A STUDENT'S GRAMMAR OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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LONGMAN

1 The English language

The use of English

1.1 English is the world's most widely used language. A distinction is often made that depends on how the language is learned: as a *native* language (or *mother tongue*), acquired when the speaker is a young child (generally in the home), or as a *foreign* language, acquired at some subsequent period. Overlapping with this distinction is that between its use as a *first* language, the primary language of the speaker, and as an *additional* language. In some countries (particularly of course where it is the dominant native language), English is used principally for internal purposes as an *intranational* language, for speakers to communicate with other speakers of the same country; in other countries such as Germany and Japan, it serves chiefly as an *international* language, the medium of communication with speakers from other countries.

But in numerous countries such as India, the Philippines, and Nigeria, where English is for the most part a foreign language too, it nonetheless has prominent internal functions within these countries in addition to its international role. Such domestic use of 'English as a foreign language' is often called 'English as a second language'.

The meanings of 'grammar'

Syntax and inflections

1.2 We shall be using 'grammar' in this book to include both SYNTAX and that aspect of MORPHOLOGY (the internal structure of words) that deals with INFLECTIONS (or ACCIDENCE). The fact that the past tense of *buy* is *bought* [inflection] and the fact that the interrogative form of *He bought it* is *Did he buy it?* [syntax] are therefore both equally within grammar. Our usage corresponds to one of the common lay uses of the word in the English-speaking world. A teacher may comment:

> John uses good grammar but his spelling is awful.

The comment shows that spelling is excluded from grammar; and if John wrote *interloper* where the context demanded *interpreter*, the teacher would say that he had used the wrong word, not that he had made a

Varieties of English

Types of variation

1.6 There are numerous varieties of English, but we shall recognize in this book five major types of variation. Any use of the language necessarily involves variation within all five types, although for purposes of analysis we may abstract individual varieties:

(a) region
(b) social group
(c) field of discourse
(d) medium
(e) attitude

The first two types of variation relate primarily to the language *user*. People use a regional variety because they live in a region or have once lived in that region. Similarly, people use a social variety because of their affiliation with a social group. These varieties are relatively permanent for the language user. At the same time, we should be aware that many people can communicate in more than one regional or social variety and can therefore (consciously or unconsciously) switch varieties according to the situation. And of course people move to other regions or change their social affiliations, and may then adopt a new regional or social variety.

The last three types of variation relate to language *use*. People select the varieties according to the situation and the purpose of the communication. The field of discourse relates to the activity in which they are engaged; the medium may be spoken or written, generally depending on the proximity of the participants in the communication; and the attitude expressed through language is conditioned by the relationship of the participants in the particular situation. A COMMON CORE is present in all the varieties so that, however esoteric a variety may be, it has running through it a set of grammatical and other characteristics that are present in all the others. It is this fact that justifies the application of the name 'English' to all the varieties.

Regional variation

1.7 Varieties according to region have a well-established label both in popular and technical use: DIALECTS. Geographical dispersion is in fact the classic basis for linguistic variation, and in the course of time, with poor communications and relative remoteness, such dispersion results in dialects becoming so distinct that we regard them as different languages. This latter stage was long ago reached with the Germanic dialects that are now Dutch, English, German, Swedish, etc, but it has not been reached (and may not necessarily ever be reached, given the modern ease and range of communication) with the dialects of English that have resulted from the regional separation of communities within the British Isles and (since the

voyages of exploration and settlement in Shakespeare's time) elsewhere in the world.

It is pointless to ask how many dialects of English there are: there are indefinitely many, depending on how detailed we wish to be in our observations. But they are of course more obviously numerous in long-settled Britain than in areas more recently settled by English speakers, such as North America or, still more recently, Australia and New Zealand. The degree of generality in our observation depends crucially upon our standpoint as well as upon our experience. An Englishman will hear an American Southerner primarily as an American, and only as a Southerner in addition if further subclassification is called for and if his experience of American English dialects enables him to make it. To an American the same speaker will be heard first as a Southerner and then (subject to similar conditions) as, say, a Virginian, and then perhaps as a Piedmont Virginian.

Social variation

1.8 Within each of the dialects there is considerable variation in speech according to education, socioeconomic group, and ethnic group. Some differences correlate with age and sex. Much (if not most) of the variation does not involve categorical distinctions; rather it is a matter of the frequency with which certain linguistic features are found in the groups.

There is an important polarity between uneducated and educated speech in which the former can be identified with the nonstandard regional dialect most completely and the latter moves away from regional usage to a form of English that cuts across regional boundaries. An outsider (who was not a skilled dialectologist) might not readily find a New Englander who said *see* for *saw*, a Pennsylvanian who said *seen*, and a Virginian who said *seed*. These are forms that tend to be replaced by *saw* with schooling, and in speaking to a stranger a dialect speaker would tend to use 'school' forms. On the other hand, there is no simple equation of regional and uneducated English. Just as educated English *I saw* cuts across regional boundaries, so do many features of uneducated use: a prominent example is the double negative as in *I don't want no cake*, which has been outlawed from all educated English by the prescriptive grammar tradition for over two hundred years but which continues to thrive as an emphatic form in uneducated speech wherever English is spoken.

Educated English naturally tends to be given the additional prestige of government agencies, the professions, the political parties, the press, the law court, and the pulpit – any institution which must attempt to address itself to a public beyond the smallest dialectal community. It is codified in dictionaries, grammars, and guides to usage, and it is taught in the school system at all levels. It is almost exclusively the language of printed matter. Because educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as STANDARD ENGLISH, and provided we

resist the influence of their powerful neighbour in their assertion of an independent national identity.

South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand are in a very different position, remote from the direct day-to-day impact of either BrE or AmE. While in orthography and grammar the South African English in educated use is virtually identical with BrE, rather considerable differences in vocabulary have developed, largely under the influence of Afrikaans, one of the country's other official languages.

New Zealand English is more like BrE than any other non-European variety, though it has adopted quite a number of words from the indigenous Maoris and over the past half-century has come under the powerful influence of Australia and to a considerable extent of the United States.

Australian English is undoubtedly the dominant form of English in the Antipodes and by reason of Australia's increased wealth, population, and influence in world affairs, this national standard (though still by no means fully institutionalized) is exerting an influence in the northern hemisphere, particularly in Britain. Much of what is distinctive in Australian English is confined to familiar use. This is especially so of grammatical features.

There are other regional or national variants that approximate to the status of a standard. Beside the widespread Creole in the Caribbean, for example, it is the view of many that the language of government and other agencies observes an indigenous standard that can be referred to as Caribbean English. In addition, some believe there are emerging standards in countries where English is a 'second' language, such as India and Nigeria.

Pronunciation and standard English

1.12 All the variants of standard English are remarkable primarily in the tiny extent to which even the most firmly established, BrE and AmE, differ from each other in vocabulary, grammar, and orthography. Pronunciation, however, is a special case in that it distinguishes one national standard from another most immediately and completely and it links in a most obvious way the national standards to the regional varieties. In BrE, one type of pronunciation is often seen as having the status of 'standard': it is the accent associated with the older schools and universities of England, 'Received Pronunciation' or 'RP'. It is nonregional and enjoys prestige from the social importance of its speakers. Although RP no longer has the unique authority it had in the first half of the twentieth century, it remains prominent in teaching the British variety of English as a foreign language, as can be easily seen from dictionaries and textbooks intended for countries that teach BrE.

Varieties according to field of discourse

1.13 The field of discourse is the type of activity engaged in through language. A speaker has a repertoire of varieties according to field and switches to the appropriate one as occasion demands. Typically, the switch involves nothing more than turning to the particular set of lexical items habitually used for handling the field in question: law, cookery, engineering, football. As with dialects, there are indefinitely many fields, depending on how detailed we wish our analysis to be.

Varieties according to medium

1.14 The differences between spoken and written English derive from two sources. One is situational: since the use of a written medium normally presupposes the absence of the person(s) addressed, writers must be far more explicit to ensure that they are understood. The second source of difference is that many of the devices we use to transmit language by speech (stress, rhythm, intonation, tempo, for example) are impossible to represent with the relatively limited repertoire of conventional orthography. In consequence, writers often have to reformulate their sentences to convey fully and successfully what they want to express within the orthographic system.

Varieties according to attitude

1.15 Varieties according to attitude are often called 'stylistic', but 'style' is a term which is used with several different meanings. We are concerned here with choice that depends on our attitude to the hearer (or reader), to the topic, and to the purpose of our communication. We recognize a gradient in attitude between formal (relatively stiff, cold, polite, impersonal) and informal (relatively relaxed, warm, casual, friendly). We also acknowledge that there is a neutral English bearing no obvious attitudinal colouring and it belongs to the common core of English (*cf* 1.6). We shall for the most part confine ourselves to this three-term distinction, leaving the neutral variety unmarked.

Acceptability and frequency

1.16 Our approach in this book is to focus on the common core that is shared by standard BrE and standard AmE. We leave unmarked any features that the two standard varieties have in common, marking as ⟨BrE⟩ or ⟨AmE⟩ only the points at which they differ. But usually we find it necessary to say ⟨esp(ecially) BrE⟩ or ⟨esp(ecially) AmE⟩, for it is rare for a feature to be found exclusively in one variety. Similarly, we do not mark features that are neutral with respect to medium and attitude. We distinguish where necessary spoken and written language, generally using 'speaker' and 'hearer' as unmarked forms for the participants in an act of communication, but drawing on the combinations 'speaker/writer' and 'hearer/reader' when we wish to emphasize that what is said applies across

the media. We also frequently need to label features according to variation in attitude, drawing attention to those that are formal or informal.

The metaphor of the common core points to a distinction that applies to two other aspects of our description of English grammar. We distinguish between the central and the marginal also for acceptability and frequency.

Acceptability is a concept that does not apply exclusively to grammar. Native speakers may find a particular sentence unacceptable because (for example) they consider it logically absurd or because they cannot find a plausible context for its use or because it sounds clumsy or impolite. However, we are concerned only with the acceptability of forms or constructions on the grounds of their morphology or syntax.

In general, our examples are fully acceptable if they are left unmarked. But we sometimes contrast acceptable and unacceptable examples, marking the latter by placing an asterisk '*' before them. If they are tending to unacceptability but are not fully unacceptable, we put a query '?' before the asterisk. A query alone signifies that native speakers are unsure about the particular language feature. If native speakers differ in their reactions, we put the asterisk or query in parentheses.

Assessments by native speakers of relative acceptability largely correlate with their assessments of relative frequency. We leave unmarked those features of the language that occur frequently, drawing attention just to those that occur extremely frequently or only rarely.

In this book we offer a descriptive presentation of English grammar. We make a direct connection between forms and their meaning, conducting excursions into lexicology, semantics, and pragmatics where these impinge closely on our grammatical description.

NOTE The diamond bracket convention applies to stylistic and other variants. Phonetic symbols used in the book are those of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA); prosodic symbols are explained in 2.13–15, and abbreviations in the Index. Among other conventions: parentheses indicate optional items, curved braces free alternatives, square braces contingent alternatives (*eg* selection of the top alternative in one pair requires selection of the top one in the other).

Bibliographical note

On varieties of English, see Bailey and Görlach (1982); Biber (1988); Hughes and Trudgill (1979); Kachru (1988); McDavid (1963); Quirk (1988, 1989).

On acceptability and language attitudes, see Bolinger (1980); Greenbaum (1977, 1985, 1988); Quirk and Stein (1990).

2 A general framework

The plan of this book

2.1 Grammar is a complex system, the parts of which cannot be properly explained in abstraction from the whole. In this sense, all parts of a grammar are mutually defining, and there is no simple linear path we can take in explaining one part in terms of another. The method of presentation adopted in this book will be to order the description of English grammar so that features which are simpler (in the sense that their explanation presupposes less) come before those which are more complex (in the sense that their explanation presupposes more).

Our mode of progression will therefore be cyclic, rather than linear. In this first cycle we present a general framework, along with some major concepts and categories that are essential for the understanding of grammar.

The second cycle, Chapters 3–11, is concerned with the basic constituents which make up the simple sentence. Thus Chapters 3 and 4 present the grammar and semantics of the verb phrase, and Chapters 5 and 6 the basic constituents of the noun phrase, in particular determiners, nouns, and pronouns. Chapter 7 deals with adjectives and adverbs, Chapter 8 with adverbials, and Chapter 9 with prepositions and prepositional phrases. In the light of these detailed studies, Chapters 10 and 11 then explore the simple sentence in all its structural variety.

