case, as in (10) (see also fn. 6 below).

Again, things are simpler in coordination because we join two fully-fledged **main clauses** to one another and none of them ends up being a syntactic constituent of the other, i.e. there is no dependency or embedding of clauses. Coordination is thus a relatively straightforward matter. The main coordinating conjunctions by which you can recognize main-clause coordination were listed in Chapter 7.

In the remainder of the present chapter, we will concern ourselves exclusively with subordination, because it is here that the major analytical questions arise. This may already be apparent from our examples above. For one thing, we need to ask how exactly a subordinate clause can be part of a superordinate clause, i.e. which syntactic functions it can fulfil in the higher-level unit. And secondly, we need to take a closer look at the formal make-up of subordinate clauses, which can be quite different from that of coordinated main clauses. We will deal with both issues in turn.

11.2.2 | Functions of subordinate clauses

Turning to the functional dimension first, we can distinguish between three broad types of subordinate clause.

11.2.2.1 | *Complement clauses*

Complement clauses

As the name implies, **complement clauses** function as complements (in the broad sense) in the superordinate clause, i.e. they can take on the role of subject, object, predicative complement and other complements. This is what happens in our earlier example (10) above: the subordinate clause [*that Mark cheated on Karen*] works like a direct object of *believe*: you believe "something", and this "something" is exactly what is spelled out by the subordinate clause. Therefore, the subordinate clause functions as a particular kind of complement in the superordinate clause. Like all complements, complement clauses are specifically licensed ("called for or allowed") by the main-clause predicator and usually obligatory elements of the sentence.

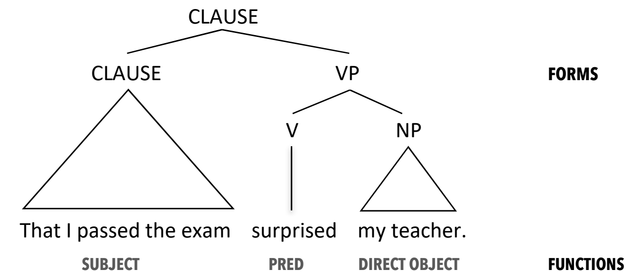
Let us illustrate three contexts in which complement clauses occur:

(11) SUBORDINATE CLAUSE AS **SUBJECT** OF THE SUPERORDINATE CLAUSE
[*That I passed the exam*] *surprised my teacher.*
[*Cooking a meal for 30 people*] *is quite challenging.*

(12) SUBORDINATE CLAUSE AS **DIRECT OBJECT**
She knows [*that I can keep a secret*].
We want [*to go to Spain next year*].
I enjoyed [*running the race*].

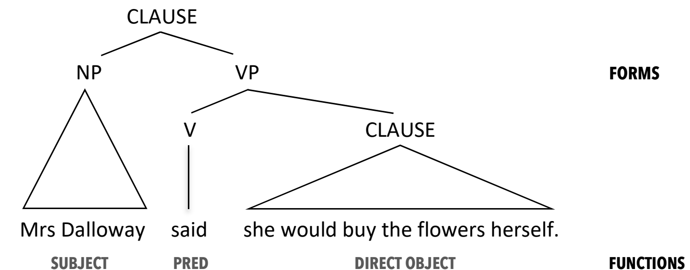
(13) SUBORDINATE CLAUSE AS **PREDICATIVE COMPLEMENT**
The good news is [*that this was the last exam for this semester*].

A tree diagram of (11) shows how a complement clause functioning as subject integrates with the sentence. Note that we abbreviate subordinate clauses by triangles in this and all following examples since we are not concerned with their own internal structure – all we want to see is how they are embedded in the superordinate clause.



| **Figure 8**
Tree diagram containing a complement clause as subject of the superordinate clause

And in Fig. 9, we finally get to see a tree diagram of our famous initial example sentence, in which the complement clause functions as the direct object of the main-clause predicator *said*; such sentences are known as "reported speech" in school grammar:



| **Figure 9**
Tree diagram containing a complement clause as object of the superordinate clause

11.2.2.2 | *Adverbial clauses*

Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses function as adjuncts in the superordinate clause. Just like adjuncts in simple sentences, such clauses are not specifically licensed by the main-clause predicator and they are never obligatory. Because they function as adjuncts, they should actually be called adjunct clauses, but the term 'adverbial clause' is simply so much more frequent in the linguistic literature that we are going to adopt it here. Adverbial clauses are nested inside the superordinate clause in the

same way as phrasal adjuncts, i.e. they are never sisters of V but attach to the VP that contains the verb and its internal complements. An example was given in Fig. 6 above.

