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Syntactic Functions of Clause Elements

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

{وَقُلْ اَعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ

وَسَتُرَدُّونَ اِلَىٰ عَالِمِ الْغَيْبِ وَالشَّهَادَةِ فَيَبْئُكُم بِمَا كُنتُمْ

تَعْمَلُونَ ﴿١٠٥﴾}

صدق الله العظيم (التوبة: ١٠٥)

Dedication

This research paper is dedicated to my dear father, who has been nicely my supporter until my research was fully finished, and my beloved mother who, for months past, has encouraged me attentively with her fullest and truest attention to accomplish my work with truthful self-confidence.

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Abstract

Defining and identifying clause elements is essential to analyzing and understanding a language, in particular in the practice of teaching and learning the language as a second/foreign language. These papers will discuss many concepts in each chapter. The first paper is an introduction to the whole research. The first chapter is about the clause elements. Each element has been discussed separately in details. The second chapter is about The Structure of Clause Functions. Each structure is analyzed with examples. A clause is a sentence or a part of sentence having a subject and a finite or principal verb. The clause is the basic unit of syntactical communication within a sentence, which can contain multiple clauses. It has seven basic elements: The predicate, The Subject (S), The Direct object (Od), The Indirect object (Oi), The Subject predicative (Ps), The Object predicative (Po), and the Adverbial (A).

Introduction

Language analysis and understanding require the defining and identifying of clauses, especially in the context of teaching and learning foreign/second languages. The clause is a group of words that includes a subject and a verb, and forms a sentence or part of a sentence. An easy way to think about clauses is to regard them as units of language that convey a single message about an event or state, it includes information about what kind of event or state it is, who is involved, when, where, and why it happened, etc. The analysis of clauses is based on clause elements, which can be understood as shorthand terms or parts of the message the clause conveys. We use the following clause elements: Predicate verb (V), Subject (S), Direct object (Od), Indirect object (Oi), Subject predicative (Ps), Object predicative (Po), and Adverbial (A). (Li& Yan, 2018:2)

A language's syntax refers to all aspects of its structure, which are typically considered to include syntax and morphology (including inflections) and sometimes also phonology and semantics. A language's syntax can also be defined as, "the arrangement of words and phrases to create well-constructed sentences," or "the grammatical structure of words and phrases to create coherent sentences. Syntax has to do with word order. (Muin, 2019:10)

The present study is intended to examine major existing definitions and identifying principles of clause elements. In this study we will learn about the functions of the clause parts in Syntax type of English grammar.

Chapter One

1.1 The predicate

The predicate is subdivided into auxiliary as operator and predication.

Example: He had given the girl an apple. In this sentence we have the subject (He), the Auxiliary as operator (had), and then the Predication phrase (given the girl) the predicate. a predicate is what the subject does. It contains the verb and any object or modifiers that are governed by the verb. the predicate is the part of a sentence or clause containing a verb and stating something about the subject. It includes the verb and anything modifying it. (Quirk, 1973:11)

1.2 The Subject (S)

The second most important element is the subject. The subject of a clause is an important participant in the event or state described by the predicate verb. Depending on the verb, it could identify who performs a certain action; who owns a certain property; or who is in a particular state. There are three types of subjects: subject pronouns in the nominative case, an object pronoun in the accusative case, and a subject and object pronoun in the nominative case. For instance, *He likes her while She likes him*. As a general rule, the subject comes before the verb phrase (except in clauses with inversion, such as questions, where the subject comes after the operator). If the subject is singular or plural, the number of the verb phrase

depends on that. For example, *She works late*, singular, is different from *They work late*, plural. You can put a subject noun phrase after a transitive verb and precede it with *by* to make a passive clause. *Kate saw it* vs *It was seen by Kate*. Generally, the subject is the most important participant in the action or state described by the verb. With transitive verbs, this generally refers to the agent, the one who performs the action. (Biber, 2021:2)

In the following clauses, the subject is highlighted.

- (4) **Boys** gathered in the street.
- (5) **All the boys** gathered in the street.
- (6) **Water** has a higher density than oil.