The third cycle treats matters which involve still more complexity of syntactic structure. Chapters 12 and 13 move beyond the simple sentence, dealing with substitution, ellipsis, and coordination: three operations which may be carried out on simple sentences in order to produce structures of greater complexity. Chapters 14 and 15 introduce a further factor of complexity, the subordination of one clause to another, and we proceed to a more general study of the complex sentence. Chapter 16 follows up Chapters 3 and 4 in giving further attention to the verb phrase, with special reference to verb classification, together with issues relating to phrasal and prepositional verbs, and to verb and adjective complementation. Similarly, Chapter 17 resumes the topic of Chapters 5 and 6, exploring the full complexity of the noun phrase in terms of structures separately examined in earlier chapters. Chapter 18 also involves a knowledge of the whole grammar as described in preceding chapters, but this time with a view to showing the various ways in which individual parts of a sentence can be arranged for focus, emphasis, and the effective

which sentence grammar relates to the formation of texts, including those comprising extended discourse in speech or writing.

NOTE At the end of each chapter, there is a bibliographical note giving guidance on further reading, especially recent monographs and articles. We assume that the reader will have access to the major grammarians of the past whose works are not mentioned in these notes though they are of course listed in the general Bibliography at the end of the book. These include the compendious works of Jespersen, Kruisinga and others, as well as bibliographies by Scheurweghs and Vorlat. To the work of such scholars all subsequent studies are heavily indebted, not least our own *Comprehensive Grammar* of 1985 to which the present book is directly related.

Sentences and clauses

2.2 Let us begin by looking at some examples of *sentences*, those language units which we must regard as primary, in comprising a minimum sense of completeness and unity:

She's selling her car. [1]
He sounded a bit doubtful. [2]
You should always clean your teeth after meals. [3]

Of course, these cannot mean much to us unless we know who 'she' is in [1] and who 'he' is in [2]; we would also want to know in [2] what he seemed doubtful about. For the place of such sentences in a wider *textual* context, we must wait till Chapter 19, but the sense of grammatical completeness in [1], [2], and [3] is none the less valid.

There are several ways of looking at the constituents of a sentence in establishing what needs to be present to make a stretch of language a sentence. The constituents most widely familiar are the *subject* and the *predicate*. If we heard someone say

went off without paying [4]

we would at once wish to ask '*Who* (went off without paying)?' In [4] we have a possible predicate but no subject. But equally if we heard someone say

that elderly man [5]

we would want to ask '*What about* that elderly man?' sensing that we had in [5] a possible subject but no predicate. By contrast with [4] and [5], we have a complete sentence in [6]:

Let us now compare the subject of [1], [2], [3], and [6] (*She*, *He*, *You*, *That elderly man*) with the predicates. The latter are not merely longer but rather obviously more heterogeneous:

's selling her car
sounded a bit doubtful
should always clean your teeth after meals
went off without paying

As well as seeing that a sentence comprises a subject and a predicate, therefore, we need to look at the constituents of the predicate itself.

Elements

2.3 One of the indications that the subject is a clearly identifiable constituent of a sentence is, as we have seen, a specific question:

Who went off without paying? [1]
That elderly man (went off without paying). [1a]

Parts of the predicate can similarly be identified with questions. For example, *the object*:

What is she selling? [2]
(She's selling) *her car*. [2a]

So too, some *adverbials*:

When should you always clean your teeth? [3]
(You should always clean your teeth) *after meals*. [3a]

Subjects, objects, and adverbials will be referred to as *elements* of sentence structure. Other elements that we shall distinguish include the *complement* as in '(He sounded) *a bit doubtful*' and of course the *verb* as in '(He) *sounded* (a bit doubtful)', '(She)'*s selling* (her car)', '(You) *should* (always) *clean* (your teeth after meals)'.

As we shall see, especially in Chapter 10, sentences differ widely as to *which* elements and *how many* elements they include. This is related primarily to the type of verb element. If the V is *intransitive*, there need be no other elements beside S and V:

My watch [S] has disappeared. [V] [4]

If the V is *transitive*, on the other hand, it is accompanied by an object:

Someone [S] must have taken [V] *my watch*. [O] [5]
A policeman [S] witnessed [V] *the accident*. [O] [6]

Transitive verbs can be turned into the passive voice (3.25), with the result that corresponding to [6] there is a sentence of basically the same meaning [6'] in which the O of [6] becomes the S

For the present, we need mention only one other type of V, the *copular* verbs, which require a complement:

He [S] sounded [V] *a bit doubtful*. [C] [7]
One of my sisters [S] has become [V] *a computer expert*. [C] [8]

Adverbial elements may be added irrespective of the verb type:

My watch has disappeared *from this desk*. [A] [4a]
Someone must *apparently* [A] have taken my watch *from this desk*. [A] [5a]
By chance [A] a policeman witnessed the accident. [6a]
He sounded a bit doubtful *that night*. [A] [7a]
To everyone's delight [A] one of my sisters has *quite rapidly* [A] become a computer expert. [8a]

But with some verbs, adverbials are obligatory; for example:

Did you put the watch *in this drawer*? [9]

2.4 The sentence elements illustrated in 2.3 draw attention to a major issue in the study of grammar: the distinction between *function* and *form*. The same formal unit *my watch* has one function in [4] and quite another in [5]. Equally, the same function can obviously be performed by units that are very different in form. Thus as V we have *witnessed* in [6], *sounded* in [7], *has disappeared* in [4], and *must have taken* in [5]. But at least these all involve verbs (2.10) and we capture what they thus have formally in common by referring to them as *verb phrases* whether they comprise one word such as *sounded* or several words, as in *must have taken*.

The realizations of S are still more various: *he* in [7], *someone* in [5], *my watch* in [4], and *one of my sisters* in [8]. But all these involve either pronouns or nouns (2.6) and to capture their formal properties we refer to them as *noun phrases*, whether they comprise one word as with *he* or several words such as *one of my sisters*. The function O is again fulfilled by noun phrases: *my watch* in [5], *the accident* in [6].

On the other hand, C is realized by a noun phrase in [8], *a computer expert*, but by a different formal structure in [7], *a bit doubtful*. Forms like this (*a bit doubtful*, *quite happy*, *more successful*) we shall call *adjective phrases*, since they are either adjectives (2.6) or expansions of adjectives.

Most various of all in its formal realizations is the function A. We have a noun phrase *that night* in [7a]; *adverb phrases*, *ie* adverbs (2.6) or expansions of adverbs, *apparently* in [5a] and *quite rapidly* in [8a]; and we also have A realized by *prepositional phrases*, that is, a structure comprising a preposition (2.6) and a noun phrase: *from this desk* in [4a], *by chance* in [6a], and *to everyone's delight* in [8a].

Clauses

2.5 Let us now consider a somewhat longer sentence than those examined in 2.2*f*:

My sister [S] is [V] normally [A] a cheerful person, [C] but she [S] seemed [V] rather unhappy [C] that day. [A] [1]

Here we have two units each with the internal structure that we have been attributing to sentences. We call these units *clauses* and we can now see that the elements discussed in 2.3*f* should be considered as constituents of clauses rather than of sentences. In other words, a sentence comprises one or more clauses, each of which in turn comprises elements.

In [1] the two clauses are as it were on an equal footing and are said to be *coordinated* to form the sentence. But a clause may equally be *subordinated* within another clause as one of its elements: clearly, the noun phrase as A in [2] performs the same function as the clause as A in [2a]:

She seemed rather unhappy *that day*. [2]
She seemed rather unhappy *when I was with her*. [2a]

We must therefore revise our list of formal realizations of elements as given in 2.3 since the function A can be performed by clauses as in [2a], and the functions of O and S can also be performed by clauses as we see by comparing [3] and [3a], [4] and [4a] respectively:

I suddenly remembered *something*. [3]
I suddenly remembered *that I had an appointment*. [3a]
Your failure is most regrettable. [4]
That you failed the exam is most regrettable. [4a]

But as well as constituting whole elements as in [2a], [3a] and [4a], clauses may constitute only a *part* of an element, especially as relative clauses in noun-phrase structure (17.5*ff*). Compare the noun phrases functioning as O in [5] and [5a]:

The police questioned *every local resident*. [5]
The police questioned *every person who lived in the neighbourhood*. [5a]

In [5a], the noun phrase as O includes the postmodifying clause:

who [S] lived [V] in the neighbourhood [A]

Words and word classes

2.6 Every constituent of a sentence ultimately consists of *words*. We have already (for example in 2.4) referred to these units in terms of the traditional 'parts of speech' and it is time now to look at a classification of words in some detail.

It is useful to consider words as falling into two ba[illegible]
and [illegible]

unchanging in the language: words like *this*, *in*, *shall*. These words play a major part in English grammar, often corresponding to inflections in some other languages, and they are sometimes referred to as 'grammatical words', 'function words', or 'structure words'.

By contrast, the *open* classes of words are constantly changing their membership as old words drop out of the language and new ones are coined or adopted to reflect cultural changes in society. These are words like *forest*, *computer*, *decorative*, and *signify*; their numbers are vast and are the subject matter of dictionaries. Appropriately, they are often called 'lexical words'.

Closed classes:

pronoun, such as *she*, *they*, *anybody*
determiner, such as *the*, *a*, *that*, *some*
primary verb, such as *be*
modal verb, such as *can*, *might*
preposition, such as *in*, *during*, *round*
conjunction, such as *and*, *or*, *while*, *yet*

Open classes:

noun, such as *hospital*, *play*, *orchestra*, *Millicent*
adjective, such as *sufficient*, *happy*, *changeable*, *round*
full verbs, such as *grow*, *befriend*, *interrogate*, *play*
adverb, such as *sufficiently*, *really*, *afterwards*, *yet*

NOTE **[a]** Other categories of words include *numerals*, such as *three*, *seventy-six*; and *interjections*, such as *oh*, *aha*.
[b] Even from the few examples given, we see that a word may belong to more than one class. Thus *round* is given as both a preposition (as in *Drive round the corner*) and an adjective (as in *She has a round face*); we could have gone further and listed it as, for example, a full verb: *The car rounded the bend.* Moreover, relations across classes can be seen in the verb *befriend* (*cf* the noun *friend*), the adjective *changeable* (*cf* the verb *change*), and above all in adverbs in *-ly* which are systematically related to adjectives: *sufficient* ~ *sufficiently*.

2.7 We assign words to their various classes on grammatical grounds: that is, according to their properties in entering phrasal and clausal structure. For example, determiners (5.3*ff*) link up with nouns to form noun phrases as in *a soldier*; pronouns can replace noun phrases as in 'I saw *a soldier* and I asked *him* the time'. But this is not to deny the general validity of traditional definitions based on meaning: 'naming things' is indeed a semantic property of nouns and many verbs are indeed concerned with 'doing things'.

In fact it is neither possible nor desirable to separate grammatical from semantic factors, whether we are considering the status of a word or the structure of a whole sentence. Let us examine the following examples:

The tiger lives in China, India, and Malaysia. [1]
These tigers are living in a very cramped cage. [2]
A keeper is coming to feed the tiger. [3]

In [1], *the tiger* can hardly refer to any particular tiger; the phrase is *generic* and illustrates a particular use of the determiner *the* with a singular noun; the plural noun phrase *the tigers* could not be generic. By contrast, *these tigers* in [2] and *the tiger* in [3] must refer to particular *tigers* and the noun phrase is *specific*. But as well as introducing the important distinction between generic and specific, [1] and [2] illustrate a related distinction that recurs in the study of grammar. The singular form *tiger* is *unmarked* as compared with the plural form *tigers* which is *marked* for plural by the inflectional ending *-s*. But in being literally 'unmarked' inflectionally, the singular in [1] is correspondingly 'unmarked' semantically: it refers to all tigers at all times and embraces both male tigers and female tigresses (*tigress* being thus a 'marked' form).

Moreover the distinction between generic and specific, unmarked and marked, extends beyond the noun phrase as S. The use in [1] of the unmarked present tense *lives* as V (embracing reference to future and past as well as the literal present) appropriately matches the generic S. Equally the specific reference of the S in [2] is matched by the verb phrase *are living* as V, the progressive aspect (4.7*ff*) marking the verb in respect of something specifically in progress at the present time.

