THE PROBLEM OF THE COMPOSITE SENTENCE

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In terms of modern linguistics, the problem of the compound sentence has been treated in different ways. Some grammarians retain the traditional trichotomy, though the terms employed are sometimes non-traditional. Ch. Fillmore rejects the traditional classification and terms. Such attempts were already made by O. Jespersen in his theory of the three ranks. Following Bloomfield's ideas of the included position of a grammatical form, Ch. Fries substitutes for the traditional doctrine his theory of included sentences and sequences of sentences; the latter concept seems to coincide with what we find in Sweet's grammar [1, 240].

Ch. Fries' treatment of the compound sentence does not seem fully convincing. According to Fries, the so-called "compound" sentence appears to be primarily a matter of the punctuation of written texts, as in his mechanical recordings of speech only very few instances occurred with a clear 3—2—3 intonation before the words listed as sequence signals, i.e. signals of an independent sentence. This does not seem to agree with his classification of all so-called sequence signals and coordinating conjunctions together with subordination conjunctions as function words of the group J, i. e. as signals of inclusion, though with a remark that it has been done tentatively.

The attempts of the authors of the older scientific grammars to reject the concept of the clause as it was identified by some grammarians and introduce such notions as "half-clauses, "abridged"-clauses, "infinitive", "gerund", "participle" clauses may be observed in Bryant's[2] grammar, treating verbid clauses. This trend has been supported by some structural linguists, who do not recognise the structural distinction between simple and complex sentences [2, 9].

Compound sentences are structures of co-ordination with two or more immediate constituents which are syntactically equivalent, i. e. none of them is below the other in rank [2, 123].

Complex sentences are structures of subordination with two or more immediate constituents which are not syntactically equivalent. In the simplest case, that of binary structure, one of them is the principal clause to which the other is joined as a subordinate. The latter stands in the relation of adjunct to the principal clause and is beneath the principal clause in rank. The dependent clause may be either coordinate or subordinate [3, 87].

The constituents of a composite sentence are organically interrelated and as such are not independent elements of a single syntactic unit.

Our starting point in describing the multiplicity of ways in which English sentences may logically be combined in actual usage will be to distinguish **one-member** and **two-member** composite sentences.

This distinction is a reality in both, speech and writing, but it often has no formal markings other than intonation in the one case and punctuation in the other.

The linguistic essence of these two types of composite syntactic units is best understood when viewed in terms of their meaning and structural peculiarities.

As we shall further see, a major point of linguistic interest is presented also by the correlation of the verb-forms in the component parts of a composite sentence and its functioning in different contexts of communication.

Let us **compare** the following compound sentences which differ only in the order of their constituents:

(a)*Now she is my colleague, two years ago she was my student.*

(b)*Two years ago she **was** my student, now she is my colleague.*

The total meaning of (a) is not absolutely the same as that of (b).

We cannot fail to see that two sentences (a) and (b) differ in emphasis, which is due to relative position of the given utterances.

The same is true of all other types of composite sentences in coordination and subordination.

We have seen throughout our previous discussion that the position of words in syntactic structures relative to one another is a most important part of English syntax. Relative position seems to bear relation to the meaning of sentences as well. That grammar must take account of "sentence-order" as well as word-order can hardly leave any doubt.

The simplest cases of two-member composite sentences are those of co-ordination – parataxis (Greek: *para* + *tassein="to* place beside").

A single idea expressed in two-member sentences of co-ordination makes itself most evident in the logical joining of predications with different subjects. Similarity or contrast of temporal relations is generally consolidated by conjunctions. Examples are not far to seek.

It was full late for the river, but the weather was lovely, and summer lingered below the yellowing leaves (WSRW, 122).

And she bent forward, and her fine light hair fell over her cheek (TDJG, 46).

A wind had cleared the mist, the autumn leaves were rustling, and the stars were shining (TDT, 178).

The train gave a gentle lurch, they were off (TDTF, 455).

Composite sentences of subordination – hypotaxis *(hypo* – "under" + + *tassein* = "to put in order") are different in their logical and grammatical organisation, characterised by subordinative expression of the syntactic relation between main and qualifying elements.

Instead of serving as complete sentences, qualifying elements are included in larger structures within the limits of sentences. Although they may be structurally rather complicated within themselves, they act as units on a higher level of structure [4, 134].

