

Coordination and subordination

- 14.1** In Chapters 10 and 11 we studied the simple sentence, a sentence consisting of a single clause in which each of its elements (subject, object, adverbial, etc) is realized by a subclausal unit – a phrase. The multiple sentence, on the other hand, consists of more than one clause. One of the two major devices for linking clauses within the same sentence is coordination, which we discussed in Chapter 13. We there distinguished coordination from the other major device, subordination (*cf* 13.2*ff*). In this chapter we examine the complex sentence, a sentence in which one of the elements is realized by a subordinate clause. Here we discuss the structural types of subordinate clauses, the formal indicators of subordination, and the choices affecting the verb phrases of subordinate clauses.

Compound and complex sentences

- 14.2** The major types of multiple sentences are the compound and the complex sentence. A compound sentence consists of two or more coordinated main clauses; the clauses of a compound sentence provide classic instances of a paratactic relationship (*cf* 13.2), that is they have equivalent function, as diagrammatically indicated in *Fig* 14.2a overpage. The two main clauses in the Figure are equal constituents of the sentence, and are linked by the coordinator *but*.

A complex sentence is like a simple sentence in that it consists of only one main clause, but unlike a simple sentence it has one or more SUBORDINATE clauses functioning as an element of the sentence. Subordination is an asymmetrical relation: the sentence and its subordinate clauses are in a hypotactic relationship (*cf* 13.2), that is they form a hierarchy in which the subordinate clause is a constituent of the sentence as a whole – an adverbial in the example diagrammed in *Fig* 14.2b overpage.

Subordination is not the only factor that enters into either the length or the complexity of sentences, when ‘complexity’ is understood in a nontechnical sense. Phrases may be complex in the degree of their modification; the vocabulary may be obscure; because of their compression, nominalizations (*cf* 17.51*ff*) may be more difficult to understand than corresponding subordinate clauses; the coherence of the sentence as a whole may be difficult to understand; the content of the sentence may presuppose knowledge that is not generally available.

With respect to its function, a subordinate clause may be viewed as downgraded to a subclausal unit, such as a prepositional phrase:

Although I admire her reasoning, I reject her conclusions.

[‘Despite my admiration for her reasoning, I reject her conclusions’]

Both the subordinate clause and the prepositional phrase in the paraphrase are functioning as adverbials within their sentence.

A clause that is not subordinate to another clause is an INDEPENDENT clause. Hence the two main clauses in *Fig* 14.2a and the main clause (identical with the sentence) in *Fig* 14.2b are independent clauses.

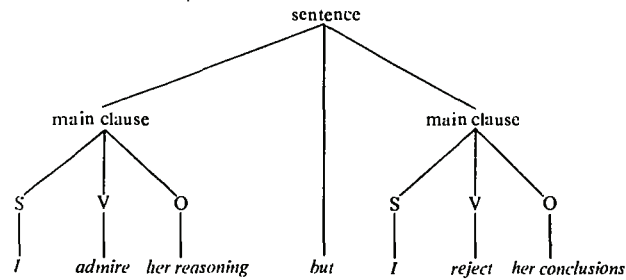


Fig 14.2a Compound sentence: coordination

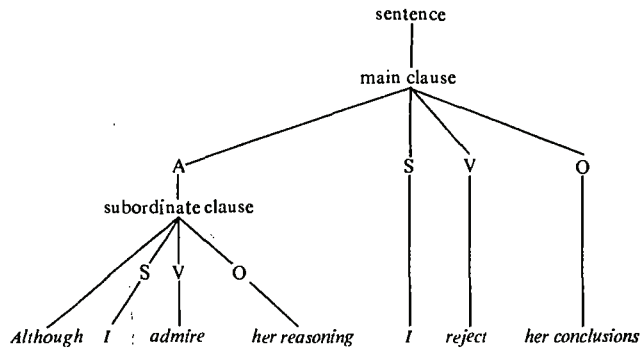


Fig 14.2b Complex sentence: subordination

- Note [a] Main clauses have also been called 'principal clauses' or (less commonly) 'head clauses'.
 [b] Subordinate clauses (sometimes abbreviated to 'sub-clauses') have also been called 'dependent', 'embedded', 'included', 'constituent', and 'syntactically bound' clauses.
 [c] Some grammarians have extended the term *sentence* to cover what we have termed *clause*.
 [d] Main clauses are generally also independent clauses. But if a coordinated main clause when it is isolated from the rest of the sentence is unacceptable as a simple sentence, it is not an independent clause. For example, the second clause below is structurally deficient as a simple sentence because of the ellipsis, the acceptability of the clause depending on its relationship to the first clause:
 The plot was exciting and *the characterization plausible*.

14.3 Subordinate and superordinate clauses
 Figures 14.2a and 14.2b present uncomplicated examples involving just two clauses. In Fig 14.2b the two clauses in the complex sentence are the subordinate clause and the SUPERORDINATE clause, of which the subordinate clause is a constituent; the superordinate clause is therefore also the main clause. But a clause may enter into more than one relationship; it may be subordinate to one clause and superordinate to another, as indicated in Fig 14.3a opposite.

each of which may in turn include subordinate clauses. An example, by no means unusually complicated, appears in Fig 14.3b, where the labelling has been abbreviated:

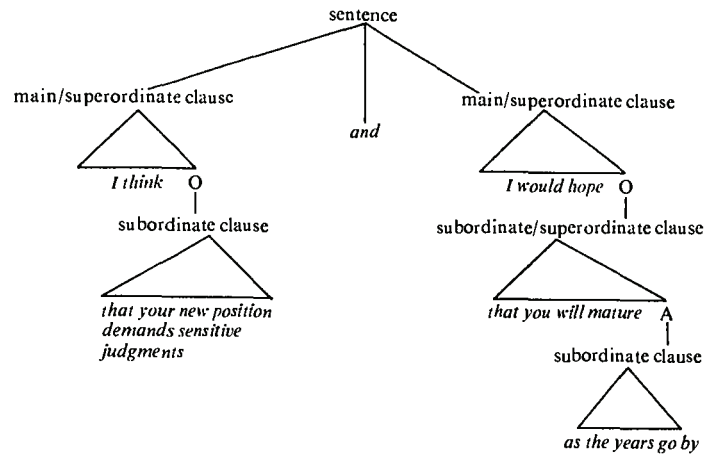


Fig 14.3b Compound sentence with subordinate clauses

Similarly, coordination may occur at any level. In Fig 14.3c the two subordinate clauses of the complex sentence are coordinated:

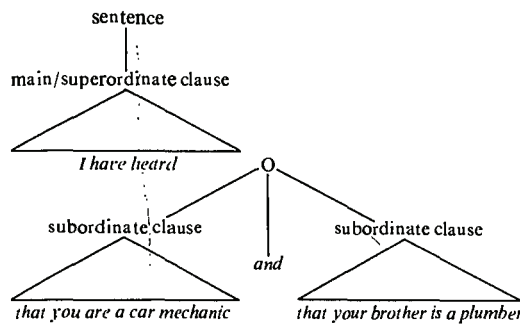


Fig 14.3c Complex sentence with coordinated clauses

A subordinate clause may function not only as a clause element of a superordinate clause but also as a constituent of a phrase, for example as a relative clause postmodifying a noun phrase:

The school *which my children attend* is within walking distance.

We consider such noun phrases to be complex, but we do not consider a sentence with a complex noun phrase to be a complex sentence merely on the grounds that it contains a complex phrase (cf 10.1 Note [a]).

Subordinate and matrix clauses

14.4 We have pointed out that a subordinate clause is a part of its superordinate clause, functioning as one of its elements. Thus, we can match clauses with phrases or words in the same function, direct object in [1] and adverbial in [2]:

- We noticed { that they were nervous. [1]
 { their nervousness.
- One matures { as the years go by. [2]
 { eventually.

We have no more reason to designate *We noticed* and *One matures* as clauses in their own right when they are followed by subordinate clauses than when they are followed by phrases or words. For both alternatives in [1] and [2] the clause that begins the sentence concludes the sentence.

Nevertheless, we find many occasions in this chapter, particularly in discussing adverbial clauses, when it is useful to distinguish between a subordinate clause and the rest of the superordinate clause of which it is part. When we have needed to do so, we have used the term **MATRIX** clause to designate the superordinate clause minus its subordinate clause. For example, we have referred to the situation described in the matrix clause as contingent on that of the subordinate conditional clause (cf 15.35):

I'll lend you some money if you don't have any money on you. [3]

The matrix clause *I'll lend you some money* conveys an offer that is consequent on the fulfilment of the condition expressed in the subordinate clause *if you don't have any money on you*. Similarly, we have referred to the matrix clause in discussing the time reference of adverbial clauses of time. For example, subordinators such as *before* and *until* indicate that the situation described in the matrix clause occurred before or led up to that in the subordinate clause (cf 15.27).

We illustrate in Fig 14.4 what we have termed a matrix clause.

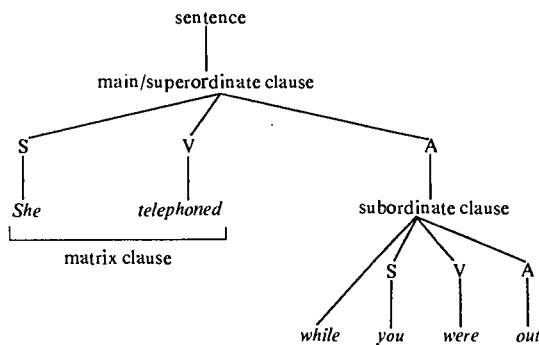


Fig 14.4 Matrix and subordinate clause

Note Some have used the term 'main clause' for what we term matrix clause.

Finite, nonfinite, and verbless clauses

14.5 We recognize three main structural types of clauses:

FINITE CLAUSE: a clause whose verb element is finite (such as *takes, took, can work, has worked, is writing, was written*; cf 3.52ff), eg:

I can't go out with you because I am studying this evening.

NONFINITE CLAUSE: a clause whose verb element is nonfinite (such as *to work, having worked, taken*; cf 3.53), eg:

Knowing my temper, I didn't reply.

VERBLESS CLAUSE: a clause that does not have a verb element, but is nevertheless capable of being analysed into clause elements, eg:

Although always helpful, he was not much liked.

We recognize nonfinite and verbless structures as clauses because we can analyse their internal structure into the same functional elements that we distinguish in finite clauses. Consider, for example, the analysis of the nonfinite clause in:

Knowing [V] my temper [O_d], I didn't reply.

The analysis depends on the analogy with the corresponding finite clause:

I [S] know [V] my temper [O_d].

Similarly, the verbless clause *although always helpful* in:

Although [conj] always [A] helpful [C_s], he was not much liked.

It is analysed as in the corresponding finite clause:

Although [conj] he [S] was [V] always [A] helpful [C_s], he was not much liked.

One structural type of clause may be embedded within another:

Too nervous to reply after other speakers had praised her devotion to duty, Margaret indicated that she would speak later. [1]

The italicized subordinate clause in [1] is a verbless clause that contains a subordinate nonfinite clause (beginning *to reply*) that in turn contains a subordinate finite clause (beginning *after other speakers*).

Note We recognize a structure as a clause only when it is describable in terms of clausal rather than phrasal structure. Hence the subject in [2] is considered a noun phrase because it has the structure of a noun phrase with *conquest* as its head:

William's conquest of England brought about a change in the status of the English language. [2]

Compare *William's conquests of other countries*, where the head of the phrase shows that it can take the number contrast that is characteristic of most nouns. On the other hand, the phrase structure of *William's conquest of England* is related to clause structure (*William conquered England*) through nominalization (cf 17.51ff). Both the clause and the phrase can be described

semantically as a sequence of agentive, activity, and affected, but semantic grounds are not sufficient for syntactic analysis. Only the clause do we analyse syntactically as a sequence of subject, verb, and object. For example, consider *part-time teaching* in:

I enjoy *part-time teaching*.