We already know that adjuncts spell out a wide variety of different circumstances under which an event takes place, and this is also what adverbial clauses do. They can indicate a temporal, conditional, causal, purposive, manner or other relation between the event in the subordinate clause and the event in the main clause. Some typical examples are provided in the following:

(14) adverbial clause of **TIME**
[*When I was young*], *Pluto was still considered a planet.*

(15) adverbial clause of **CONDITION**
I will ask my boss for a pay rise [*if he's in a good mood*].

(16) adverbial clause of **REASON/CAUSE**
I made my wife a cake [*because it was her birthday*].

(17) adverbial clause of **PURPOSE**
We're leaving early tonight [*so that we can still catch the bus*].

(18) adverbial clause of **CONCESSION**
[*Although it was pouring with rain*], *we had a great party.*

11.2.2.3 | *Relative clauses*

Relative clauses

Relative clauses are illustrated in the following examples:

(19) *This is a film* [***which/that*** *always makes me laugh*].

(20) *The woman* [***who*** *lives next door*] *is a professor of physics.*

(21) *I gave Chris a book* [***whose*** *ending he will never forget*].

We can see in these examples that typical relative clauses are used to modify nouns, in much the same way that this job could also be performed by a syntactically simpler element, like an attributive adjective:

(22) a. attributive adjective
the [*fierce*] *dog*
b. relative clause
the dog [*that bit me*]

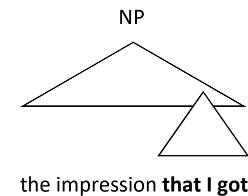
Theoretically, there are many dogs that the speaker might be referring to, and the relative clause narrows down which specific dog the speaker is talking about by providing a context in which that dog has played a role: it is not just any dog, but the dog that bit me the other day.

Because relative clauses like these modify a noun, they are embedded *inside a noun phrase*, just like the attributive adjective in (22a). Therefore, in contrast to complement and adverbial clauses, relative clauses do not have a direct syntactic function in the superordinate clause; it is only the NP which the relative clause is part of that bears such a syntactic relation to the clause as a whole. Thus in the following example, the relative clause in brackets occurs inside the NP in bold print, and it is the whole NP which functions as the subject of the superordinate clause:

(23) $_{NP}$***The family* [*that has moved into our house*]** *is very nice.*

A tree diagram containing a relative clause is given in Fig. 10. (The version on the right is meant for those students who read about the internal structure of NPs in the optional part of Ch. 8.)

(a) schematic (abbreviated) version



(b) elaborate version (**optional**)

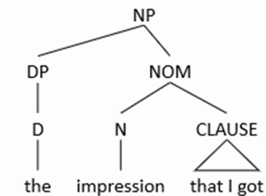


Figure 10
Tree diagrams containing a relative clause

11.2.2.4 | *Distinguishing the three types*

Students sometimes have trouble telling the three types of subordinate clauses apart, so let us dwell on this point for a moment. The first thing to note is that we are dealing with three different *functional* types of clause, so it is irrelevant what exactly they look like. For example, the conjunction *that* can introduce both complement and relative clauses; the conjunction *if* can introduce adverbial and complement clauses; and the conjunction *to* can introduce all three types:

(24) *Ralph asked me* [***to*** *bring some wine*]. [COMP.]
I stopped the car [***to*** *take a break*]. [ADV.]
This is an assignment [***to*** *be completed by next week*]. [REL.]

Therefore, their form cannot reliably distinguish between them.

What really matters is the job that the subordinate clause is performing in each case and what unit it is nested inside. Complement and adverbial clauses operate at the clausal level – they are either complements or adjuncts of the main-clause predicator. As such, complement clauses are specifically licensed, like any other complement, whereas adverbial clauses are optional elements that express circumstantial information; they are never licensed by specific predicators.