Stative and dynamic

2.8 A further and related contrast is illustrated by [1] and [2] in 2.7; this is the distinction between *stative* and *dynamic*. Most verbs in most contexts relate to action, activity, and to temporary or changeable conditions:

The car *struck* a lamppost as I *was parking* it.
What aria *did* she *sing* last night?

Verbs whose meaning denotes lack of motion can be equally dynamic in their grammar:

I *was* quietly *resting* after a busy day.
Are you *sitting* comfortably?

But it is not uncommon to find verbs which may be used either dynamically or statively. If we say that some specific tigers *are living* in a cramped cage, we imply that this is (or ought to be) a temporary condition and the verb phrase is dynamic in its use. On the other hand, when we say that the species of animal known as the tiger *lives* or *is found* in China, the generic statement entails that this is not a temporary circumstance and the verb phrase is stative.

Stative use is not, however, confined to generic statements:

Mrs Frost *knew* a great deal about economics.
Did you *hear* the thunder last night?

(Note that it is actually ungrammatical to say 'Mrs Frost *was knowing* a great deal . . .'.) Nor is the category stative confined to a minority of

and adjectives are stative in that they denote phenomena or qualities that are regarded for linguistic purposes as stable and indeed for all practical purposes permanent:

Jack is { *an engineer.* / *very tall.*

(We may note that it would be very odd indeed to add here an adverbial like *this afternoon* which would suggest that Jack's profession or height applied only to the moment of speaking.) On the other hand, just as some verbs such as *live* can be used statively as well as dynamically, so also can some nouns and adjectives be used dynamically as well as statively:

My little boy seems to like being *a nuisance* when we have friends to supper.
Do you really like my poem or are you just being *kind*?

Pro-forms and ellipsis

2.9 One fundamental feature of grammar is providing the means of referring back to an expression without repeating it. This is achieved by means of *pro-forms*:

Their beautiful new car was badly damaged when *it* was struck by a falling tree. [1]
Jack was born in a British *industrial town* and Gillian grew up in an American *one*. [2]
My parents live *in the north of the country* and my husband's people live *there* too. [3]
I raised the proposal *in the early months of 1988*, but no one was *then* particularly interested. [4]
She hoped they would *play a Mozart quartet* and they will *do so*. [5]

In [1] we have the pronoun *it* referring back to the whole noun phrase *their beautiful new car*. In [2], the pronoun *one* refers back to the head part *industrial town* of the noun phrase *a British (industrial town)*. In [3] *there* is a pro-form for the adverbial of place *in the north of the country*, while *then* in [4] refers comparably to the time adverbial *in the early months of 1988*. In [5], the pro-form *do so* refers to a unit not so far discussed, the *predication* (2.10), and thus corresponds to the whole of *play a Mozart quartet*.

In some constructions, repetition can be avoided by ellipsis (12.14). Thus instead of [5], we might have:

She hoped they would *play a Mozart quartet* and they will.

Again instead of [3], we might have ellipsis of the V and an A in the second part:

My parents *live in the north of the country* and my husband's people too.

Note also the ellipted V in

Her daughter is studying physics and her son history.

Some pro-forms can refer forward to what has not been stated rather than, as in [1]–[5], back to what has been stated. There are, for example, the *wh*-items, as in

What was badly damaged? (*Their beautiful new car*) [1a]
Jack was born in a British *what*? (*Industrial town*) [2a]
Where do your parents live? (*In the north of the country*) [3a]
When did you raise the proposal? (*In the early months of 1988*) [4a]
What did she hope they would *do*? (*Play a Mozart quartet*) [5a]

Cf also '*Which* is their car?' (*That beautiful new one*).

NOTE But *wh*-items have a further role in subordinate clauses (14.1) when their reference may be backward as in [6] or forward as in [7]:

I met her *in 1985*, *when* she was still a student. [6]
Please tell me *what* is worrying you. [7]

Operator and predication

2.10 In 2.2*f*, we looked at the traditional division of a sentence into subject and predicate, noting the heterogeneous character of the latter. Bearing in mind what was said in 2.3 about sentence constituents being identified by specific questions, it should be noted that no question elicits the predicate as such. If, however, we see the English sentence as comprising a *subject*, an *operator*, and a *predication*, we have in this last a constituent that can indeed be elicited by a question. *Cf* [5a] in 2.9. But the analysis of predicate as operator plus predication has a much wider relevance than this.

We shall consider the operator in more detail in 3.11, but for the present we may define it as the first or only auxiliary in the verb phrase realizing the sentence element V. Note first of all the way in which the operator permits the coordination (13.17) of two predications:

You should *telephone your mother* and *find out if she's recovered from her cold*.
He is either *cleaning the car* or *working in the garden*.

Secondly, instead of representing a predication by the *do so* pro-form (as in 2.9, [5]), an operator can be used alone, with total ellipsis of the predication that is to be understood:

She hoped that they would *play a Mozart quartet* { and they *will*. / but they *won't*.

The second variant in this example draws attention to a further characteristic of the operator: it can be followed by the informal contraction *n't* (as well as by the full form *not*).

The position immediately after the operator is in fact crucial in forming a negation or a question:

(a) *Negation* is expressed by inserting *not* (informally *n't*) after the operator:

They *should* have bought a new house.
They *should not* have bought a new house.

(b) *Questions* are formed by placing the subject of the sentence after the operator:

They should have bought a new house.
Should they have bought a new house?

Where the V element in a positive declarative sentence has no operator, a form of *do* is introduced as operator in the negative or interrogative version:

They *bought* a new house.
They *didn't buy* a new house.
Did they *buy* a new house?

Where the V element is realized by a form of *be*, this functions as itself an operator:

The sea *is* very rough.
The sea *is not* very rough.
Is the sea very rough?

NOTE The verb *have* can function like *be*, especially in BrE:

She *has* the time to spare.
She *hasn't* the time to spare.
Has she the time to spare?

But see further 3.14 Notes [a] and [b].

Assertive and nonassertive

2.11 If we consider the following examples, we see that more can be involved than what occupies the position after the operator, when we move from a positive statement as in [1] and [3] to negation or question:

She has finished her thesis already.	[1]
She has*n't* finished her thesis *yet*.	[2]
The priest gave some money to some of the beggars.	[3]
Did *the priest* give *any* money to *any* of the beggars?	[4]

In [2], *yet* corresponds to the occurrence of *already* in [1], and in [4] *any* twice corresponds to the use of *some* in [3]. We express these differences by

saying that the predication in positive statements is 'assertive territory' and that the predication in negative sentences and in questions is 'nonassertive territory'. While most words can be used equally in assertive and nonassertive predications, some determiners, pronouns, and adverbs have specifically assertive or nonassertive use. See further, 10.37.

NOTE [a] As well as assertive and nonassertive forms, there are also some negative forms. Compare

I saw *somebody*.	[assertive pronoun]
I didn't see *anybody*.	[nonassertive pronoun]
I saw *nobody*.	[negative pronoun]

[b] Nonassertive territory is not confined to negation and question predications, as we shall see in 10.37 Note [b]; for example

If you *ever* want *anything*, please ask.
She is more intelligent than *anyone* I know.

The primacy of speech

2.12 All the material in this book is necessarily expressed in the silence of the printed word. But in 2.1 we referred to 'discourse in speech or writing', and at no point must we forget that language is normally *spoken* and *heard*. Even what we write and read needs to be accompanied by an imagined realization in terms of pronunciation and such prosodic features as stress and intonation. The familiar graphic devices of spaces between words and punctuation marks such as comma, colon, semi-colon, and period help us to recover from writing how sentences would sound if spoken, but the correspondence between punctuation and prosody is only partial. From time to time, we shall need in this book to express examples with the help of a 'prosodic transcription', and we now explain the transcription system and the phenomena it represents.

Stress, rhythm and intonation

Stress

2.13 The relative prominence of a syllable within a word, or of a word within a phrase, is indicated by relative stress. In transcription, we mark the stressed segment by putting in front of it a short raised vertical stroke:

in'dignant
in the 'middle

An exceptionally heavy stress can be shown by a double vertical, and a lower level of stress ('secondary stress') can be marked by a lowered vertical stroke. For example:

It's ˌabsoˈlutely inˈˈcredible.

The ability to indicate stress is particularly valuable where it is unusual, as for example in a contrast:

Well, 'you may think she's 'happy, but in 'fact she's 'very ''unhappy.

Pronouns are normally unstressed and the speaker here emphasizes *you* to indicate the addressee's isolation in so thinking; likewise, although prefixes like *un-* are normally unstressed, here it is emphasized in contrast with the previous mention of *happy*.

Rhythm

2.14 English connected speech is characterized by stressed syllables interspersed by unstressed ones such that, when the speaker is unaffected by hesitation on the one hand or excitement on the other, the stressed syllables occur at fairly regular intervals of time. Absolute regularity of rhythm is avoided for the most part, as oppressively mechanical, but is often used in children's verse:

'Hickory 'dickory 'dock
The 'mouse ran 'up the 'clock.

It is also heard when a speaker is speaking severely or stating a rule:

You should 'always 'clean your 'teeth 'after 'meals.

But absolute regularity is quite normal as an aid to keeping track of numbers when we are counting things:

'one 'two 'three 'four . . . 'seven ˌteen 'eigh ˌteen 'nine ˌteen 'twenty ˌtwenty-'one ˌtwenty-'two . . .

NOTE When not part of a counting series, *-teen* numbers have the main stress on this element: *She is nine'teen.*

Intonation

2.15 Like stress, intonation is a mode of indicating relative prominence, but with intonation the variable is *pitch*, the aspect of sound which we perceive in terms of 'high' and 'low'. Intonation is normally realized in *tone units* comprising a sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables, with at least one of the stressed syllables made prominent by pitch. We call such a syllable the *nucleus* of the tone unit and we mark it by printing it in small capitals. The first prominent syllable in a tone unit is called the *onset* and where necessary it is marked with a slender long vertical and the end of the tone unit can be indicated with a thicker vertical:

She's |selling her CAR|

Pitch prominence at the nucleus is usually associated with pitch change and the direction of this can be indicated by the use of accents. The commonest form of pitch change is a *fall*, as in:

She's |selling her CÀR|

But if the speaker were using these words not to make a statement but to ask a question, the next commonest pitch change would be used, a *rise*:

She's |selling her CÁR|

Other nuclear tones to be especially noted are the *fall-rise* and the *fall-plus-rise*:

He |sounded a bit DŎUBTful|
It's |THĬS type that I LĪKE|

Conclusion

2.16 The material presented in this chapter constitutes a modest but essential foundation for studying English grammar as a whole. We have introduced features and concepts which cut across the individual topics that will now occupy our attention, chapter by chapter. Thus we have illustrated a system by which intonation and other prosodic features of speech can be related to grammar; we have outlined major concepts such as the distinctions between generic and specific, stative and dynamic, assertive and nonassertive.

But we have also provided a framework of sentence analysis, within which the detailed material of individual chapters may be fitted, much as these must in turn modify and clarify this framework. Thus we have examined the 'parts of speech'; the sentence elements such as object and complement; the segmentation of sentences into subject, operator, and predication; and some of the chief grammatical processes such as those relating positive to negative, statement to question.

Bibliographical note

For a fuller treatment of the material here and elsewhere in this book, see Quirk et al. (1985); *cf* also Attal (1987).

On the theory of English grammar, see Huddleston (1984); Langacker (1987); Radford (1988).

On intonation and related features of speech, see Bolinger (1972b); Crystal (1969).

On syntactic and semantic relations, see Li (1976); Lyons (1977); Matthews (1981).

3 Verbs and auxiliaries

Major verb classes

3.1 The term VERB is used in two senses:
1 The verb is one of the elements in clause structure, like the subject and the object.
2 A verb is a member of a word class, like a noun and an adjective.
The two senses are related in this way: A VERB PHRASE consists of one or more verbs (sense 2), *eg linked*, *is making*, *can believe*, *might be leaving* in the sentences below; the verb phrase operates as the verb (sense 1) in the clause, *eg*:

They *linked* hands. He *is making* a noise.
I *can believe* you. She *might be leaving* soon.

As a word class, verbs can be divided into three major categories, according to their function within the verb phrase: the open class of FULL VERBS (or lexical verbs, 3.2*ff*) and the very small closed classes of PRIMARY VERBS (3.13*ff*) and MODAL AUXILIARY VERBS (3.16*ff*). Since the primary verbs and the modal auxiliary verbs are closed classes, we can list them in full.