It has the structure of a noun phrase with *teaching* as head and *part-time* as premodifier. Contrast *teaching undergraduates* in:

I enjoy *teaching undergraduates*.

It has the structure of a clause (as in *I teach undergraduates*) with *teaching* as verb and *undergraduates* as object. On the other hand, there is structural ambiguity in:

I enjoy *teaching*.

Teaching may be a noun phrase with only a head or a clause with only a verb (cf 15.13).

Nonfinite clauses

- 14.6 The nonfinite clause may be with or without a subject. The classes of nonfinite verb phrase (cf 3.53) serve to distinguish four structural classes of nonfinite verb clauses:

(i) TO-INFINITIVE

without subject: The best thing would be *to tell everybody*.

with subject: The best thing would be *for you to tell everybody*.

The infinitive clause with *to* plus a subject is found characteristically in constructions with anticipatory *it* (cf 18.33ff), for being used to introduce the subject: *It would be better for you to tell everybody*.

(ii) BARE INFINITIVE

without subject: All I did was *hit him on the head*.

with subject: *Rather than you do the job*, I'd prefer to finish it myself.

The bare infinitive is found characteristically in pseudo-cleft sentences (cf 18.29f), where the infinitival *to* is optional:

What they did was (*to*) *dig a shallow channel around the tent*.

(iii) -ING PARTICIPLE

without subject: *Leaving the room*, he tripped over the mat.

with subject: *Her aunt having left the room*, I asked Ann for some personal help.

When the subject of *-ing* clauses is expressed, it is often introduced by a preposition (cf 14.19 Note [b]):

With the audience turning restive, the chairman curtailed his long introduction.

On the question of genitive subjects, cf 15.12.

(iv) -ED PARTICIPLE

without subject: *Covered with confusion*, they apologized abjectly.

with subject: *The discussion completed*, the chairman adjourned the meeting for half an hour.

Categories (i) and (iii) are used most frequently; category (ii) is relatively rare.

Except for the *-ed* clause, which is inherently passive (*cf* 14.7), all types of nonfinite clauses have both active and passive forms, for example:

It would be possible *for my son to drive you to the airport*.

~ It would be possible *for you to be driven to the airport by my son*.

Rather than *Michael guarantee the loan*, it can be done by his father.

~ Rather than *the loan be guaranteed by Michael*, it can be done by his father.

The parents having paid for the damaged window, the police were not called.

~ *The damaged window having been paid for by the parents*, the police were not called.

Progressive and perfective forms may function in the verb phrase of nonfinite clauses, though the nonfinite verb paradigm is somewhat defective (*cf* 3.56). But modal auxiliaries are excluded, since they have neither infinitives nor participles.

In negative nonfinite clauses, the negative particle is generally positioned before the verb or the *to* of the infinitive:

It's his fault *for not doing anything about it*.

The wisest policy is (for us) *not to interfere*.

Adverbs and brief prepositional phrases that intervene between *not* and the verb in finite clauses may also come between *not* and the verb:

It's his fault *for not ever doing anything about it*.

When *not* is inserted, there is often some aspectual marking:

The purse *not having been found*, } we went to the police.
The purse *not yet found*, }

On the split infinitive, *cf* 8.21.

14.7 The normal range of clause types (*cf* 10.2) is available for most nonfinite clauses, as in this set of *to*-infinitive clauses:

SV I expect *them to come*.

SVO They wanted *us to learn economics*.

SVC Joe supposed *the stranger to be friendly*.

SVA It's great *for everybody to be here*.

SVOO It's best *for you to give him a call*.

SVOC Paul prefers *me to make the difference clear*.

SVOA He got *her to put the car in the garage*.

The subject of nonfinite clauses, however, is commonly absent.

Because it is generally both syntactically and semantically passive, the *-ed* participle clause is restricted to the four types of passive clauses. In [1] the subordinator *when* introduces the *-ed* clause:

(S)*V_{pass}* ~ active *SVO*

When questioned, she denied being a member of the group. [1]

- (S) $V_{pass}C$ ~ active *SVOC*
Considered works of art, they were admitted into the country
 without customs duties. [2]
- (S) $V_{pass}A$ ~ active *SVOA*
Kept in the refrigerator, the drug should remain effective for at
 least three months. [3]
- (S) $V_{pass}O$ ~ active *SVOO*
Allowed unusual privileges, the prisoner seemed to enjoy his
 captivity. [4]

- 14.8** Because nonfinite clauses lack tense markers and modal auxiliaries and frequently lack a subject and a subordinating conjunction, they are valuable as a means of syntactic compression. Certain kinds of nonfinite clause are particularly favoured in written prose, where the writer has the leisure to revise for compactness. We recover meanings associated with tense, aspect, and mood from the sentential context. We can also normally see a correspondence with a finite clause with a form of the verb BE and a pronoun subject having the same reference as a noun or pronoun in the same sentence (*cf* 15.58ff). For examples 14.7 [1–4], one might make the following insertions:

- When (she was) questioned*, she denied being a member of the
 group. [1a]
- (Since/Because/As they were) *considered works of art*, they were
 admitted into the country without customs duties. [2a]
- (If it is) *kept in the refrigerator*, the drug should remain effective
 for at least three months. [3a]
- (Since/After he was) *allowed unusual privileges*, the prisoner
 seemed to enjoy his captivity. [4a]

On the other hand, [5] shows how the advantage of compactness must be balanced against the danger of ambiguity; for the absence of a subject leaves doubt as to which nearby nominal element is notionally the subject:

- We met you (*when you?/we? were*) leaving the room. [5]

With infinitive clauses, a corresponding finite clause also enables one to identify an understood subject:

- I asked *to go*. ~ I asked *if I could go*.
 I asked *him to go*. ~ I asked *if he would go*.