1.3 The Direct object (Od)

The direct object of a verb is the thing being acted upon (i.e., the receiver of the action). A direct object generally follows immediately after the verb, except in cases where an indirect object intervenes. Its most common semantic function is to denote the subject of the verb's action or process. Only Transitive Verbs Have Direct Objects, when a verb has a direct object, it is called a transitive verb. Some verbs do not have a direct object. They are known as intransitive verbs. (Shrives, 2019:1)

Some examples of direct objects:

Play **the guitar**.

Every actor played **his part**.

The crowd will cheer **the President**.

We can climb **the hill** and fly **the kite**.

1.4 The Indirect object (Oi)

It refers to someone or something affected by a transitive verb (typically as a recipient), but is not the primary object (e.g. him in give him the book). The indirect object of an English sentence is the word or phrase that receives the direct object. For example, in the sentence The teacher gave the students cake, the indirect object is the students. The direct object is cake, and the students are the ones who eat it. When you know what direct objects are, you can easily understand indirect objects. A direct object is the noun that receives the action of the verb, while an indirect object is the noun that receives the direct object itself. A sentence must have a direct object in order for indirect objects to be used. Direct objects can be used without indirect objects. For the same reason as direct objects, indirect objects can only be used with transitive verbs. Furthermore, not all transitive verbs can use indirect objects; only a special type called ditransitive verbs can do so. Indirect objects can be either an individual noun or a noun phrase.

I loaned him some money. In this example, him is the indirect object because he receives the money (the direct object). But what if we got a little more descriptive .
I loaned my fat, bald friend of ten years some money. In this case, the indirect object is the entire phrase my fat, bald friend of ten years. (Ellis, 2021:1)

1.5 The Subject predicative (Ps)

Subject predicative characterize or specify the subject noun phrase. Highlighted in the following examples:

- 1- His skin was **very pink**. (ACAD) <SP = adjective phrase>
- 2- That tall fellow over there is **Dr Fraker**. (FICT) <SP = noun phrase>
- 3- But his wife Shelley seemed in **great shape**. NEWS^ <SP = prepositional phrase>

Special distinguishing features of the subject predicative are :It immediately follows the verb phrase. The main verb has to be a copular verb, such as be, seem, and become. Subject predicatives are also sometimes called 'subject complements'. (Conrad, 2021:2)

1.6 The Object predicative (Po)

An Objective Predicative (Po) (which is more widely known as an object complement in most grammars) follows and modifies or refers to a direct object. It can be a noun or adjective or any word acting as a noun or adjective. Object predicative characterize or specify the direct object noun phrase. Highlighted in the following examples: (Patel, 2015:1)

- 1- Oh, I can't get this milk **open**.
- 2- Many consider these new gates **something of a menace**.
- 3- He was surprised to find himself **out of breath**.

1.7 The Adverbial (A)

Adverbials perform a wide range of functions within a clause. Some adverbials specify circumstances that accompany an event or a state. For example, an adverbial may specify when, where, why or how an event took place. "[The class of adverbial] includes manner and degree adverbs (e.g. happily, clumsily, quickly, very), temporal adverbials (e.g. now, when, today), spatial adverbials (here, north, up, across), attitudinal adverbials (certainly, hopefully), modal adverbials (not, no, probably, etc.), expectation adverbials (only, even, again), and textual adverbials (firstly, finally)." (McGregor , 1997:1)

"In reality, adverbials are very free in their placement, appearing in different positions in the sentence, not just sentence final:

sentence initial—[Yesterday], I ran a marathon.

sentence final—I ran a marathon [yesterday].

preverbal—I [always] run well in the heat.

postverbal—I handed the baton [quickly] to the next runner.

within the verb group—I have [never] won a race.

The various types of adverbials behave differently, however; while all can occur sentence finally, time adverbials are acceptable sentence initially and sometimes preverbally, place adverbials are clumsy sentence initially, and manner adverbials frequently occur preverbally but are less good sentence initially. One position which is impossible for adverbials is between the verb and the direct object." (Benjamins, 2000:2)

Chapter Two

The Structure of Clause Functions

1.2 Coordinate Clauses

The simplest sentences may contain a single clause. (Simple is a standard description of one kind of sentence.) Where a sentence contains more than one clause, these may be considered of equal grammatical importance. If this is so, these are coordinate clauses. They are joined by a coordinating conjunction, such as and, or or but. (Some grammarians call the first clause of the sentence the main clause, and the others coordinate clauses). A compound sentence is made up of one or more coordinate clauses joined to the main clause. (Nordquist,2019:1)

Here are some examples:

- You can travel by tube, you can drive or you can take the train.
- Lucy opened her window and in came Count Dracula.