FULL VERBS	*believe, follow, like, see, . . .*
PRIMARY VERBS	*be, have, do*
MODAL AUXILIARIES	*can, may, shall, will, must, could, might, should, would*

If there is only one verb in the verb phrase, it is the MAIN VERB. If there is more than one verb, the final one is the main verb, and the one or more verbs that come before it are auxiliaries. For example, *leaving* is the main verb in this sentence, and *might* and *be* are auxiliaries:

She *might be leaving* soon.

Of the three classes of verbs, the full verbs can act only as main verbs, the modal auxiliaries can act only as auxiliary verbs, and the primary verbs can act either as main verbs or as auxiliary verbs.

NOTE **[a]** Some verbs have a status intermediate between that of main verbs and that of auxiliary verbs, *cf* 3.18.
[b] Notice that in *Did they believe you?* the verb phrase *Did . . . believe* is discontinuous. The verb phrase is similarly discontinuous in sentences such as *They **do** not **believe** me* and *I **can** perhaps **help** you.*

[c] Sometimes the main verb (and perhaps other words too) is understood from the context, so that only auxiliaries are present in the verb phrase:

I can't tell them, but you *can*. [*ie* 'can tell them']
Your parents may not have suspected anything, but your sister *may have*. [*ie* 'may have suspected something']

[d] There are also multi-word verbs, which consist of a verb and one or more other words, *eg*: *turn on*, *look at*, *put up with*, *take place*, *take advantage of*. *Cf* 16.2*ff*.

Full verbs

Verb forms

3.2 Regular full verbs, *eg*: CALL, have four morphological forms: (1) base form, (2) *-s* form, (3) *-ing* participle, (4) *-ed* form. Irregular full verbs vary in this respect; for example, the verb SPEAK has five forms, whereas CUT has only three. Since most verbs have the *-ed* inflection for both the simple past (*They called*) and the past participle or passive participle (*They have called*; *They were called*), we extend the term '*-ed* form' to cover these two sets of functions for all verbs.

In some irregular verbs, *eg*: SPEAK, there are two *-ed* forms with distinct syntactic functions: the past *-ed* form and the *-ed* participle. In other irregular verbs, *eg*: CUT, and in all regular verbs, *eg*: CALL, the two *-ed* syntactic forms are identical.

They *spoke* to me. They have *spoken* to me.
She *cut* herself. She has *cut* herself.
I *called* him. I have *called* him.

NOTE **[a]** Regular verbs are called such because if we know their base form (*ie* the dictionary entry form) we can predict their three other forms (*-s*, *-ing*, and *-ed*) by rule. The vast majority of English verbs are regular, and new words that are coined or borrowed from other languages adopt the regular pattern.
[b] The primary verb BE (*cf* 3.13) has eight forms.

The functions of verb forms

3.3 The verb forms have different functions in finite and nonfinite verb phrases (*cf* 3.19*f*). The *-s* form and the past form are always FINITE, whereas the *-ing* participle and the *-ed* participle are always NONFINITE. The BASE form (the form which has no inflection) is sometimes finite, and sometimes nonfinite (see below). In a finite verb phrase (the kind of verb phrase which normally occurs in simple sentences), only the first verb word (in bold face below) is finite:

She ***calls*** him every day. She ***has*** *called* twice today.

[b] In both BrE and AmE the general rule is broken by the doubling of *-g* in *humbug ~ humbugging ~ humbugged* and of words ending in *c* (spelled *-ck-*), *eg*: *panic ~ panicking ~ panicked*.
[c] In certain verbs whose base ends in a vowel followed by *-s*, there is variation between *-s-* and *-ss-* when the inflection is added:

'bias	*'biasing/'biassing*	*'biased/'biassed*
bus	*'busing/'bussing*	*bused/bussed*
'focus	*'focusing/'focussing*	*'focused/'focussed*

Deletion of and addition of *-e*

3.7 If the base ends in an unpronounced *-e*, this *-e* is regularly dropped before the *-ing* and *-ed* inflections:

create ~ creating ~ created	*shave ~ shaving ~ shaved*
bake ~ baking ~ baked	*type ~ typing ~ typed*

Verbs with monosyllabic bases in *-ye*, *-oe*, and *-nge*, pronounced /ndʒ/, are exceptions to this rule: they do not lose the *-e* before *-ing*, but they do lose it before *-ed*:

dye ~ dyeing ~ dyed	*singe ~ singeing ~ singed*
hoe ~ hoeing ~ hoed	*tinge ~ tingeing ~ tinged*

The final *-e* is also lost before *-ed* by verbs ending in *-ie* or *-ee*: *tie ~ tied*, *die ~ died*, *agree ~ agreed*.

Before the *-s* ending, on the other hand, an *-e* is added after the following letters, representing sibilant consonants:

-s	*pass ~ passes*	*-ch*	*watch ~ watches*	*-x*	*coax ~ coaxes*
-z	*buzz ~ buzzes*	*-sh*	*wash ~ washes*		

NOTE [a] An *-e* is added after *-o* in GO (*~ goes*), DO (*~ does* /dʌz/), ECHO (*~ echoes*), VETO (*~ vetoes*).
[b] The *-e* is regularly dropped in *impinging* and *infringing*.

Treatment of *-y*

3.8 In bases ending in a consonant followed by *-y*, the following changes take place:
(a) *-y* changes to *-ie-* before *-s*: *carry ~ carries*, *try ~ tries*
(b) *-y* changes to *-i-* before *-ed*: *carry ~ carried*, *try ~ tried*

The *-y* remains, however, where it follows a vowel letter: *stay ~ stayed*, *alloy ~ alloys*, etc; or where it precedes *-ing*: *carry ~ carrying*, *stay ~ staying*.

A different spelling change occurs in verbs whose bases end in *-ie*: DIE, LIE, TIE, VIE. In these cases, the *-ie* changes to *-y-* before *-ing* is added: *die ~ dying*, *lie ~ lying*, *tie ~ tying*, *vie ~ vying*.

NOTE Exceptions to these rules are certain verbs where the *y* changes to *i* after *-a-*: PAY (*~ paid*) and LAY (*~ laid*) and their derivatives, *eg*: REPAY (*~ repaid*), MISLAY (*~ mislaid*). The irregular verb SAY follows the same pattern (*~ said*).

The morphology of irregular full verbs

3.9 Irregular full verbs differ from regular verbs in that either the past inflection, or the *-ed* participle inflection, or both of these, are irregular. More precisely the major differences are:
(a) Irregular verbs either do not have the regular *-ed* inflection, or else have a variant of that inflection in which the /d/ is devoiced to /t/ (*eg*: *burn ~ burnt*, which occurs alongside the regular *burned*).
(b) Irregular verbs typically, but not invariably, have variation in their base vowel: *choose ~ chose ~ chosen*, *write ~ wrote ~ written*.
(c) Irregular verbs have a varying number of distinct forms. Since the *-s* form and the *-ing* form are predictable for regular and irregular verbs alike, the only forms that need be listed for irregular verbs are the base form (V), the past (V-ed_1), and the *-ed* participle (V-ed_2). These are traditionally known as the PRINCIPAL PARTS of the verb. Most irregular verbs have, like regular verbs, only one common form for the past and the *-ed* participle; but there is considerable variation in this respect, as the table shows:

	V	V-ed_1	V-ed_2
all three forms alike:	*cut*	*cut*	*cut*
V-ed_1 = V-ed_2:	*meet*	*met*	*met*
V = V-ed_1:	*beat*	*beat*	*beaten*
V = V-ed_2:	*come*	*came*	*come*
all three forms different:	*speak*	*spoke*	*spoken*

Irregular verbs in alphabetical order

3.10 Irregular verbs can be classified on the basis of criteria derived from the variation discussed in 3.9. However, we shall merely list alphabetically the principal parts (including common variants) of the most common irregular verbs. The list omits most verbs with a prefix such as *out-*, *over-*, *re-*, and *un-* that have otherwise the same parts as the corresponding unprefixed verbs.

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-ed_1)	*-ed* PARTICIPLE (V-ed_2)
arise	arose	arisen
awake	awoke, awaked	awoken, awaked
be	was, were	been
bear	bore	borne
beat	beat	beaten
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bereave	bereft, bereaved	bereft, bereaved
beseech	besought, beseeched	besought, beseeched
beset	beset	beset

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-*ed*$_1$)	*-ed* PARTICIPLE (V-*ed*$_2$)
mislead	misled	misled
misspell	misspelt, misspelled	misspelt, misspelled
mistake	mistook	mistaken
misunderstand	misunderstood	misunderstood
mow	mowed	mown, mowed
offset	offset	offset
put	put	put
quit	quit, quitted	quit, quitted
read	read	read
rend	rent	rent
rid	rid, ridded	rid, ridded
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
saw	sawed	sawn, sawed
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
seek	sought	sought
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
set	set	set
sew	sewed	sewn, sewed
shake	shook	shaken
shear	sheared	shorn, sheared
shed	shed	shed
shine	shone, shined	shone, shined
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	shown
shrink	shrank	shrunk
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
sit	sat	sat
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
sling	slung	slung
slit	slit	slit
smell	smelt, smelled	smelt, smelled

BASE (V)	PAST TENSE (V-*ed*$_1$)	*-ed* PARTICIPLE (V-*ed*$_2$)
sow	sowed	sown, sowed
speak	spoke	spoken
speed	sped, speeded	sped, speeded
spell	spelt, spelled	spelt, spelled
spend	spent	spent
spill	spilt, spilled	spilt, spilled
spin	spun, span	spun
spit	spat, spit	spat, spit
split	split	split
spoil	spoilt, spoiled	spoilt, spoiled
spread	spread	spread
spring	sprang	sprung
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stank	stunk
stride	strode	stridden, strid, strode
strike	struck	struck
string	strung	strung
strive	strove, strived	striven, strived
swear	swore	sworn
sweat	sweat, sweated	sweat, sweated
sweep	swept	swept
swell	swelled	swollen, swelled
swim	swam	swum
swing	swung	swung
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
telecast	telecast	telecast
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
thrive	thrived	thrived
throw	threw	thrown
thrust	thrust	thrust
tread	trod	trodden
underbid	underbid	underbid
undergo	underwent	undergone
understand	understood	understood
undertake	undertook	undertaken
underwrite	underwrote	underwritten

(b) They cannot occur in nonfinite functions, *ie* as infinitives or participles: *may*~**to may*, **maying*, **mayed*. In consequence they can occur only as the first verb in the verb phrase.

(c) They have no *-s* form for the 3rd person singular of the present tense. Contrast:

You *must* write.~She *must* write.
You *like* to write.~She *likes* to write.

(d) Their past forms can be used to refer to present and future time (often with a tentative meaning):

I think he *may/might* be outside.
Will/Would you phone him tomorrow?

NOTE The dummy auxiliary DO, like the modal auxiliaries, is followed by the bare infinitive and cannot occur in nonfinite functions. The primary auxiliaries BE, HAVE, and DO have an *-s* form, but it is irregular (*cf* 3.13*ff*). For the marginal modal auxiliaries, see 3.17.

The primary verbs BE, HAVE, and DO

Be

3.13 The verb *be* is a main verb (with a copular function: *cf* 10.3) in:

Ann *is* a happy girl. *Is* that building a hotel?

But *be* also has two auxiliary functions: as an aspect auxiliary for the progressive (4.10*ff*):

Ann *is* learning Spanish.
The weather has *been* improving.

and as a passive auxiliary (3.25*f*):

Ann *was* awarded a prize.
Our team has never *been* beaten.

Be is unique in having a full set of both finite and nonfinite forms in auxiliary function; it is also unique among English verbs in having as many as eight different forms. In the nonnegative column of Table 3.13 the unstressed pronunciations (with vowel reduction) are given after the stressed pronunciation, where they differ.

Table* 3.13 Forms of *Be

	NONNEGATIVE	UNCONTRACTED NEGATIVE	CONTRACTED NEGATIVE
base	*be* /biː/, /bɪ/		
present			
1st person singular present	*am* /æm/, /əm/ *'m* /m/	*am not*, *'m not*	(*aren't*)
3rd person singular present	*is* /ɪz/ *'s* /z/, /s/	*is not*, *'s not*	*isn't* /'ɪznt/
2nd person present, 1st and 3rd person plural present	*are* /ɑːʳ/ *'re* /əʳ/	*are not* *'re not*	*aren't* /ɑːʳnt/
past			
1st and 3rd person singular past	*was* /wɒz/, /w(ə)z/	*was not*	*wasn't* /'wɒznt/
2nd person past 1st and 3rd person plural past	*were* /wɜːʳ/, /wəʳ/	*were not*	*weren't* /wɜːʳnt/
-ing form	*being* /'biːɪŋ/	*not being*	
-ed participle	*been* /biːn/, /bɪn/	*not been*	

NOTE **[a]** *Ain't* is a nonstandard contraction used commonly (especially in AmE) in place of *am not*, *is not*, *are not*, *has not*, and *have not*. *Aren't* is the standard contraction for *am not* in questions (especially in BrE): *Aren't I tall?*
[b] There is a rare use of *be* as a perfect auxiliary with the verb *go*: *The guests are* [also *have*] *gone*.