That is the crucial difference between them. Relative clauses share with adverbial clauses that they are syntactically optional: if we leave out the relative clause in (23), we are left with the main clause *The family is very nice*, which is a grammatically well-formed sentence. (Certainly, we might not know which family is being talked about, which is precisely what the relative clause is good for, but the sentence would nevertheless be grammatically correct.) But in contrast to adverbial clauses, the relative clause is not an adjunct at the level of the clause. As we said above, typical relative clauses are noun modifiers and thus parts of NPs. As such, they are embedded at a lower level than adverbial clauses, as they do not relate directly to the predicator of the main clause.

What we have presented so far is the bare minimum of what you need to know actively about complement, adverbial and relative clauses at this point. Useful further information on each clause type can be found in the optional EXTENSION part of the chapter.

11.2.3 | Formal markers of subordination

We stated above that coordinated main clauses are, by definition, fully-fledged clauses that could each work like an independent sentence. In contrast to this, the form of a subordinate clause is often (though not necessarily) different from a main clause. Such formal changes reflect that the subordinate clause is itself dependent on something else. There are two basic ways in which subordinate clauses can be formally marked as dependent.

Markers of dependency (I): Subordinating conjunctions

First, subordinate clauses can be introduced by a **subordinating conjunction**, such as *that* in the complement clauses in (11)–(13) or the conjunctions *when, if, because, so that* and *although* in the adverbial clauses in (14)–(18). Relative clauses can also be introduced by the conjunction *that*, but there are more specific markers, called relative pronouns, available in English (*who, which, whom, whose*). There are quite a few other words that function as conjunctions is English, such as the morpheme *to* and various interrogative words (*where, why, whether*, etc.). (For a comprehensive list of conjunctions, please consult Chapter 7 on word classes again.)

The second feature by which clauses can be shown to be subordinate is somewhat harder to recognize because here we actually have to look for something that is *absent* from the clause when compared to an independent clause (rather than a conjunction that is added to it). Specifically, subordinate clauses may contain one of the so-called non-tensed, or **non-finite**, verb forms that we introduced in Chapter 5, but crucially, they may appear without a tensed auxiliary in front of them, and that makes them different from independent clauses. Compare the following pairs of sentences:

(25) a. MAIN/INDEPENDENT CLAUSES
Alex should ***go*** *to the doctor. The baby is* ***crying*** *fiercely.*

b. SUBORDINATE CLAUSES
I want Alex [*to* ***go*** *to the doctor*].
[***Crying*** *fiercely*], *the baby woke me up.*

All sentences in (25) contain non-finite verb forms, which are highlighted in bold print. But the difference is that these are directly preceded by a finite auxiliary in (25a), so that the clauses in (25a) are tensed and can appear on their own. In (25b), by contrast, the same non-finite verb forms appear in a subordinate clause and without a tensed auxiliary in front of them. Consequently, these clauses are incomplete without a tensed verb form and thus could not appear on their own:

(26) **To go to the pub. *Crying fiercely.*

Markers of dependency (II): Dependent verb forms

Such non-finite forms that appear without an auxiliary are called **dependent verb forms**, and they are so called because they signal the dependent status of a subordinate clause.[4]

In Chapter 5, we briefly introduced the different non-finite forms of English verbs, and we here repeat those which can appear as dependent verb forms of subordinate clauses:

(27) Plain form as dependent verb form = INFINITIVE
She made me [***cry***]. *I want* [*to* ***break*** *free*]. = as COMPLEMENT CLAUSE
I'm running [*to* ***catch*** *my train*]. = as ADVERBIAL CLAUSE
The next train [*to* ***arrive***] *is for King's Cross.* = as RELATIVE CLAUSE

(28) Gerund-participle form as dependent verb form
I enjoy [***reading*** *detective fiction*]. = GERUND
The man [***standing*** *over there*] *is my uncle.* = RELATIVE PARTICIPLE
[***Walking*** *down the road*], *I met an old friend.* = ADVERBIAL PARTICIPLE

(29) Past participle form as dependent verb form
I like books [***written*** *by Ian McEwan*]. = RELATIVE PARTICIPLE
[*Lunch* ***finished***], *they retired to their rooms.* = ADVERBIAL PARTICIPLE

[4] With these dependent forms in mind, we can now go back to the distinction between finite clauses and non-finite clauses briefly introduced in Chapter 6: a **finite clause** is one that contains a finite verb (i.e. a tensed main verb or auxiliary), while a **non-finite clause** is one that contains only a dependent verb form.