2.2 Subordinate Clauses

Sometimes the clauses are placed in a hierarchy: the more important ones are main clauses, while the less important are subordinate clauses. A main or coordinate clause could stand on its own as a sentence, but a subordinate clause works only within a sentence. A subordinate clause can do the job of other clause elements. It can work as subject, object, complement and adverbial, as in these examples:

- Subordinate subject clause: What you say is stupid.
- Subordinate object clause: I did not know that you were here.

Clauses that function as subject, object or complement replace noun phrases, so they are called nominal clauses. Those that function as adverbs/adjectives are adverbial/adjectival clauses. Some other kinds of nominal clauses are shown below. For clarity, they are all shown in object position. This is not the only place where they may occur, but is the most common.

- That clause: I think (that) you know each other. (That may be omitted if understood.)
- Wh- clause: I know what you did last summer. (Clause introduced by who, when, what, why, whether.)
- -ing clause: I don't recall seeing her there. (Clause introduced by present participle.)
- inf. clause: I wish to confess to my crimes. (Clause introduced by to + infinitive.)

2.3 Adverbial Clauses

Adverbial clauses are known from traditional grammar as one of three major classes of subordinate clauses. They are semantically diverse and structurally complex. These are introduced by a subordinating conjunction, which explains the adverbial meaning of the clause. These include when/before/after/while (time); because/since (reason); if/unless/lest (condition), etc., (Lin, 2015:1)

as in these examples:

- When the bell sounds, you may leave the room.
- We cannot send you the goods because we are out of stock.
- Unless you are good, Father Christmas will bring you nothing.

Two minor types of adverbial clause are inf. and -ing clauses.

- Inf. clause: I went to the shop to buy some presents. (Clause introduced by to + infinitive.)
- -ing clause: Jane broke her arm while fighting. (Clause introduced by present participle.)

2.4 Adjectival Clauses

An adjective clause is a multi-word adjective that includes a subject and a verb. When we think of an adjective, we usually think about a single word used before a noun to modify its meanings (e.g., tall building, smelly cat, argumentative assistant). However, an adjective can also come in the form of an adjective clause. An adjective clause usually comes after the noun it modifies and is made up of several words, which, like all clauses, will include a subject and a verb. A familiar type is the relative clause, introduced by a relative pronoun (who, whom, whose, that, which). (Shrives, 2021:1)

as in these examples:

- Here is the woman (whom) I married.
- This is the book (which) I am reading.
- The drink (that) I most like is orange-juice.

Two minor types of adjectival clause are -ing and -ed clauses.

- -ing clause: The train now standing at platform four is the 5.30 to Leeds.
- -ed clause: She is the celebrity pursued by the press.

Since past participles do not all end in -ed we may find other verb forms in such clauses: The tea drunk by the students or the exam taken by the pupils.

Conclusion

A clause is the main unit of grammatical structure. It usually consists of a subject and a predicate. It consists of one or more groups. A typical structure of a clause is SPCA - subject, predicator, complement, adjunct. Subject is typically realized by a nominal group. Predicator is typically realized by a verbal group. Complement is typically realized by a nominal group. Adjunct is typically realized by an adverbial group. A clause can stand alone as a complete thought or sentence. We call this type of clause Independent, Main or Alpha clause. This clause does not depend on another clause to fully express itself. The subordinate clause is a type that does not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone in a sentence as a separate grammatical entity since its meaning depends on the meaning of the main clause. An adverbial clause is the subordinate, Beta or dependent clause that performs the function of an adverb in a sentence. Adjective clauses are dependent clauses that give information about nouns. They allow you to combine two sentences into one by using relative pronouns (who, whom, whose, where, when, which, that, and why) as connectors. Coordinate clause is a clause (i.e., a word group containing a subject and predicate) that is introduced by one of the coordinating conjunctions--most commonly and or but.

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