Have

3.14 *Have* functions both as an auxiliary and as a main verb. As an auxiliary for perfect aspect (*cf* 4.8*f*), *have* combines with an *-ed* participle to form complex verb phrases:

I *have* finished. It must *have* been eaten.

As a main verb, it normally takes a direct object: *I have no money*. The *-ed* participle is not used as an auxiliary.

She *used to* attend regularly.

It is used both as an auxiliary and as a main verb with DO-support:

He *usedn't* (or: *used not*) *to* smoke. ⟨BrE⟩
He *didn't use(d) to* smoke. ⟨BrE and informal AmE⟩

The normal interrogative construction is with DO-support, even in BrE:

Did he *use to* drink? He used to drink, *didn't* he?

Ought to normally has the *to*-infinitive, but the *to* is optional following *ought* in ellipsis:

You *oughtn't to* smoke so much.
A: *Ought* I *to* stop smoking?
B: Yes, I think you *ought (to)*.

Dare and *need* can be used either as modal auxiliaries (with bare infinitive and without the inflected forms) or as main verbs (with *to*-infinitive and with inflected *-s*, *-ing*, and past forms). The modal construction is restricted to nonassertive contexts, *ie* mainly negative and interrogative sentences, whereas the main verb construction can always be used, and is in fact more common.

NOTE Blends of the two constructions (modal auxiliary and main verb) are widely acceptable for *dare*:

They *do* not *dare* ask for me. *Do* they *dare* ask for more?

Modal idioms and semi-auxiliaries

3.18 Two other categories of verbs are intermediate between auxiliaries and main verbs. They express modal or aspectual meaning.

(a) The MODAL IDIOMS are a combination of auxiliary and infinitive or adverb. None of them have nonfinite forms and they are therefore always the first verb in the verb phrase. The most common modal idioms are *had better*, *would rather*, *have got to*, and *be to*.

(b) The SEMI-AUXILIARIES are a set of verb idioms which are introduced by one of the primary verbs HAVE and BE. They have nonfinite forms and can therefore occur in combination with preceding auxiliaries. Indeed, two or more semi-auxiliaries can occur in sequence. Common semi-auxiliaries include:

be able to	*be bound to*	*be going to*	*be supposed to*
be about to	*be due to*	*be likely to*	*have to*

NOTE Like auxiliaries – in having meanings similar to those for the aspectual and modal auxiliaries (*cf* 4.7, 4.21) – are the catenatives, such as *appear to*, *happen to*, *seem to*. Some catenatives are followed by *-ing* or *-ed* participles rather than by infinitives: *start* (working), *go on* (talking), *keep (on)* (smoking), *get* (trapped).

The structure of verb phrases

Finite verb phrases

3.19 A finite verb phrase is a verb phrase in which the first or only word is a finite verb (*cf* 3.3), the rest of the verb phrase (if any) consisting of nonfinite verbs. Finite verb phrases can be distinguished as follows:

(a) Finite verb phrases can occur as the verb phrase of independent clauses.

(b) Finite verb phrases have tense contrast, *ie* the distinction between present and past tenses:

He *is* a journalist now.
He *worked* as a travel agent last summer.

(c) There is person concord and number concord between the subject of a clause and the finite verb phrase. Concord is particularly clear with the present tense of *be*:

I *am* / You *are* } here. He/She/It *is* / We/They *are* } here.

But with most full verbs overt concord is restricted to a contrast between the 3rd person singular present and other persons or plural number:

He/She/Jim *reads* / I/We/You/They *read* } the paper every morning.

With modal auxiliaries there is no overt concord at all (*cf* 3.12):

I/You/She/We/They *can* play the cello.

(d) Finite verb phrases have mood, which indicates the factual, nonfactual, or counterfactual status of the predication. In contrast to the 'unmarked' INDICATIVE mood, we distinguish the 'marked' moods IMPERATIVE (used to express commands and other directive speech acts; *cf* 11.15 *ff*), and SUBJUNCTIVE (used to express a wish, recommendation, etc; *cf* 3.23*f*).

A clause with a finite verb phrase as its V element is called a 'finite verb clause' or, more tersely, a 'finite clause'. Similarly, a clause with a nonfinite verb phrase as its V element is called a 'nonfinite (verb) clause' (*cf* 14.3*f*).

Nonfinite verb phrases

3.20 The infinitive ((*to*) *call*), the *-ing* participle (*calling*), and the *-ed* participle (*called*) are the nonfinite forms of the verb. Hence any phrase in which one of these verb forms is the first or only word (disregarding the infinitive marker *to*) is a nonfinite verb phrase. Such phrases do not normally occur as the verb phrase of an independent clause. Compare:

The past subjunctive (or *were*-subjunctive) survives only in *were* as a past form of BE. It is distinguishable from the past indicative of BE only in the 1st and 3rd persons singular:

If she *was* leaving, you would have heard about it. [indicative]
If she *were* leaving, you would have heard about it. [subjunctive]

The indicative *was* is more common in less formal style.

NOTE [a] Only *were* is acceptable in *as it were* ('so to speak'); *were* is usual in *if I were you*.
[b] Negation of the present subjunctive does not require an operator. Hence, *reconsider* in [1a] is unambiguously subjunctive:

I insist that we not reconsider the Council's decision. [1a]

Uses of the subjunctive

3.24 We distinguish two main uses of the present subjunctive:

(a) The MANDATIVE SUBJUNCTIVE is used in a *that*-clause after an expression of such notions as demand, recommendation, proposal, intention (*eg*: *We insist*, *prefer*, *request*; *It is necessary*, *desirable*, *imperative*; *the decision*, *requirement*, *resolution*). This use is more characteristic of AmE than BrE, but seems to be increasing in BrE. In BrE the alternatives are putative *should* (14.14) and the indicative.

The employees demanded that he { *resign.* ⟨esp AmE⟩ / *should resign.* ⟨esp BrE⟩ / *resigns.* }

(b) The FORMULAIC (or 'optative') SUBJUNCTIVE is used in certain set expressions:

God *save* the Queen.	Heaven *forbid* that . . .
Long *live* the King.	*Be* that as it may, . . .
Come what may, . . .	*Suffice* it to say that . . .

The past subjunctive is hypothetical in meaning. It is used in conditional and concessive clauses and in subordinate clauses after *wish* and *suppose*:

If I *were* a rich man, I would . . .
I wish the journey *were* over.
Just suppose everyone *were* to act like you.

Subjunctive *were* is often replaced in nonformal style by indicative *was*.

Voice

Active and passive

3.25 The distinction between active and passive applies only to sentences where the verb is transitive. The difference between the active voice and the passive voice involves both the verb phrase and the clause as a whole. In the verb phrase, the passive adds a form of the auxiliary *be* followed by the *-ed* participle of the main verb. For example:

kisses	*is kissed*
has kissed	*has been kissed*
may be kissing	*may be being kissed*

At the clause level, changing from active to passive has the following results:

(a) The active subject, if retained, becomes the passive AGENT.
(b) The active object becomes the passive subject.
(c) The preposition *by* is inserted before the agent.

The butler murdered the detective. [ACTIVE]
The detective was murdered (by the butler). [PASSIVE]
The explanation was followed by an example.

The prepositional phrase (AGENT *BY*-PHRASE) of passive sentences is in most cases an optional element and is commonly omitted.

NOTE [a] *Get* is frequently used with the passive in informal English: *get caught*, *get dressed*, *get run over*. It often conveys the connotation that the referent of the subject has some responsibility for the action. Compare the construction with a reflexive pronoun: 'She got herself caught.'
[b] The change to passive is highly restricted if the active object is a clause. It becomes acceptable when the clause is extraposed and replaced by anticipatory *it*:

They thought *that she was attractive.*
It was thought *that she was attractive.*

[c] Some stative transitive verbs, called 'middle verbs', normally occur only in the active (*cf* 16.15), *eg*:

They *have* a nice house.	The auditorium *holds* 500 people.
He *lacks* confidence.	Will this *suit* you?

[d] In the 'statal passive' the *-ed* form refers to a state resulting from an action, and the construction contains a copular verb and a subject complement:

The building is *demolished.*
Her arm was already *broken* when I saw her.

A sentence such as *Her arm was broken* is ambiguous between a dynamic passive reading ('Someone broke her arm') and a statal reading ('Her arm was in a state of fracture').

Uses of the passive

3.26 In sentences where there is a choice between active and passive, the active is the norm.

Speakers or writers use the passive for the following reasons. In considering the examples, bear in mind that more than one reason may apply. Reasons 1–4 illustrate the uses of the passive without the agent *by*-phrase, which is commonly omitted.

opposition is reduced to two tenses: the PRESENT TENSE and the PAST TENSE, which typically refer to present and past time respectively.

NOTE Future meaning is conveyed by various means, including the present tense: *Tomorrow is Tuesday*. *Cf* 4.13*ff*.

Stative and dynamic senses of verbs

4.2 We draw a broad distinction between the STATIVE and DYNAMIC senses in which verbs are used to refer to situations (*cf* 4.11). Verbs like *be*, *have*, and *know* have stative senses when they refer to a single unbroken state of affairs:

I *have known* the Penfolds all my life.

Verbs like *drive*, *speak*, and *attack* have dynamic senses, as can be seen when they are used with the present perfect to refer to a sequence of separate events:

I *have driven* sports cars for years.

NOTE [a] A verb may shift in sense from one category to another. *Have*, for example, is usually stative: *She has two sisters*. But it has a dynamic sense in *We have dinner at Maxim's quite frequently*.
[b] Dynamic verb senses can regularly occur with the imperative and progressive, but stative verb senses cannot:

Learn how to swim.	**Know* how to swim.
I *am learning* to swim.	*I *am knowing* how to swim.

In general, only dynamic senses follow *do* in a pseudo-cleft sentence (*cf* 18.20):

What she did was (to) *learn* Spanish.
*What she did was (to) *know* Spanish.

Tense

Simple present tense for present time

4.3 (a) The STATE PRESENT is used with stative verb senses to refer to a single unbroken state of affairs that has existed in the past, exists now, and is likely to continue to exist in the future. It includes the 'timeless present', which refers to 'eternal truths' such as *Two and three make five* or to less extreme instances of timelessness, such as *The British Isles have a temperate climate*. It also includes more restricted time spans:

Margaret *is* tall.	He *does not believe* in hard work.
We *live* near Toronto.	This soup *tastes* delicious.

(b) The HABITUAL PRESENT is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to events that repeatedly occur without limitation on their extension into the past or future. Like the state present, it includes the 'timeless present', such as *Water boils at 100 °C* and *The earth moves round the sun*, and more restricted time spans:

We *go* to Brussels every year.	She *doesn't smoke*.
She *makes* her own dresses.	Bill *drinks* heavily.

Whereas the state present always refers to something that applies at the time of speaking or writing, this is very often not so for the habitual present: We can say *Bill drinks heavily* when Bill is not actually drinking.

(c) The INSTANTANEOUS PRESENT is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to a single event with little or no duration that occurs at the time of speaking or writing. It is used only in certain restricted situations; for example, in commentaries and self-commentaries (*Black passes the ball to Fernandez*; *I enclose a form of application*) and with performative verbs that refer to the speech acts performed by uttering the sentences (*I apologize for my behaviour*; *We thank you for your recent enquiry*).

NOTE It is a sign of the habitual present that one can easily add a frequency adverbial (*eg*: *often*, *once a day*, *every year*) to specify the frequency of the event.

Simple present tense for past and future

4.4 There are three additional kinds of uses of the simple present that are best seen as extended interpretations of the basic meanings of 4.3.

(a) The HISTORIC PRESENT refers to past time, and is characteristic of popular narrative style. It conveys the dramatic immediacy of an event happening at the time of narration:

Just as we arrived, up *comes* Ben and *slaps* me on the back as if we'*re* life-long friends.