As you can see, all subordinate clauses in (27)–(29) are enclosed in brackets to make them more clearly visible, and in all of them, the non-finite verb form in bold print is "left alone": there is no auxiliary present.

The examples above also illustrate the different functional types of subordinate clauses from §11.2.2 in which dependent verb forms can be found. In (27), we see that clauses with infinitives are typically complement clauses, but they may also function as adverbial clauses of purpose and occasionally even as relative clauses. (28) indicates that dependent {-ing}-forms are called **gerunds** when they appear in a complement clause, and they are **participles** when they occur in relative or adverbial clauses. And the past participle form, finally, can be used to construct very compact relative and adverbial clauses; here, too, we speak of **relative participles** and **adverbial participles**.

Dependent {-ing}-forms: Gerund, relative participle, adverbial participle

To sum up this far, we have seen that the dependent status of subordinate clauses can be marked by two formal techniques, namely subordinating conjunctions and the use of dependent verb forms. A third option would be a combination of both of these techniques, as in (30):

(30) [***While reading*** *the book*], *I fell asleep.*

The subordinate clause in (30) is marked by both a subordinating conjunction (*while*) and a dependent verb form *reading*, which is dependent because it is not preceded by a tensed auxiliary. Since the subordinate clause is an adverbial clause, the dependent verb form is an adverbial participle. The same general technique also applies when the infinitive is preceded by the conjunction *to*:

(31) *Who wants* [***to live*** *forever*]?

The fourth and final option is for the subordinate clause not to contain any special marking at all. In fact, this is what we started with in (1) above: the subordinate clause *she would buy the flowers herself* is not introduced by a conjunction, and the plain form *buy* is preceded by an auxiliary, so it is not a dependent verb form. Because it lacks any of these formal traces of subordination, the clause could – in principle – occur as an independent clause:

(32) *She would buy the flowers herself.*

The reason why we still recognize it as subordinate is because the other part of the sentence, i.e. the "main clause", is incomplete without it:

(33) **Mrs Dalloway said.*

Therefore, the clause in (32) must be a constituent, more specifically a complement, of the whole clause in (1). Like any complement, it is specifically licensed by the predicator *say*.[5]

Table 1 below summarizes the four different types of formal marking in subordinate clauses in English. We label them I-IV here and illustrate each of them with some examples from song lyrics again. In keeping with what we said above, options I and IV are **finite subordinate clauses**, while options II and III are **non-finite subordinate clauses**:

Finite versus non-finite subordinate clauses

| Table 1

Types of formal marking of subordinate clauses

I: Subordinating conjunction (but no dependent verb form)	**II: Dependent verb form** (but no conjunction)
[***If*** *you love somebody*], *set them free.* *I was lost* [***until*** *I met you*].	*There's nothing* [***holding*** *me back*]. *Let it* [***be***].
III: Conjunction + dependent verb form	**IV: No conjunction, no dependent verb form**
I don't care [***to dance***]. *Burn* [***after reading***].	*I know* [*you want me*]. *These are the things* [*we lost in the fire*].

| 11.2.4 Putting it all together

After having surveyed the two major mechanisms of clause combination in English – coordination and subordination – as well as the different functional and formal types of subordinate clauses in English, we are now armed to see what complex sentences J. K. Rowling built into the beginning of the first *Harry Potter* novel. We thus return to the passage in (5) above and, to give you some practice with the current topic, we shall inspect it with regard to clause combinations.