When no referential link with a nominal can be discovered in the linguistic context, an indefinite subject may be inferred, or else the 'I' of the speaker:

- To be an administrator* is to have the worst job in the world. ['For a
 person to be . . .']
 The prospects are not very good, *to be candid*. ['. . . if I am to be candid']

Contrast:

- It's hard work *to be a student*. [indefinite subject; *cf* 10.42f]
 It's hard work, *to be honest*. [*I* as subject; *cf* 8.125]

Verbless clauses

- 14.9 Verbless clauses take syntactic compression one stage further than nonfinite clauses and like them are also commonly subjectless. Once again (*cf* 14.8), it is often possible to postulate a missing form of the verb BE and to recover the subject, when omitted, from the context:

Whether right or wrong, he always comes off worst in argument.
 ['whether *he is* right or wrong']

One should avoid taking a trip abroad in August *where possible*. ['where *it is* possible']

Verbless clauses can also sometimes be treated as reductions of nonfinite clauses:

Too nervous to reply, he stared at the floor. ['*Being* too nervous to reply . . .']

(Here the verbless clause itself contains a subordinate nonfinite clause, *to reply*.)

When the subject is present, only the verb has to be recovered, though it is not always possible to insert it without juxtaposing the clause (*cf* [2] below):

73 people have been drowned in the area, *many of them children*. [1]
 ['many of them being children']
 There he stood, *a tray in each hand*. ['a tray was in each hand'] [2]

The subject is often introduced by *with* (*cf* 14.15):

With the children at school, we can't take our vacations when we want to. [3]

Since it is usually possible to interpret the clause as having an omitted BE, the verbless clause is limited to the two clause-types SVC and SVA, with or without a subordinator (*sub*):

She looked at him expectantly, *her eyes full of excitement and curiosity*. [S (V) C] [4]
 I do not wish to describe his assertions, *some of them offensive*. [S (V) C] [5]
 He looked remarkably well, *his skin clear and smooth*. [S (V) C] [6]
Though somewhat edgy, she said she would stay a little longer. sub [S (V) C] [7]
 We can meet again tomorrow, *if necessary*. sub [S (V) C] [8]
 Mavis sat in the front seat, *her hands in her lap*. [S (V) A] [9]
While at college, he was a prominent member of the dramatic society. sub [(S V) A] [10]

It is also possible in [9] to view the understood verb as HAVE ('having her hands in her lap', *cf* 'with her hands in her lap'), in which case the structure is [(S V) O A].

Optional adverbials may also be added, either initially or finally:

'Thank you very much,' said Raymond, *ever mindful of his manners*.
 [(S V) A_{frequency} C_s]

Loath to reply for fear of offending her parents, she strode out of the room. [(S V) C_s A_{reason}]

Though now frail, they were quite capable of looking after themselves.
sub [(S V) A_{time} C_s]

When the verbless clause is reduced to its minimum of a single complement or adverbial, it may not be easy to distinguish it from an appositive construction (*cf* 17.65*ff*), a nonrestrictive postmodifier (*cf* 17.48*f*), or an adverbial which is a direct constituent of the main clause. The initial prepositional phrase below is an adverbial of the sentence:

Of humble parentage, he began his working life in a shoe factory.

It might be regarded as an adverbial realized by a verbless clause consisting of just a complement, because its analysis is directly parallel to nominal or verbless clauses like:

A man of humble parentage, . . . ~ Born of humble parentage, . . .

Similarly, if the final noun phrase below had been placed next to the subject we would have recognized it as full apposition:

The river lay in its crescent loop entirely without movement, an artifice of green-black lquescient marble.

As it is, we could regard it as a verbless clause functioning as an adverbial. Indeed, many instances of partial apposition with noun phrases (*cf* 17.66) could be equally regarded as verbless clauses, *eg*:

Judge Clement Turpin, now a federal appeals court judge, is being considered for appointment to the US Supreme Court.

Formal indicators of subordination

14.10 Subordination is generally marked by a signal in the subordinate clause. The signal may be of various kinds:

- (i) The clause is initiated by a subordinating conjunction (14.11*ff*).
- (ii) The clause is initiated by a *wh*-element (14.20).
- (iii) Initial elements in the clause are inverted (14.20).
- (iv) The presence of certain verb forms in finite clauses is determined by the type of subordinate clause (14.21*ff*).
- (v) The verb element of the clause is either nonfinite or absent (14.20).

More than one subordination signal may cooccur in the same subordinate clause. For example, a nonfinite or verbless clause may be introduced by a subordinating conjunction (*cf* 14.15*ff*).

- Note [a] The verb form in the superordinate clause may also be affected by the type of subordinate clause. The clearest example is in the hypothetical condition relationship (*cf* 15.36).
- [b] For nonfinite and verbless clauses that are not part of a superordinate clause, *cf* 11.40*f*.

Subordinators

- 14.11** SUBORDINATORS (or more fully SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS) are the most important formal device of subordination, particularly for finite clauses. Like prepositions, which they resemble in having a relating function, subordinators forming the core of the class consist of a single word, but there is a larger range of complex subordinators which function, to varying degrees, like a single conjunction. In addition, there is a small class of correlative subordinators, which combine two markers of subordination, one being a subordinator.

Subordinators may be restricted to particular types of clauses, as the following sections show.

Subordinators for finite clauses

- 14.12** Most subordinators may introduce finite clauses. Here is a list of those subordinators. They are divided into simple, complex, and correlative subordinators. The correlative subordinators are listed and discussed in 14.13.