It is used as a stylistically marked device in fictional narrative for imaginary events in the past:

The crowd *swarms* around the gateway, and *seethes* with delighted anticipation; excitement *grows*, as suddenly their hero *makes* his entrance . . .

(b) The simple present is optionally used to refer to the past with verbs of communication or reception of communication to suggest that the information communicated is still valid:

Jack *tells* me that the position is still vacant.
The Bible *prohibits* the committing of adultery.
I *hear* that you need an assistant.
I *understand* that the game has been postponed.

(c) In main clauses, the simple present typically occurs with time-position adverbials to suggest that a future event is certain to take place:

The plane *leaves* for Ankara at eight o'clock tonight.

The use of the simple present for future time is much more common in subordinate clauses, particularly in conditional and temporal clauses (*cf* 14.11):

He'll do it if you *pay* him.
I'll let you know as soon as I *hear* from her.

NOTE Somewhat akin to the other optional uses of the simple present for past time is its use in reference to writers, composers, etc, and their works (*cf* 19.13):

Dickens *draws* his characters from the London underworld of his time.
Beethoven's Ninth *is* his best composition.

Simple past tense for past time

4.5 The simple past is used to refer to a situation set at a definite time in the past.

(a) The EVENT PAST is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to a single definite event in the past. The event may take place over an extended period (*The Normans invaded England in 1066*) or at a point of time (*The plane left at 9 a.m.*).

(b) The HABITUAL PAST is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to past events that repeatedly occur: *We spent our holidays in Spain when we were children.*

(c) The STATE PAST is used with stative verb senses to refer to a single unbroken state of affairs in the past: *I once liked reading novels.*

NOTE [a] The habitual and state meanings of the past can be paraphrased by *used to*. [b] The definite time may be conveyed by a previous or subsequent time expression in the linguistic context, for example by a time adverbial such as *in 1066*. It may also be presupposed on the basis of knowledge shared by speaker and hearer. For example, *Your brother was at school with me* presupposes as common knowledge that a specific period of time is spent at school.

Special uses of the simple past tense

4.6 There are three special uses of the simple past (*cf* 4.9 Note):

(a) In INDIRECT SPEECH OR INDIRECT THOUGHT (*cf* 14.17*f*), the simple past in the reporting verb may cause the verb in the subordinate reported clause to be backshifted into the simple past: *She said that she knew you*; *I thought you were in Paris.*

(b) The ATTITUDINAL PAST is optionally used to refer more tentatively (and therefore more politely) to a present state of mind: *Did you want to see me now?*; *I wondered whether you are / were free tomorrow* (*cf* 14.18).

(c) The HYPOTHETICAL PAST is used in certain subordinate clauses, especially *if*-clauses, to convey what is contrary to the belief or expectation of the speaker (*cf* 14.12):

If you *knew* him, you wouldn't say that. [1]
If she *asked* me, I would help her. [2]
I wish I *had* a memory like yours. [3]

The implication of [1] is that you do not know him, of [2] that she will not ask me, and of [3] that I do not have such a memory.

Aspect

4.7 ASPECT is a grammatical category that reflects the way in which the action of a verb is viewed with respect to time. We recognize two aspects in English, the perfect and the progressive, which may combine in a complex verb phrase, and are marked for present or past tense:

present perfect	*has examined*
past perfect	*had examined*
present progressive	*is examining*
past progressive	*was examining*
present perfect progressive	*has been examining*
past perfect progressive	*had been examining*

The present perfect

4.8 The present perfect is used to refer to a situation set at some indefinite time within a period beginning in the past and leading up to the present.

(a) The STATE PRESENT PERFECT is used with stative verb senses to refer to a state that began in the past and extends to the present, and will perhaps continue in the future:

They *have been* unhappy for a long time.
We *have lived* in Amsterdam for five years.
She *has owned* the house since her father died.
I've always *liked* her.

(b) The EVENT PRESENT PERFECT is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to one or more events that have occurred at some time within a period leading up to the present. We distinguish two subtypes:

1 The event or events are reported as news; usually they have occurred shortly before the present time:

The Republicans *have won* the election.
I've just *got* a new job.
There's *been* a serious accident.

2 The event or events occurred at some more remote time in the past, but the implicit time period that frames the event or events leads up to the present:

She *has given* an interview only once in her life (but she may yet give another interview).
Have you *seen* the new production of *King Lear* at the National Theatre? (You still can do so.)
All our children *have had* measles (and they are not likely to have it again).

(c) The HABITUAL PRESENT PERFECT is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to past events that repeatedly occur up to and including the present.

The magazine *has been* published every month (since 1975).
I'*ve been* reading only science fiction (till now).
Socrates *has influenced* many philosophers (till now).

Unlike the simple past, the present perfect does not normally cooccur with adverbials that indicate a specific point or period of time in the past. Contrast:

I *saw* her a week ago. [simple past]
*I *have seen* her a week ago. [present perfect]

NOTE [a] The use of the present perfect for recent events may imply that the result of the event still applies: *He's broken his arm* ('His arm is broken'); *I've emptied the basket* ('The basket is empty'); *The train has arrived on Platform 4* ('The train is now on Platform 4').
[b] The simple past is often used in place of the present perfect for recent events, especially in AmE: *I just got a new job.*
[c] Some adverbials cooccur with the present perfect and not with the simple past. They include the adverb *since* (*I haven't seen him since*); prepositional phrases and clauses introduced by *since* (*since Monday*; *since I met you*); the phrases *till/up to now* and *so far*. *Cf* 8.22 Note [a].
[d] The simple past must be used if the implicit time period does not reach up to the present moment:

She *gave* an interview only once in her life. (She can give no more interviews, since she is dead.)
Did you *see* the new production of *King Lear* at the National Theatre? (You can no longer do so, because the production has closed.)

[e] If *will* (or *shall*) is combined with the perfect, the resulting future perfect conveys the meaning 'past in future':

By next week, they *will have completed* their contract.

A similar meaning may be conveyed with other modals:

By next week, they *may have completed* their contract. ['It is possible that they will have completed . . .']

But the combination with the modal may represent a simple past or a present perfect:

I *may have left* the keys at the office. ['It is possible that I left/have left . . .']

The past perfect

4.9 The past perfect (or 'pluperfect') refers to a time earlier than another past time. It may represent the past of the simple past, a time earlier than that indicated by the simple past:

They *had moved* into the house before the baby was born. [1]

The simple past can often replace the past perfect in such cases, if the time-relationship between the two situations is clear:

They *moved* into the house before the baby was born. [1a]

The past perfect may also represent the past of the present perfect:

She *had owned* the house since her parents died. [2]

Contrast:

She *has owned* the house since her parents died. [2a]

Whereas [2a] entails that she still owns the house, [2] implies that she does not own it now.

NOTE The past perfect has special uses analogous to those for the simple past (*cf* 4.6):
[a] In indirect speech constructions it indicates a backshift into the more remote past: *I told her the parcel had not arrived.*
[b] The ATTITUDINAL PAST PERFECT refers more politely than the simple past to a present state of mind: *I had wondered whether you are / were free now* (*cf.* 14.18).
[c] The HYPOTHETICAL PAST PERFECT is used in certain subordinate clauses, especially *if*-clauses, to imply that the situation did not occur (*cf* 14.12): *If I had been there, it would not have happened.*

Progressive aspect

4.10 The progressive (or 'continuous') focuses on the situation as being in progress at a particular time. In consequence, it may imply that the situation has limited duration, and that it is not necessarily complete.
(a) Generally, verbs with stative senses do not occur in the progressive, since there is no conception of progression in states of affairs:

*I *am liking* your sister.
*He *was knowing* English.

When verbs that are ordinarily stative occur in the progressive, they adopt dynamic meanings. They may indicate a type of behaviour with limited duration:

You *are being* obstinate.
He *was being* silly.

Verbs expressing emotion or attitude, which are ordinarily stative, indicate tentativeness when they occur in the progressive:

I'*m hoping* to take my exam soon.
I *was wondering* whether you could help me.

(b) The EVENT PROGRESSIVE is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to an event that has duration and is not completed:

I *was reading* an economics book last night. [1]
One of the boys *was drowning*, but I dived in and saved him. [2]

The past progressive in [1] suggests that the book was perhaps not finished. In contrast, the simple past in [1a] indicates that I had finished reading the book:

I *read* an economics book last night. [1a]

The simple past *drowned* could not replace the past progressive *was drowning* in [2], because it would not be compatible with the report that the boy was saved.

The present progressive is more commonly used than the simple present for events in present time, because present events are usually regarded as having some duration:

What *are* you *doing*? I'*m writing* a letter.

(c) The HABITUAL PROGRESSIVE is used with dynamic verb senses to refer to events that repeatedly occur, with the implication that they take place over a limited period of time:

She'*s writing* some short stories. [3]
He'*s teaching* in a comprehensive school. [4]

Contrast the nonprogressive in [3a] and [4a]:

She *writes* short stories. [3a]
He *teaches* in a comprehensive school. [3b]

The progressive implies temporariness, whereas the nonprogressive implies permanence ('She's a short-story writer'; 'He's a teacher in a comprehensive school'). The normally stative verb *have* in [5] carries the implication of temporariness, and the initial time adverbial reinforces that notion:

At the time she *was having* singing lessons. [5]

NOTE [a] The progressive also has some special uses:

1 To refer to events anticipated in the future, or to events anticipated in the past (future in the past): *The train is leaving at nine (tomorrow)*; *They were getting married the following spring.*
2 After *will* (or *shall*) to imply that the situation will take place 'as a matter of course' in the future: *I'll be seeing you next week.*

[b] Verbs denoting states of bodily sensation may be used more or less interchangeably in the progressive and the nonprogressive when referring to a temporary state: *My foot hurts/is hurting*, *My back aches/is aching*; *I feel/am feeling cold.*

[c] The habitual progressive is not used to refer to sporadic events (**She's sometimes walking to the office*); the nonprogressive is required for this purpose (*She sometimes walks to the office*). In combination with indefinite frequency adverbs such as *always* and *continually*, the habitual progressive loses its temporary meaning; it often conveys disapproval: *Bill is always working late at the office.* The pejorative sense may also be expressed with the simple present or past in combination with these adverbs.

[d] The relationship between two simple forms is normally one of TIME-SEQUENCE: *When we arrived, Jan made some fresh coffee* (The arrival came before the coffee-making). The relationship between progressive and a simple form is normally one of TIME-INCLUSION: *When we arrived, Jan was making some coffee* (The arrival took place during the coffee-making).

Verb senses and the progressive

4.11 We have pointed out that verbs with stative senses generally do not occur in the progressive (*cf* 4.10). Below we list classes of verbs that typically occur with stative and dynamic senses, and we give a few examples of each class. Stance verbs are intermediate between stative and dynamic verbs.

(a) STATIVE
1 States of 'being' and 'having': *be*, *contain*, *depend*, *have*, *resemble*.
2 Intellectual states: *believe*, *know*, *realize*, *think*, *understand*.
3 States of emotion or attitude: *disagree*, *dislike*, *like*, *want*, *wish*.
4 States of perception: *feel*, *hear*, *see*, *smell*, *taste*.
5 States of bodily sensation: *ache*, *feel sick*, *hurt*, *itch*, *tickle*.

(b) STANCE: *lie*, *live*, *sit*, *stand*.

(c) DYNAMIC DURATIVE (taking place over a period of time)
1 Activities performed by inanimate forces: (wind) *blow*, (engine) *run*, *rain*, (watch) *work*.
2 Activities performed by animate agents: *dance*, *eat*, *play*, *sing*, *work*.
3 Processes (denoting change of state taking place over a period): *change*, *deteriorate*, *grow*, *ripen*, *widen*.
4 Accomplishments (activities having a goal or endpoint): *finish* (the book), *knit* (a sweater), *read* (the paper), *write* (an essay).

(d) DYNAMIC PUNCTUAL (with little or no duration)
1 Momentary events and acts: *bang*, *jump*, *knock*, *nod*, *tap*. In the progressive, they indicate the repetition of the event, *eg*: *He was knocking on the door.*

2 Transitional events and acts: *arrive*, *die*, *drown*, *land*, *leave*, *stop*. In the progressive, they refer to a period leading up to the change of state, *eg*: *the train is (now) arriving at Platform 4.*

NOTE Stance verbs may be used with either the progressive or the nonprogressive, often with little to choose between the variants. But sometimes they seem to be used with the nonprogressive to express a permanent state and with the progressive to express a temporary state:

James *lives* in Copenhagen. [permanent residence]
James *is living* in Copenhagen. [temporary residence]

The perfect progressive

4.12 When the perfect and progressive aspects are combined in the same verb phrase (*eg*: *has been working*), the features of meaning associated with each aspect are also combined to refer to a TEMPORARY SITUATION LEADING UP TO THE PRESENT when the perfect auxiliary is present tense *has* or *have*.