Let us dissect the first sentence in detail to have a model for the other ones:

(34) *The Dursleys had everything they wanted, but they also had a secret, and their greatest fear was that somebody would discover it.*

This sentence consists of three coordinated main clauses, which are conveniently separated by commas here. The second one is introduced by the coordinating conjunction *but*, the third one by the coordinating conjunction *and*. All three of these clauses could stand alone as gram-

[5] Because (33), as it stands, is ungrammatical without the complement clause, it is actually not entirely correct to call it a "main clause"; after all, it could not appear on its own as an independent sentence. This is why some grammars, like the *DUDEN Grammatik* for German, use the term 'main clause fragment' instead of main clause for units like (33). We are glossing over this problem here and apply the term 'main clause' even to incomplete units like *I believe, He wants* or *They say*.

matically well-formed sentences. But there is more going on: Inside the first clause, we find the unit [*they wanted*], which relates to *everything*: What did the Dursleys have? [Everything they wanted]. The clause *they wanted* is thus embedded inside an NP and hence it is a relative clause. It is not formally marked as such, however: there is no subordinating conjunction, and *wanted* is a tensed, i.e. finite, verb form. One could say that it is the reduced version of *everything that they wanted*. Formally, therefore, this relative clause falls into category IV of Table 1 above. Finally, the coordinate clause about the Dursleys' fear contains the subordinate clause *that somebody would discover it*. This is a complement clause because it acts as the predicative complement of the copula *was*: *Their fear was* _____. The clause is formally marked as subordinate by the conjunction *that*, but it does not contain a dependent verb form: the infinitive *discover* is preceded by the auxiliary *would* and so this is nothing "special". It thus falls into category I of Table 1.

With this model in place, let us now use a kind of shorthand for the analysis: we bracket every clause that is somehow combined with another one, assign a number to it an provide the relevant analytical information in a short list:

(35) *Mr Dursley was a big, beefy man with hardly any neck,* [*although he did have a very large moustache*]$_1$.

1 Subordinate clause; functional type: adverbial clause (functions as adjunct in the superordinate clause/the sentence); formal marking: Type I in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction *although,* but no dependent verb form (infinitive *have* preceded by tensed auxiliary *did*))

(36) [*As Mr Dursley drove towards town*]$_1$ *he thought of nothing except a large order of drills* [*he was hoping* [*to get that day*]$_3$]$_2$.

1 Subordinate clause; functional type: adverbial clause (functions as adjunct in the superordinate clause/the sentence); formal marking: Type I in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction *as*, but no dependent verb form (finite verb *drove*))

2 Subordinate clause; functional type: relative clause (modifies *a large order of drills*); formal marking: Type IV in Table 1 (no conjunction, no dependent verb form (*hoping* is preceded by the finite auxiliary *was*))

3 Subordinate clause; functional type: complement clause (one hopes for something, and this is spelled out by a complement clause here, namely *to get that day*); formal marking: Type III in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction *to*; dependent verb form (infinitive without preceding auxiliary))

(37) [*As he sat in the usual morning traffic jam*]$_1$, *he noticed* [*that there were a lot of strangely dressed people about*]$_2$.

1 Subordinate clause; functional type: adverbial clause (functions as adjunct in the superordinate clause/the sentence); formal marking: Type I in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction *as*, but no dependent verb form (finite verb *sat*))

2 Subordinate clause; functional type: complement clause (he noticed something, and this is spelled out in the rest of the sentence, i.e. everything after *noticed* is a complement (specifically: the direct object of) the predicator *notice*); formal marking: Type I in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction *that*, but no dependent verb form (finite verb *were*))

(38) *Mr Dursley couldn't bear people* [*who dressed in funny clothes*]$_1$.

1 Subordinate clause; functional type: relative clause (modifies the noun *people*); formal marking: Type I in Table 1 (subordinating conjunction (= relative pronoun) *who*, but no dependent verb form (finite verb *dressed*))

(39) *He supposed* [*this was some stupid new fashion*]$_1$.

1 Subordinate clause; functional type: complement clause (direct object of the predicator *supposed*, cannot be left out and is specifically licensed by *suppose*); formal marking: Type IV in Table 1 (no subordinating conjunction (*that* is missing) and no dependent verb form (finite verb *was*))

Take a breath – we have finished: we are at the end of our tour of clause combinations and our survey of the grammatical structure of English more generally. As always, those with an insatiable appetite for grammatical analysis can still move on to the EXTENSION part of the chapter, which provides a chance to investigate subordinate clauses in more detail.