By far the greater number of sub-clauses begins with a function word which signals the fact the structure to follow is an included element. There are two kinds of such function words (sometimes called includers):

1) simple conjunctive words, whose sole function is to mark a structure as a certain type of sub-clause;

2) relative pronouns, which, in addition to this function, have a further function within the structural pattern of the sub-clause.

It seems perfectly reasonable to distinguish here two lines of linguistic development: 1) one-member complex sentences and 2) two-member complex sentences with subordinate clauses (further abbreviated as "sub-clauses") of cause or result, purpose and time, conditional and concessive sub-clauses [5, 123]. Logically interrelated, with one idea or subordinated to another, the constituents of such sentences make up a single complex syntactic unit.

Examples are:

But she'd had heard his name ***until she saw it on the theatres*** (PAP, 344).

As soon as he had become a director, Winifred and others of his family had begun to acquire shares to neutralise their income-tax (JSWOD, 56).

What can you do ***if you are thirty and, turning the corner of your own street, you are overcome, suddenly by a feeling of bliss – absolute bliss!*** (JSGW, 421).

If Laurie agreed with the others, *then it was bound to be all right* (JLIH, 198).

It was so big ***that the carter and Pat carried it into the courtyard*** (EHFA, 212).

Although Bertha Young was thirty *she still had moments like this when she wanted to run instead of walk* (EDWH, 287).

Here belong sentences with such descriptive relative subordination that give only some additional information about what has already been sufficiently defined. Examples are:

The sun, ***which had been hidden all day,*** *now came out in all its splendour.*

All because her heritage was that tragic optimism, ***which is all too often the only inheritance of youth, still half asleep,*** *she smiled with a little nervous tremor round her mouth* (CDHT, 54).

We also include here such borderline cases with sub-clauses where a complex sentence approaches co-ordination:

She is most attentive at the lesson, ***which you seldom are*** (CDHT, 74).

She did it like the clever ***girl, which she undoubtedly is.***

He said no word, ***which surprised me.***

Every morning before going to business he came into the nursery and gave her a perfunctory kiss, ***to which she responded with "Goodbye,*** *father".* (CDBH, 789).

Al! The above given types of two-member sentences in subordination stand in contrast to their opposites – one-member complex sentences where a subordinate clause goes patterning only as a developed part of the main clause.

The first to be mentioned here are complex sentences with relative sub-clauses, attributive in their meaning. In such sentences pronominal-demonstrative elements are organically indispensable and are readily reinstated in the principal clause [6, 176]. Examples are:

It was the same ship as that ***in which my wife and the correspondent came to England*** (ASKD, 345).

The fellow, with his beard and his cursed amused way of speaking – son of the old man ***who had given him the nickname «an of Property»*** (WSRW, 107).

But at night in his leisure moments he was ravaged by the thought that ***time was always flying and money flowing in, and his own future as much «in irons» as ever*** (TDJG, 56).

Andrew took advantage of the moment to launch one of those lectures, rare yet odious, ***which made him sound like a deacon of a nonconformist chapel*** (TDT, 563).

So she slept and dreamed, and smiled in her sleep, and once threw out her arm to feel something which was not there, dreaming still (TDTF, 432).

Further examples of one-member complex sentences are those in which a sub-clause expresses the object or the subject felt as missing in the principal clause, e. g.: *Aunt Juley was sure that dear Val was very clever* (PAP, 432).

Did not Winifred think ***that it was much better for the young people to be secure and not run any risk at their age?*** (JSWOD, 221).

What's done *cannot be undone* (JSWOD, 211).

Contact clauses consisting of a finite predication without connectives are more common in spoken than in written English, probably
because the potential structural ambiguities may be resolved more easily by intonation than by punctuation. There is every reason to say, in general, that the more formal the context, linguistic or non-linguistic, the more likely it is that a conjunction or a relative pronoun will be present [7, 123].

Compare the following: *The trouble is he can't help you. The trouble is that he cannot help you. Here is the man he told his story to. Here is the man to whom he told his story.*

Here belong also sub-clauses which extend some part of the principal clause: subject, predicative, attribute, object or adverbials with demonstrative pronouns, present or readily understood, e. g.: *All is well that ends well. He is the one you wanted to see.*

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