SIMPLE SUBORDINATORS

after, although, as, because, before, directly <informal, esp BrE>, *if, immediately* <informal, esp BrE>, *lest* <esp AmE>, *like* <informal, esp AmE>, *once, since, that, though, till, unless, until, when(ever), where(ver), whereas, whereupon, while, whilst* <a minority alternative to *while*, esp BrE>

COMPLEX SUBORDINATORS

ending with *that*:

but that, in that, in order that, insofar that <formal, rare>, *in the event that, save that* <literary>, *such that*

ending with optional *that*:

(a) participle form:

assuming, considering, excepting, given, granted, granting, provided, providing, seeing, supposing } (*that*)

(b) others:

except, for all, now, so } (*that*)

ending with *as*:

according as, as far as, as long as, as soon as, forasmuch as <formal>, *inasmuch as* <formal>, *insofar as, insomuch as* <formal>

Others:

as if, as though, in case

Note [a] The distinction in form between the simple and complex subordinators is in part orthographic, since some of the simple subordinators are internally (that is morphologically) complex. But their orthographical unity points to the central place of the simple subordinators in the system.

[b] In addition, the following archaic subordinators still have a limited currency: *albeit, whence, whereat, wherefore, whither*.

[c] Many of the subordinators indicate more than one logical relationship. The relationships are discussed in subsequent sections of this chapter.

[d] The omission of an optional *that* in the complex subordinators tends to lower the level of formality. On the other hand, the inclusion of *that* may avoid ambiguity (cf 14.41).

[e] *About* and *without* are used as subordinators for finite clauses in informal style, but are not generally considered acceptable:

?She explained to us *about there's nothing for teenagers to do in the village*.

?We can't even read in our bedroom *without one of the children comes barging in wanting something*.

They are among recent examples of a continuing trend to use prepositions also as subordinators. *On account (of)* (esp AmE), another recent example, has achieved somewhat greater acceptability in informal style:

I can't come now *on account (of) I have to look after my baby brother*.

[f] *But that* is a subordinator in the sense 'except (that)':

She would have ignored Edward *but that* she knew he would have complained to her sister.

Occasionally *that* is omitted:

It never rains *but* it pours.

Except is used without *that* in the sense 'unless' (cf 15.34):

I wouldn't be here *except* I had to.

But that is often added when *except* has the sense 'only' (cf 15.44):

I'd lend you my car *except (that) I may need it later this afternoon*.

[g] The temporal subordinators, interrogative *whether* and *if*, and conditional *if* can alone serve as truncated subordinate clauses functioning as exclamation tags:

A: Brian will attend the class $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{if} \\ \text{when} \end{array} \right\}$ it suits him.

B: (Ah, yes) $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{!F!} \\ \text{WHEN!} \end{array} \right\}$

Virtually any conjunction can function alone as an echo question:

A: I'll let you know *if* there are going to be refreshments.

B: *if?* But surely you promised you would arrange it.

A: We're arriving in New York *after* you leave.

B: *After?* But I was hoping to see you there.

Correlative subordinators

14.13 The correlative subordinators are divided into five sets, listed below. The second correlative endorses the meaning of the first. For correlative coordinators, cf 13.33ff.

CORRELATIVE SUBORDINATORS

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) <i>as</i> | ... <i>so</i> |
| (b) $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{as} \\ \textit{so} \\ \textit{such} \end{array} \right\}$ | $\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$... <i>as</i> |
| $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{so} \\ \textit{such} \end{array} \right\}$ | $\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$... (<i>that</i>) |
| $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{less} \\ \textit{more (-er)} \end{array} \right\}$ | $\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$... <i>than</i> |
| <i>no sooner</i> | ... <i>than, when</i> <informal> |
| $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{barely} \\ \textit{hardly} \end{array} \right\}$ | $\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$... <i>when, than</i> <informal> |
| <i>scarcely</i> | |
| (c) <i>the</i> | ... <i>the</i> |
| (d) $\left. \begin{array}{l} \textit{whether} \\ \textit{if} \end{array} \right\}$ | $\left. \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \end{array} \right\}$... <i>or</i> |

(e) subordinator plus optional conjunct

<i>although</i>	}	}	... <i>yet, nevertheless, etc</i>
<i>even if</i>			
<i>(even) though</i>			
<i>while</i>			
<i>if</i>	}	}	... <i>then, in that case</i>
<i>once</i>			
<i>since [reason]</i>			
<i>unless</i>			
<i>because</i>	}	}	... <i>therefore</i>
<i>seeing (that)</i>			

The (a) set consists of the unique proportional correlative *as ... so* (cf 15.51), also typical of formal and deliberative style. The conjunct emphasizes the relationship indicated by the initial subordinator:

As the strength of the defenders failed, so the courage of the attackers grew.

The omission of *so* tends to give a temporal interpretation ('all the while that') to the subordinator *as*.

The (b) set contains comparative correlatives (cf 15.63ff). In this set the subordinate clause is positioned finally. The first element functions as degree modifier in the superordinate clause, while the second is a subordinator introducing the final subordinate clause:

I was $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{more ashamed} \\ \text{angrier} \end{array} \right\}$ *than* I have ever been.
He had *no sooner* arrived *than* he asked for food.

The (c) set consists of the unique pair of proportional correlatives *the ... the* (cf 15.51):

The harder they worked, the hungrier they became.
['As they worked harder, so they became hungrier.']

If the order of the two clauses is reversed, the meaning relationship is changed (cf Note [d] below):

The hungrier they became, the harder they worked.
['As they became hungrier, so they worked harder.']

The (d) set contains the *whether ... or* correlatives used in two different types of subordinate clauses; alternative interrogative clauses (cf 15.6) and alternative conditional-concessive clauses (cf 15.41). In the interrogative construction the *or*-clause is optional:

They didn't tell me *whether* I should write to the manager (*or whether* I should see him personally).