The combination conveys the sense of a situation in progress with limited duration: *I've been writing a letter to my nephew*; *It's been snowing again*. We may contrast these with the nonprogressive sense in *I've written a letter to my nephew*; *It's snowed again*.

If the perfect progressive sense is combined with accomplishment predications or process predications (*cf* 4.11), then the verb phrase conveys the possibility of incompleteness:

I've been cleaning the windows. [The job may not be finished; contrast: *I've cleaned the windows.*]
The weather *has been getting* warmer. [It may get warmer still.]

The present perfect progressive may be used with dynamic verb senses to refer to a TEMPORARY HABIT UP TO THE PRESENT. The events occur repeatedly up to the present and possibly into the future:

Martin *has been scoring* plenty of goals (this season).
I've been working on the night shift for several weeks.

The perfect progressive may combine with the past tense and with modals:

The fire *had been raging* for over a week. [1]
By Friday, we *will have been living* here for ten years. [2]

In [1] the temporary event leads up to some point in the past. In [2] the temporary state is earlier than the time in the future indicated by *Friday*. The combination with the past tense or a modal need not presuppose an earlier time, and it can therefore be accompanied by an adverbial of time position (*cf* 4.8 Note [e]):

I *had been talking* with him only last Monday.
I *must have been talking* with him last Monday.

Some means of expressing future time

4.13 In the absence of an inflectional tense, there are several possibilities for expressing future time in English. Future time is expressed by means of modal auxiliaries, modal idioms, and semi-auxiliaries (*cf* 3.18), or by the simple present and progressive forms.

Will/shall + infinitive

4.14 The most common way of expressing futurity is the construction of *will* or *'ll* with the infinitive:

He *will be* here in half an hour.
Will you *need* any help?
No doubt I'*ll see* you next week.

Shall is also sometimes used with the infinitive (especially in Southern BrE) to indicate futurity with a 1st person subject:

No doubt *I shall see* you next week.

Although these constructions are the closest approximations to a colourless, neutral future, they also cover a range of modal meanings (*cf* 4.27*f*).

Be going to + infinitive

4.15 The general meaning of the construction of *be going to* with the infinitive is 'future fulfilment of the present'. We can further distinguish two specific meanings. The first, 'future fulfilment of a present intention', is chiefly associated with personal subjects and agentive verbs:

When *are* you *going to* get married?
Martha *is going to lend* us her camera.
I'*m going to complain* if things don't improve.

The other meaning, 'future result of a present cause', is found with both personal and nonpersonal subjects:

It'*s going to rain*.
There'*s going to be* trouble.
She'*s going to have* a baby.
You'*re going to get* soaked.

Present progressive

4.16 The general meaning of the present progressive is 'future arising from present arrangement, plan, or programme':

The orchestra *is playing* a Mozart symphony after this.
The match *is starting* at 2.30 (tomorrow).
I'*m taking* the children to the zoo (next week).

Simple present

4.17 The future use of the simple present is frequent only in subordinate clauses:

What will you say if I *marry* the boss?
At this rate, the guests will be drunk before they *leave*.

In main clauses, the future use represents a marked future of unusual certainty, attributing to the future the degree of certainty one normally associates with the present and the past. For example, it is used for statements about the calendar:

Tomorrow *is* Thursday. School *finishes* on 21st March.

Also to describe immutable events:

When *is* high tide? What time *does* the match begin?

Like the present progressive, it is used with certain dynamic, transitional verbs (*eg*: *arrive*, *come*, *leave*; *cf* 4.11) to convey the meaning of plan or programme:

I *go*/*am going* on vacation next week.
The plane *takes* off/*is taking* off at 20:30 tonight.

It is also used with stative verbs to convey the same meaning, but the progressive is then not possible:

I'*m* on vacation next week.

Will/*shall*+progressive

4.18 The construction of *will*/*shall* with the progressive may indicate a future period of time within which another situation occurs:

When you reach the end of the bridge, I'*ll be waiting* there to show you the way.

Another use denotes 'future as a matter of course'. (It avoids the interpretation of volition, intention, promise, etc, to which *will*, *shall*, and *be going to* are liable.)

We'*ll be flying* at 30,000 feet.

Spoken by the pilot of an aircraft to the passengers, the statement implies that 30,000 feet is the normal and expected altitude for the flight. This implication accounts for the use of the construction to convey greater tact than the nonprogressive with *will*/*shall*:

When *will* you *be paying* back the money?

Be (about) to

4.19 *Be to*+infinitive is used to refer to a future arrangement or plan, a future requirement, and intention:

Their daughter *is to be* married soon.
There'*s to be* an official enquiry
You *are to be* back by 10 o'clock. ['You are required to be . . .']
If he'*s to succeed* in his new profession, he must try harder. ['If he intends to succeed . . .']

Be about to+infinitive simply expresses near future:

The train *is about to leave*.
I'*m about to read* your essay.

The negative *be not about to* ⟨esp informal⟩ may be paraphrased 'have no intention of' (*She's not about to complain*).

NOTE Futurity is often indicated by modals other than *will*/*shall*: *The weather may improve (tomorrow)*; *You must have dinner with us (soon)*. It is also indicated by semi-auxiliaries such as *be sure to*, *be bound to*, *be likely to*, and by full verbs such as *hope*, *intend*, *plan*.

Future time in the past

4.20 Most of the future constructions just discussed can be used in the past tense to describe something which is in the future when seen from a viewpoint in the past.

(a) MODAL VERB CONSTRUCTION with *would* ⟨rare; literary narrative style⟩

The time was not far off when he *would* regret this decision.

(b) *BE GOING TO*+INFINITIVE (often with the sense of 'unfulfilled intention')

You *were going to* give me your address. ['. . . but you didn't . . .']
The police *were going to* charge her, but at last she persuaded them she was innocent.

(c) PAST PROGRESSIVE (arrangement predetermined in the past)

I *was meeting* him in Bordeaux the next day.

(d) *BE TO*+INFINITIVE ⟨formal⟩; (i)='was destined to'; (ii)='arrangement'

(i) He *was* eventually *to* end up in the bankruptcy court.
(ii) The meeting *was to* be held the following week.

(c) *BE ABOUT TO* + INFINITIVE ('on the point of'; often with the sense of 'unfulfilled intention')

He *was about to* hit me.

Meanings of the modals

4.21 We distinguish two main kinds of meanings for modal auxiliaries:
(a) INTRINSIC modality (which includes 'permission', 'obligation', and 'volition') involves some intrinsic human control over events;
(b) EXTRINSIC modality (which includes 'possibility', 'necessity', and 'prediction') involves human judgment of what is or is not likely to happen.

Each of the modals has both intrinsic and extrinsic uses. In some instances there is an overlap of the two uses; for example, the *will* in sentences such as *I'll see you tomorrow then* can be said to combine the meanings of volition and prediction.

Most of the modals can be paired into present and past forms (*can/could*, *may/might*, *shall/should*, *will/would*). From the point of view of meaning, the past forms are often merely more tentative or more polite variants of the present forms (*cf* 4.32).

NOTE Various terms are used for these contrasts in modal meanings. Approximate synonyms for *intrinsic* are *deontic* and *root*; for *extrinsic* the common variant is *epistemic*.

Can/could

4.22 (a) POSSIBILITY

Even expert drivers *can* make mistakes. ['It is possible for even . . .']
Her performance was the best that *could* be hoped for.
If it's raining tomorrow, the sports *can* take place indoors. ['It will be possible for the sports to . . .']

(b) ABILITY

Can you remember where they live? ['Are you able to remember . . .']
Magda *could* speak three languages by the age of six.
They say Bill *can* cook better than his wife.

(c) PERMISSION

Can we borrow these books from the library? ['Are we allowed to . . .']

In those days only men *could* vote in elections.

In this sense, *can/could* is less formal than *may*, which has been favoured by prescriptive tradition.

May/might

4.23 (a) POSSIBILITY

We *may* never succeed. ['It is possible that we'll never succeed.']
You *may* be right. ['It is possible that you are right.']
There *might* be some complaints.

Here *may* denotes the possibility of a given proposition's being or becoming true.

(b) PERMISSION

You *may* borrow my bicycle if you wish. ['I permit you to borrow . . .']
Visitors *may* reclaim necessary travel expenses up to a limit of £50.
Might I ask whether you are using the typewriter?

As a permission auxiliary, *may* is more formal and less common than *can*, which (except in fixed phrases such as *if I may*) can be substituted for it.

NOTE In formal English, *may/might* is sometimes used in the same possibility sense as *can/could*:

During the autumn, many rare birds *may* be observed on the rocky northern coasts of the island.

May here is a more formal substitute for *can*, and the whole sentence could be paraphrased *It is possible to observe . . .*

Must

4.24 (a) (LOGICAL) NECESSITY

There *must* be some mistake.
You *must* be feeling tired.
The Smiths *must* have a lot of money.

The 'logical necessity' meaning of *must* is parallel to the possibility meaning of *may* since it implies that the speaker judges the proposition expressed by the clause to be necessarily true, or at least to have a high likelihood of being true. *Must* in this sense means that the speaker has drawn a conclusion from things already known or observed. *Must* [= logical necessity] cannot normally be used in interrogative or negative clauses. *Can* is generally used in place of *must* in questions, so that corresponding to *She must be the one you mean* is the question *Can she be the one you mean?* The negative of *can* [= possibility] fills the negative gap, so that *You must be joking* ['It is necessarily the case that you are joking'] is

synonymous with *You can't be serious* ['It is impossible that you are serious']. Similarly:

She *must* be asleep = She *can't* be awake.

There is another necessity meaning of *must* in examples like:

To be healthy, a plant *must* receive a good supply of both sunshine and moisture. ['It is necessary for a plant to . . .']

(b) OBLIGATION *or* COMPULSION

You *must* be back by ten o'clock. ['You are obliged to be back . . .'; 'I require you to be back . . .']
We *must* all share our skills and knowledge.
Productivity *must* be improved, if the nation is to be prosperous.

In these examples, there is the implication, to a greater or lesser extent, that the speaker is advocating a certain form of behaviour. Thus *must*, unlike *have (got) to*, typically suggests that the speaker is exercising his authority.

Need, have (got) to

4.25 *Need* (constructed as an auxiliary *cf* 3.17) is used (esp in BrE) as the negative and question form of *must* in the sense 'necessary for':

Need they make all that noise? [= '*Do* they *need/have to* make all that noise?'] ⟨esp BrE⟩
You *needn't* worry about the test. [= 'You *don't need/have to* worry about that test'.] ⟨esp BrE⟩

As the above glosses show, however, it is possible, and indeed, more common even in BrE, to replace auxiliary *need* by *need to* or *have to* accompanied by *do*-support.

Have (got) to can also be substituted for *must* with little or no difference of meaning. Compare the following with the parallel sentences in 4.24:

(a) (LOGICAL) NECESSITY

There *has (got) to* be some mistake. ⟨esp AmE⟩
To be healthy, a plant *has (got) to* receive a good supply of both sunshine and moisture.

(b) OBLIGATION *or* COMPULSION

You *have (got) to* be back by ten o'clock.
We *have* all *got to* share our skills and knowledge.
Productivity will *have to* be improved, if the nation is to be prosperous.

Since *must* has no past tense form and no nonfinite forms, *have to* is used in many contexts where *must* is impossible, *eg* following a modal verb: *We'll have to be patient.*

Ought to, should

4.26 (a) TENTATIVE INFERENCE

The mountains { *should* / *ought to* } be visible from here.

These plants { *should* / *ought to* } reach maturity after five years.

The speaker does not know if his statement is true, but tentatively concludes that it is true, on the basis of whatever he knows.

(b) OBLIGATION

You { *should* / *ought to* } do as he says.

The floor { *should* / *ought to* } be washed at least once a week.

With the perfect aspect, *should* and *ought to* typically have the implication that the recommendation has *not* been carried out:

They { *should* / *ought to* } have met her at the station.