SUMMARY

This chapter has provided an introduction to the domain of **complex sentences**, i.e. sentences consisting of more than one clause. While there are two major ways of forming complex sentences, **coordination** and **subordination**, the focus of the chapter has been on the latter. In particular, we have provided an overview of the three important ***functional* types** of subordinate clauses, i.e. **complement**, **adverbial** and **relative clauses**, and their typical ***formal*** realizations. While all of these clause types can be based on the "normal" verb forms used in simple sentences, it is also quite common to find special ('**dependent**') verb forms in subordinate clauses, such as the plain form or the gerund-participle form of the verb without the presence of a finite auxiliary. In order to distinguish the different functional contexts in which those verb forms can appear, they are often given separate labels, e.g. the {-ing}-form is called **relative participle** when it appears in a relative clause, **adverbial participle** when appears in an adverbial clause, but **gerund** when it occurs in a complement clause.

11.3 | Extension

This **optional** part of the text is intended to elaborate on the basic information on complement, adverbial and relative clauses given in the main text.

11.3.1 | More on complement clauses

Complement clauses can function as subject, as direct object, and as all kinds of other complement in the superordinate clause. Complement clauses internal to the VP (i.e. all except for those in subject function) occur after a wide variety of main-clause predicators:

- perception verbs (*see, hear, feel, smell, observe,* etc.)
- cognition verbs (*know, think, believe, realize, discover, deny,* etc.)
- desiderative verbs (*want, like, love*, etc.)
- phasal verbs (*begin, stop, finish, continue*, etc.)
- causative verbs (*make, let, force sb. to do sth.*)
- report verbs (*say, ask, tell, order* etc.) = indirect statements, commands or questions ("reported speech" in school grammar)

It is often the case that some of the classes show preferences for a specific formal type of complement clause (e.g. quotative verbs tend to go with *that*-clauses, while desiderative verbs rather take clauses with the *to*-infinitive). However, we need to be aware of the fact that, at the end of the day, each verb has its own, unique restrictions on the formal types of complement clause it can co-occur with. This is precisely what we already know as licensing. Therefore, as non-native speakers of English, you simply need to learn that *suggest*, for example, requires a gerund and cannot take a *to*-infinitive as complement clause (cf. *I suggest doing this now* versus **I suggest to do this now*).

Complement clauses functioning as the subject of a complex sentence are less frequent than those in object functions. In English and quite a few other languages, subject clauses are commonly found in a special position. In such 'extraposition' structures, the subject clause is delayed, i.e. shifted to the right, and replaced in the superordinate clause by the 'dummy' subject *it*. This is illustrated in example (40).

(40) *It bothered us that Penny was late for the meeting again.*

As you can see here, the subject participant ('the thing that bothered us') is expressed by an extraposed complement clause. Because subject clauses are relatively long as compared to ordinary NP subjects, it has been argued in the linguistic literature they are not particularly "practical" at the beginning of the sentence (because you have to wait for quite a while until you get to the main predicator of the sentence). Therefore, they are commonly delayed until after the main clause, but anticipated there by the subject pronoun *it*.

11.3.2 | More on adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses, just like adverb phrases, typically function as adjuncts in the main clause. Adverbial clauses are most commonly finite in English (the notable exceptions were listed in (27), (28) and (29) in the main text), and they spell out a variety of circumstantial information on the predicate.[6] Table 2 lists the most central semantic types of adverbial clauses along with the conjunctions that typically introduce them:

Table 2 *Semantic classification of adverbial clauses* (adapted from Leech et al. 2005: 108)

Adverbial clause of	Eliciting question	Subordinating conjunctions
Place	Where?	*where, wherever*
Time	When?*	*when, before, after, as, while, until, since, whenever*
Manner	How?	*as, as if, as though, like*
Reason/cause	Why?	*because, as, since*
Purpose	What for?	*so that, in order that, in order to*
Condition	-	*if, unless*
Result	-	*so that*
Concession	-	*although, though, even if*

* Adverbial clauses of time are not only asked for by 'When?'. They can also spell out other kinds of temporal information, as is indicated by *since* and *until*, for example.