In the conditional-concessive construction, on the other hand, the *or*-clause is obligatory. In both instances, the correlative *or* coordinates two subordinate clauses (cf the *either ... or* correlative, 13.33f), unlike the previous sets, where only one correlative is attached to the subordinate clause. *Or* is also an

optional correlative in the alternative interrogative clause introduced by *if* (cf 15.6).

The (e) set combines a subordinator in an initial subordinate adverbial clause with an optional conjunct (cf 8.134ff) in the superordinate clause. The conjunct emphasizes the relationship indicated by the subordinator:

Though the workers were unhappy with some aspects of the proposed new contract, *nevertheless* they overwhelmingly voted in favour of it.

[CONCESSIVE CLAUSE; cf 15.39ff]

If this year's harvest is good, *then* they will not need to import wheat.

[CONDITIONAL CLAUSE; cf 15.33ff]

Because you have not replied to my formal letter of May 1, I am *therefore* withdrawing my offer.

[REASON CLAUSE; cf 15.45ff]

Some writers avoid the conjunct as redundant in these examples. Its insertion is more usual in an insistent persuasive argument or in a formal and deliberative style of writing, especially if the initial subordinate clause is lengthy and the relationship then needs to be recalled. The effect is to balance the two parts of the system, an effect akin to parallelism (cf 19.7), and to remind the reader or hearer of the force of the argument.

Note [a] The range of correlative subordinators can be extended somewhat in literary style to include, for example, *where . . . there* and *when . . . then*:

When her imagination was stirred, *then* there descended upon her a frenzy to inscribe her thoughts.

[b] The following occur with subject-operator inversion (cf 18.24) in the first clause:

no sooner . . . than *barely/hardly/scarcely . . . when/before*

There is traditional objection to the use of *when* as correlative with *no sooner* and to the use of *than* as correlative with the three negative adverbs.

[c] Since subordinate adverbial clauses are usually in *E* position, the correlative in sets (a), (b), and (c) can be seen as providing the condition for the clause to be in *I* position and subsequently endorsing the force of the clause.

[d] *The* may be used in two ways to introduce a final subordinate clause without a preceding initial correlative *the*. In the first use, it correlates with a comparative in the superordinate clause, the construction then belonging to set (c):

They became (*the*) hungrier *the* harder they worked.

The construction is equivalent in meaning to the correlative *the . . . the* construction:

The harder they worked, *the* hungrier they became.

[cf *Harder they worked, hungrier they became.]

The equivalence provides an argument for suggesting that the first clause is semantically subordinate, as in sets (a) and (b).

In the second use, *the* is noncorrelative. It combines with a comparative, chiefly to introduce a final subordinate clause of purpose, especially a *to*-infinitive clause:

They moved to the front, *the* better to hear the speaker.

Less formally:

They moved to the front in order to hear the speaker better.

In formal style, the purpose clause may be initial:

The more easily to induce witnesses to testify, we are conducting our hearings in private.

Marginal subordinators

- 14.14 As with complex prepositions (cf 9.10ff), it is difficult to distinguish categorically between complex subordinators and free syntactic constructions. Several marginal types require discussion.

Type 1 consists of a habitual combination of a subordinator with a preceding or following adverb; for example *even if* and *if only*. We regard these as subordinators because the meaning of the subordinator is affected by the presence of the adverb. In contrast, combinations such as *only if* and *just as* consist of a premodifier preceding a subordinator.

Type 2 consists of noun phrases that commonly function as temporal adverbials; for example, *the moment (that)* and *every time (that)*. We consider these to be more like free syntactic constructions than like complex subordinators. The relationship between *the moment* and the following clause, for example, can be explained as the head of a noun phrase modified by a restrictive relative clause, the noun phrase functioning as adverbial of time. Compare:

I recognized him *that moment*. I recognized him *the moment I saw him*.

The phrase permits the range of structural variations that one would expect from that analysis. For example:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{at} \\ \text{from} \end{array} \right\} (\text{just}) \text{the} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{first} \\ \text{next} \\ \text{last} \\ \text{precise} \\ \text{very} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{moment} \\ \text{instant} \\ \text{minute} \\ \text{time} \end{array} \right\} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{that} \\ \text{when} \end{array} \right\} \text{I saw him, I recognized him.}$$

Other examples of such free constructions include *during the period when*, *until such time as*, *since the days that*.

Type 3 consists of prepositional phrases ending in *the fact that*. They express relationships of reason or concession. Because they can be replaced more concisely by a simple conjunction, they are considered to be stylistically clumsy. Examples include:

$$\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{because of the fact that} \\ \text{due to the fact that} \\ \text{on account of the fact that} \\ \text{in (the) light of the fact that} \\ \text{in spite of the fact that} \\ \text{regardless of the fact that} \end{array} \right\} \left[\begin{array}{l} \text{'because'} \\ \text{'although'} \end{array} \right]$$

These allow some variation of the preposition and considerable variation of the head of the noun phrase. Compare:

$$\text{In spite of} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{the fact} \\ \text{the news} \\ \text{your report} \\ \text{my belief} \end{array} \right\} \text{that they were sick, I went to visit them.}$$

Only *in spite of the fact that* can be replaced by a simple conjunction (eg: *although*), yet it is clear that all the phrases have a similar function. We should therefore regard them as prepositional phrases followed by a clause in apposition to the noun-phrase complement.

Type 4 consists of participle forms such as *supposing (that)* and *provided (that)*. The participles form a gradient. Some retain certain properties characteristic of verbs, while those that are most like simple conjunctions

have lost all such properties. Thus, like other participles, *supposing* and *assuming* can be expanded by adverbials:

supposing } { for the sake of argument } that
 assuming } { as a result of your advice }

But such expansion is not permitted for some of the other participle forms:

*seeing } { for the sake of argument } that
 *provided } { as a result of your advice }

On the other hand, like many verbs, *seeing* and *considering* can be followed by conjunctions other than *that*:

Seeing } how he reacted . . .
 Considering }

But most important of all, the conjunctive *seeing*, *provided*, *providing*, and *given* are now distinct from the participles in meaning and in not requiring subject identification (*cf* 15.58*f*), so that they cannot be viewed as the verb in a participle clause.

- Note [a] The premodifier in the free constructions of type 1 may be focusing (*cf* 8.116), as in *even when* and *only if*; intensifying (*cf* 8.104), as in *ever since* and *just as* (in the similarity sense); or specifying further the time relationship, as in *just when* and *a few days before*.
 [b] There are other conjunction-like prepositional phrases similar to those in type 3, but not ending in *the fact that*; for example, *in the event that*, *on the grounds that*, *in the sense that*.

Subordinators for nonfinite and verbless clauses

- 14.15 Nonfinite and verbless clauses are subordinate by virtue of the absence of a finite verb as the verb element of the clause. They are, however, sometimes introduced by a subordinator, which generally signals the clause to be adverbial.

The structural classes of clauses vary in the subordinators that they admit. However, all the classes except for that of the bare infinitive clauses may be introduced by the subordinators *with* and *without*. A noun phrase (not necessarily the subject) is required after the subordinator:

Without you to consult, I would be completely lost.
With the mortgage paid, they could afford to go abroad for their vacation.
 Don't walk around *with your shirt hanging out*.
With you as my friend, I don't need enemies.

- Note *Rather than* is found with all types of clauses, including finite clauses, but it is generally best treated as a quasi-coordinator (*cf* 13.103), with matching forms in the clauses (but *cf* 4.19 Note [c]):

They were *screaming* rather than *singing*. She *telephoned* rather than *wrote*.
 He wanted to *sunbathe* rather than *(to) swim*.

The part after *rather than* refers to an earlier assumption that is rejected; *rather than* is here equivalent to 'and not'.

Subordinators for bare infinitive clauses

- 14.16 Bare infinitive clauses are limited to the two synonymous subordinators *rather than* and *sooner than* (*cf* 14.15 Note for the function of *rather than* as

quasi-coordinator). The matrix clauses express the subject's preference (cf 15.52):

He paid the fine *rather than appeal to a higher court*.
Sooner than wait for a reply to your letter, I would telephone her.

The bare infinitive clause occasionally takes a subject:

Rather than Robert drive in his present state, I'd prefer to drive him home myself.

Note [a] In contrast to the constraints on the quasi-coordinator *rather than*, when clauses are introduced by the subordinators *rather than* and *sooner than* the verb forms do not need to match and the subordinate clause may be initial as well as final.

[b] If *would* or *should* is in the matrix clause, *rather* and *sooner* may be moved into that clause when the subordinate clause is final:

He would *rather* pay the fine *than appeal to a higher court*.

Such sentences have an obvious resemblance to comparative constructions and admit various comparative adverbs:

He would *more* $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{readily} \\ \textit{willingly} \\ \textit{cheerfully} \end{array} \right\}$ pay the fine *than appeal to a higher court*.

Subordinators for *to*-infinitive clauses

- 14.17 *To*-infinitive clauses may be introduced by several subordinators: *as if*, *as though*, *for*, *in order*, *so as*, *whether* ... (*or*), *with*, and *without*. *For* in this function is restricted to infinitive clauses with their own subject, and indeed is often obligatory (cf 15.10):

It would be an absurd idea *for them to move to another house at this stage of their careers*.

Since *for* may be combined with the subordinator *in order to*, it seems to be a device for introducing the subject rather than to be a true subordinator:

In order for you to be eligible for a student grant, your parents must receive less than a stipulated annual income.

Whether (with or without correlative *or*) introduces a subordinate interrogative clause:

I don't know *whether to put on the air-conditioning today*.

In the absence of a subject in the subordinate clause, the subject is understood as identical with that of the matrix clause.

Subordinators for *-ed* clauses and verbless clauses

- 14.18 Clauses with an *-ed* participle and verbless clauses may be introduced by some subordinators that are also used for finite clauses (cf 14.12):

although, *as* [manner], *as if*, *as soon as*, *as though*, *even if*, *if*, *once*, *though*, *unless*, *until* [only *-ed* participle clauses], *when(ever)*, *where(ver)*, *whether* ... or [conditional-concessive], *while*, *whilst* (esp BrE)

These clauses can be related to finite clauses for which the subject and the verb BE are supplied (cf 14.9):

- When taken according to the directions*, the drug has no side effects.
 ['When the drug is taken . . .'] [1]
- Although not yet six months old*, she was able to walk without support. ['Although she was not yet . . .'] [2]
- Unless told otherwise*, be here every night. ['Unless you are told . . .'; *you* is implied subject of the imperative superordinate clause] [3]
- If necessary*, he will take notes for you. ['If his taking notes is necessary, . . .'] [4]

The subject of the subordinate clause must generally be understood as identical with that of the matrix clause, but for verbless clauses such as *if necessary* and *where possible* it may refer to the matrix clause as a whole, as in example [4].

- Note [a] The *if*-clauses may be used for hypothetical conditions (cf 14.19 Note [a], 15.35):
 The milk would not turn sour *if boiled*. ['if it were boiled']
 I would have typed your manuscript for you *if necessary*. ['if it had been necessary to do so']
- [b] There is a stereotyped construction in which the *-ed* participle follows *no sooner than*:
 (It was) no sooner said *than done*.

Subordinators for *-ing* clauses

- 14.19 Clauses with an *-ing* participle may be introduced by any of the subordinators for *-ed* participle clauses (cf 14.18), except that the subordinators *where*, *wherever*, *as* [manner], and *as soon as* are excluded (cf Note [a] below):

although, *as if*, *as though*, *even if*, *if*, *once*, *though*, *unless*, *until*, *when(ever)*, *whether* . . . or [conditional-concessive], *while*, *whilst* <esp BrE>

Unlike *-ed* participle and verbless clauses, however, these *-ing* participle clauses cannot be regarded as strictly elliptical clauses, since the *-ing* participle does not necessarily represent a progressive form in the equivalent finite clause. The *-ing* participle neutralizes that aspectual distinction:

When returning merchandise, be sure to bring your receipt. ['When you return . . .' or 'When you are returning . . .']