"Again we have to beware of overlapping uses of conjunctions. For example, *as* has a number of different meanings, and *since* can express either time or reason:

(41) [***Since*** *I lost my glasses yesterday*], *I haven't been able to do any work.*

This sentence is ambiguous between the two interpretations." (Leech et al. 2005: 108). It can mean that in the whole *time* between losing his glasses and now, the speaker has not been able to work (temporal interpretation), or it can mean that *because* the speaker lost his glasses, he has not been able to work.

[6] Just like adverbs, though, they can also function as sentence adjuncts (see Chapter 7). The adverbial clause in *To be honest, I really don't like science fiction movies*, is precisely such an adverbial clause. It does not describe the circumstances of the event in the main clause, but rather relates to the *communication* and *assessment* of the event *by the speaker*. Therefore, it relates syntactically to the entire main clause, not just the predicate VP.

We mentioned in earlier chapters that adjuncts, in contrast to complements, are usually quite flexible in their position in the clause. This also holds for most adverbial clauses in English. Temporal, conditional and concessive clauses, in particular, can occur before and after the main clause. Purpose clauses are more typically found after the main clause, and this is even obligatory with result clauses.

11.3.3 | More on relative clauses

Relative clauses have some particularly intriguing semantic and syntactic properties. From a semantic perspective, relative clauses are typically used to modify the head noun of an NP, just like an attributive adjective (see (19) above). In their most characteristic function, relative clauses are attached to head nouns whose referent would not be sufficiently clear without any further modification. For example, in

(42) *The drink* [*we had at the party last night*] *was really tasty.*

the particular referent of the noun *drink* could not be made out if it were not for the relative clause to narrow down the interpretation to a particular drink. Such relative clauses are thus called 'restrictive relative clauses'. As can be seen in Fig. 10b above, restrictive relative clauses are sisters of the noun they restrict, and the resulting nominal can then take determiners, etc. (*a/the/any* [*drink* [*we had at the party*]]).

There are also relative clauses that simply provide additional, supplementary information on the head noun of an NP, without narrowing down its reference. Compare the two sentences below (adapted from Brinton and Brinton 2010: 265):

(43) a. *Children who have vivid imaginations should avoid this book.*
b. *Children, who have vivid imaginations, should avoid this book.*

In (43a), the relative clause is restrictive: the recommendation to avoid the book applies only to a subset of all children, namely those with vivid imaginations. In (43b), by contrast, all children are said to have vivid imaginations and hence they should all avoid this particular book. The relative clause here does not serve to create a subset of children but provides supplementary information on (all) children that explains why they should avoid the book. Therefore, this semantic type of relative clause is called a 'non-restrictive relative clause'. In tree diagrams, such relative clauses do not attach to just an N, but to an already complete NP:

(44) $_{\text{NP}}$[$_{\text{NP}}$[*children*], $_{\text{CLAUSE}}$[*who have vivid imaginations*]], …

The two types of relative clause are also different in speech and writing: in spoken language, non-restrictive relative clauses are often set off from the head noun by a notable pause, and in written language they are enclosed in commas. Restrictive relative clauses, by contrast, are not surrounded by commas. (This is where German and English punctuation differ!)

Because typical relative clauses directly relate back to a preceding noun, that noun is not normally repeated as such inside the relative clause, for reasons of efficiency. Thus in

(45) *The guy* [*that we saw*] *is called Peter.*

the NP *the guy* does not appear in the relative clause. But we know it is there somehow because the verb *see* normally occurs with a direct object. Linguist say that speakers leave a "gap" in the that position:

(46) *The guy* [*that we saw* ____] *is called Peter.*

The blue line indicates that the gap needs to be filled by the referent of the head noun. In a way, relative clauses are always internally incomplete because of such gaps, as can also be seen in the following examples:

(47) *the dog* [*that* ___ *barks very often*] [subject missing]
(48) *the dog* [*that I feed* ____] [direct object missing]
(49) *the dog* [*that I give* ____ *food*] [indirect object missing]
(50) *the town* [*that I live in* _____] [prepositional object missing]

It is this "incompleteness" that sets relative clauses apart from (finite) complement clauses and from (finite) adverbial clauses.

11.4 | Bibliography

The present chapter integrates the ideas of several different sources:

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