The nonequivalence of the *-ing* participle in these clauses with the finite progressive is most conspicuous when the progressive aspect is ruled out, as with the perfective or a verb used statively (cf 4.27ff):

Once having left the premises, you must buy another ticket to reenter.
 ['Once you have left . . .']

Though understanding no Spanish, she was able to communicate with the other students. ['Though she understood no Spanish, . . .']

- Note [a] *-ing* clauses introduced by *if*, *even if*, and *unless* are restricted to open conditions (cf 15.35), in which they are roughly equivalent to 'in cases where'. Even so, *if* sounds somewhat stilted:

If coming by car, take the A10 and turn off at the A414.

Even if and *unless* are relatively more acceptable in such contexts:

Even if } *receiving visitors*, patients must observe normal hospital rules.
Unless }

- [b] *After*, *before*, and *since* (subordinators with finite clauses) differ from subordinators such as *when* or *while* in that they are followed by *-ing* clauses but not by *-ed* clauses or verbless clauses:

He took a shower { *before* } *returning home*. [1]
 { *after* }

Since moving here, I have felt more relaxed. [2]
 These three also differ from the subordinators listed above in 14.19 in that they allow a subject in the *-ing* clause:

Since my coming here, life has become more comfortable for my parents. [3]
 The differences suggest that *after*, *before*, and *since* are better classed with prepositions such as *on* and *through* (both of which permit a subject in the *-ing* clause) rather than with subordinators:

He took a shower *on returning home*. [1a]
Through my moving here, life has become more comfortable for my parents. [3a]
 [c] Like *as well as* and *instead of*, *rather than* is a preposition, not a quasi-coordinator (cf 13.103), when it is followed by an *-ing* participle clause that does not match the verb in the matrix clause (cf 14.15 Note):

Their actions precipitated the war *rather than averting it*.
As well as visiting Niagara Falls, we spent a day in Toronto.
 He intends to go as he is, *instead of changing into his best clothes*.

Other indicators of subordination

14.20 We now turn to other indicators of subordination apart from subordinators.

(i) *Wh*-elements are initial markers of subordination in subordinate interrogative clauses (cf 15.5f) and subordinate exclamative clauses (cf 15.7), in *wh*-relative clauses (cf 15.8f, 17.9ff), and in conditional-concessive clauses (cf 15.41f). The subordinating *wh*-words are:

who, whom, whose, which
when, where, what, why, how
whoever, whomever <rare>, *whichever*
wherever, whenever, whatever, however
whosoever, whomsoever, wheresoever, whatsoever, howsoever <all rare;
 legal and religious>

(ii) The relative pronoun *that*, which can often replace *wh*-pronouns, is a subordination marker in restrictive relative clauses (cf 17.9ff):

The style *that we are examining in this exhibition* was an unusual one.

The relative pronoun is to be distinguished from the subordinator *that*, which does not operate as an element in the subordinate clause.

(iii) Subject-operator inversion is a marker of subordination in some conditional, similarity, and comparative clauses (cf 15.36, 15.50 Note, 15.74). It is typical of a literary and elevated style of persuasion. The operators that permit the inversion are *had*, *were*, *should*, and (less commonly) *could* and *might*:

Had I been less forthright, I would have acquired more support.
Were she here, she would support the motion.

Inversion of a different kind – the fronting of the whole or part of the predication – may occur with the subordinators *as*, *though*, and *that* (cf 15.39, 15.47):

Eloquent though she was, she could not persuade them.

(iv) The absence of a finite verb is itself an indicator of subordination, since nonfinite and verbless clauses are necessarily subordinate:

Denying any interest in politics, she claimed that she wished to continue in forensic medicine.

There are only two types of subordinate clauses that have no clear indicator of subordination within them:

(a) Nominal *that*-clauses allow the omission of *that* in certain contexts (cf 15.4), but they may be said to be recognizable as subordinate through the potentiality for the insertion of *that*:

I suppose *I can use your phone*.
 ~ I suppose *that I can use your phone*.

Compare also the omissibility of relative *that*, 17.13ff.

(b) Some comment clauses (cf 15.54) have no overt mark of subordination, but – as with the zero relative clauses mentioned in (a) – they generally lack an obligatory verb complementation:

I have no alternative, *I suppose*.
 It could be worse, *you know*.
 = *You know*, it could be worse.
 ≠ *You know* (that) it could be worse.

The verb phrase in subordinate clauses

- 14.21 In general the rules for the uses of forms and categories of the verb phrase – such as tenses, aspects, and modal auxiliaries – apply both to subordinate and independent clauses. Nevertheless, there are cases in which choices affecting the verb phrase of a subordinate clause are determined by the particular type of subordinate clause it belongs to. With temporal *since*-clauses, on the other hand, it is the choice of verb phrase in the matrix clause that is more obviously affected.

Such determinations constitute a signal of subordination additional to other signals, such as initial subordinators. They are a particularly conspicuous signal when the verb phrase in the subordinate clause prevents that clause from constituting an independent sentence, even with the omission of the subordinator, as in (*Though*) *he be the President himself*. Less obviously, the meaning of the verb phrase would be different in an independent clause, as in (*When*) *the game ends*.

Note Dependency relations of this kind are not necessarily found in disjunct clauses, particularly style disjunct clauses (cf 15.21), where verb choices are primarily dependent on the circumstances of the speech act. Contrast, for example, the matching tenses in [1], where the *since*-clause is an adjunct, with the absence of matching in [2], where the *since*-clause is a style disjunct:

Since they really *wanted* to know, they *conducted* their own investigation. [1]
 Since you really *want* to know, they *conducted* their own investigation. [2]