The likely implication is '. . . but they didn't'. In both senses (a) and (b), *should* is more frequent than *ought to*.

NOTE *Ought to* and synonymous uses of *should* express the same basic modalities of 'necessity' and 'obligation' as do *must* and *have (got) to*. They contrast with *must* and *have (got) to* in not expressing the speaker's confidence in the occurrence of the event or state described. Hence [1] is nonsensical, but [2] is not:

*Sarah { *must* / *has to* } be home by now, but she isn't. [1]

Sarah { *should* / *ought to* } be home by now, but she isn't. [2]

Will / would ('ll / 'd)

4.27 (a) PREDICTION

1 The common FUTURE predictive sense of *will* in *You will* (or *You'll*) *feel better after this medicine* has been discussed in 4.14 and 4.18. The corresponding 'prediction in the past' sense of *would* is illustrated by:

I was told I *would* feel better after this medicine.

2 The PRESENT predictive sense of *will*, which is comparatively rare, is similar in meaning to *must* in the 'logical necessity' sense:

She *will* have had her dinner by now.
That'*ll* be the postman. [on hearing the doorbell ring]

3 The HABITUAL predictive meaning often occurs in conditional sentences:

If litmus paper is dipped in acid, it *will* turn red.

or in timeless statements of 'predictability':

Oil *will* float on water.

In addition, it occurs in descriptions of personal habits or characteristic behaviour:

He'*ll* talk for hours, if you let him. [said of a chatterbox]
She'*ll* sit on the floor quietly all day. She'*ll* just play with her toys, and you *won't* hear a murmur from her. [of a good baby]
Every morning he *would* go for a long walk. [*ie* 'it was his custom to go . . .']

(b) VOLITION
1 INTENTION (often in combination with a sense of prediction)

I'*ll* write as soon as I can.
We *won't* stay longer than two hours.
The manager said he *would* phone me after lunch.

2 WILLINGNESS

Will/Would you help me to address these letters?
I'*ll* do it, if you like.

This meaning is common in requests and offers. On the greater politeness of *would*, *cf* 4.32.
3 INSISTENCE

If you '*will* go out without your overcoat, what can you expect?
She '*would* keep interrupting me.

This somewhat rare use implies wilfulness on the part of the subject referent. The auxiliary is always stressed, and cannot be contracted to '*ll* or '*d*. In this case, the past form *would* expresses past time, rather than tentativeness or politeness.

Shall

4.28 *Shall* is in present-day English (especially in AmE) a rather rare auxiliary and only two uses, both with a 1st person subject, are generally current:
(a) PREDICTION (with 1st person subjects)
Shall is a substitute for the future use of *will* in formal style:

According to the opinion polls, I { *will* / *shall* } win quite easily.

When { *will* / *shall* } we know the results of the election?

Especially in BrE, prescriptive tradition forbids *will* as a future auxiliary with *I* or *we*, but this prescription is old-fashioned and is nowadays widely ignored.

(b) VOLITION (with 1st person subjects)
In the intentional sense, *shall* is again a formal (and traditionally prescribed) alternative to *will* after *I* or *we*:

We { *will* / *shall* } uphold the wishes of the people.

In questions containing *Shall I/we*, *shall* consults the wishes of the addressee, and thus moves from a volitional towards an obligational meaning. It is suitable for making offers:

Shall I/we deliver the goods to your home address? [= Do you want me/us to . . .?] [1]

and for making suggestions about shared activities:

What *shall* we do this evening? *Shall* we go to the theatre? [2]

It is only in such questions that *shall* cannot regularly be replaced by *will*.

The past tense forms of the modals

'Past time' in indirect speech

4.29 The past tense modals *could*, *might*, *would*, and *should* are used quite regularly as past tense equivalents of *can*, *may*, *will*, and *shall* in indirect speech constructions (*cf* 14.21):

You *can/may* do as you wish. [= permission]
~ She said we *could/might* do as we wished.
It *may* rain later. [= possibility]
~ We were afraid that it *might* rain later.
The plan *will* succeed. [= prediction]
~ I felt sure that the plan *would* succeed.

Must, together with *need* (as auxiliary), *ought to*, and *had better*, has no present/past distinction. These verbs are therefore unchanged in indirect speech constructions, even where they refer to past time.

'Past time' in other constructions

4.30 Outside indirect speech contexts, the behaviour of the past tense modal forms is less predictable. *Could* and *would* act as the 'past time' equivalents of *can* and *will*; but on the whole, *might* and *should* do not act as the 'past time' equivalents of *may* and *shall*.
(a) *CAN~COULD*

There were no rules: we *could* do just what we wanted. [= permission]
In those days, a transatlantic voyage *could* be dangerous. [= possibility]
Few of the tourists *could* speak English. [= ability]

(b) *WILL* ~ *WOULD*

Later, he *would* learn his error. [= prediction]
The old lady *would* sit in front of the television continuously. [= habitual prediction]
We tried to borrow a boat, but no one *would* lend us one. [= willingness]
He *would* leave the house in a muddle. [= insistence]

NOTE Outside indirect speech *would* is not used in the sense of intention; hence a sentence such as *He would meet me the next day* is almost inevitably interpreted as free indirect speech (*cf* 14.22).

Hypothetical meaning

4.31 The past tense modals can be used in the hypothetical sense of the past tense (*cf* 4.6) in both main and subordinate clauses. Compare:

If United *can* win this game, they *may* become league champions. [1]
If United *could* win this game, they *might* become league champions. [2]

Sentence [2], unlike [1], expresses a hypothetical condition; *ie* it conveys the speaker's expectation that United *will not* win the game, and therefore will *not* become league champions. For past hypothetical meaning (which normally has a contrary-to-fact interpretation), we have to add the perfect aspect:

If United *could have won* that game, they *might have become* league champions. [3]

The usual implication of this is that United did *not* win the game.

Tentativeness or politeness: *could, might, would*

4.32 (a) TENTATIVE PERMISSION (in polite requests):

Could I see your driving licence?
I wonder if I *might* borrow some coffee?

(b) TENTATIVE VOLITION (in polite requests):

Would you lend me a dollar? [more polite than *will*]
I'd be grateful if someone *would* hold the door open.

(c) TENTATIVE POSSIBILITY

1 in expressing a tentative opinion:

There *could* be something wrong with the light switch.
Of course, I *might* be wrong.

2 in polite directives and requests:

Could you (please) open the door?
You *could* answer these letters for me.

'Mood markers': *would* and *should*

4.33 (a) *WOULD/SHOULD* AS A MARKER OF HYPOTHETICAL MEANING

Would (and sometimes, with a 1st person subject, *should*) may express hypothetical meaning in main clauses (*cf* 14.12):

If you pressed that button, the engine *would* stop. [1]
If there were an accident, we *would/should* have to report it. [2]

Although the conditional sentence, as in [1] and [2], is the most typical context in which hypothetical *would/should* occurs, there are many other contexts in which hypothetical *would/should* is appropriately used:

I'*d* hate to lose this pen. [3]
It *would* be impossible to estimate how many crimes went undetected last year. [4]
Don't bother to read all these papers. It *would* take too long. [5]

In such sentences, there is often an implicit *if* . . .; for example, [5] could be expanded: *It would take too long if you did (try to read them all)*.

(b) *SHOULD* AS A MARKER OF 'PUTATIVE' MEANING

In this use *should* + infinitive is often equivalent to the mandative subjunctive (*cf* 3.24). In using *should*, the speaker entertains, as it were, some 'putative' world, recognizing that it may well exist or come into existence (*cf* 4.14):

She insisted that we *should* stay.
It's unfair that so many people *should* lose their jobs.
Let me know if you *should* hear some more news.
Why *should* anyone object to her enjoying herself?
I can't think why he *should* have been so angry.

Putative *should* is more common in BrE than in AmE.

The modals with the perfect and progressive aspects

4.34 The perfect and progressive aspects are normally excluded when the modals express 'ability' or 'permission', and also when *shall* or *will* expresses 'volition'. These aspects are freely used, however, with extrinsic modal meanings other than ability; *eg*:

'possibility'	He *may/might have* missed the train.
	She *can't/couldn't be* swimming all day.
'necessity'	He *must have* left his umbrella on the bus.
	You *must be* dreaming.
'prediction' etc	The guests *will/would have* arrived by that time.
	Hussein *will/would* still *be* reading his paper.

(On the meaning of the perfect aspect after a modal, and in particular the possibility of paraphrasing it by means of the simple past tense, *cf* 14.8 Note [e]).

'Obligation' can only be expressed with the perfect or progressive when combined with *should* or *ought to*:

'obligation' I *ought to be* work*ing* now. ['. . . but I'm not']
You *should have* finish*ed* it. ['. . . but you haven't']
She *shouldn't have* left him. ['. . . but she did']

The combination of both perfect and progressive constructions with the modals is also possible, subject to the conditions already mentioned:

You *must have been* dream*ing*.
She *could*n't *have been* swimm*ing* all day.
The guests *would have been* arriv*ing* by now.

Meaning in the nonfinite verb phrase

4.35 Nonfinite verb phrases do not accept modal auxiliaries, but the meanings of the modals can be expressed through the use of semi-auxiliaries, such as *have to*, *be (un)able to*, *be allowed to*, *be about to*:

I am sorry to *have to* repeat this warning.
Being unable to free himself, he lay beneath the debris until rescued.
The suspects admitted *being about to* commit a crime.
Many inmates hate not *being allowed to* leave the premises.

We have seen that the distinction between present and past tense does not apply to nonfinite verb phrases (*cf* 3.19). Although there are nonfinite perfect constructions, the meaning conveyed by the perfect in such constructions is simply time preceding some other time.

The full range of perfect and progressive aspect forms is only possible within an infinitive phrase:

Sir Topaz appears { to be winning his race. [simple progressive] / to have won his race. [simple perfect] / to have been winning his race. [perfect progressive] }

In an *-ing* participle phrase in adverbial clauses, the perfect/nonperfect contrast is sometimes available:

Eating a hearty breakfast, } we prepared for our long journey. [1]
Having eaten a hearty breakfast, } [2]

From [1], we understand that the eating and the preparation took place together, while from [2], we understand that the breakfast preceded the preparation.

But the progressive/nonprogressive contrast is not normally applicable here, since *-ing* participle phrases are incapable of expressing this distinction formally. Moreover, the *-ing* participle itself is not, in spite of its appearance, necessarily associated with the progressive:

Being an enemy of the Duke's, } he left the court immediately. [3]
Realizing he was in danger, }
Having no news of his wife, }

The participles in [3] are stative verbs, normally incompatible with the progressive.

Nevertheless, there are constructions in which the *-ing* participle construction has aspect contrast with the infinitive, and is progressive in meaning (*cf* 16.28*f*):

I { saw / heard } them { *shoot* at him. / *shooting* at him.

Whereas the infinitive *shoot* suggests a single shot, the *-ing* participle suggests a repetitive action lasting over a period of time, in accordance with the interpretation of the progressive aspect in finite verb phrases referring to momentary events. In:

I watched them { *climb* the tower. [4] / *climbing* the tower. [5] }

the infinitive *climb* suggests that they reached the top of the tower, whereas the participle *climbing* leaves open the possibility that the action was not completed.

The *-ed* participle phrase has no formal contrasts of aspect, and is therefore the most restricted type of phrase in terms of semantic contrasts. Here again, however, there is a potential contrast with the passive *-ing* participle phrase:

I saw the tower { *climbed* by a student. [6] / *being climbed* by a student. [7] }

The participle *climbed* in [6] is the passive counterpart of the infinitive *climb* in [4]; it describes the climb as a completed event, whereas *being climbed* in [7] describes it as in progress, and as possibly incomplete. Compare also the perfect passive *-ing* participle phrase in *Having been reprimanded, I . . .*

Bibliographical note

General treatments of the meaning and use of verb constructions: Leech (1987); Palmer (1988).

On tense and aspect in general, see Lyons (1977, vol. 2); Schopf (1987, 1989).

On the perfective aspect, see McCoard (1978).

On stative, agentive, and other classes of verb meaning, see Bache (1982); Cruse (1973); Jacobson (1980); Vendler (1957).

On expression of future time, see Wekker (1976).

On modal meanings in general, see Coates (1983); Hermerén (1978); Johannesson (1976); Leech and Coates (1980); Lyons (1977, vol. 2); Palmer (1979).

5 Nouns and determiners

5.1 Nouns fall into different classes as shown in Fig 5.1.

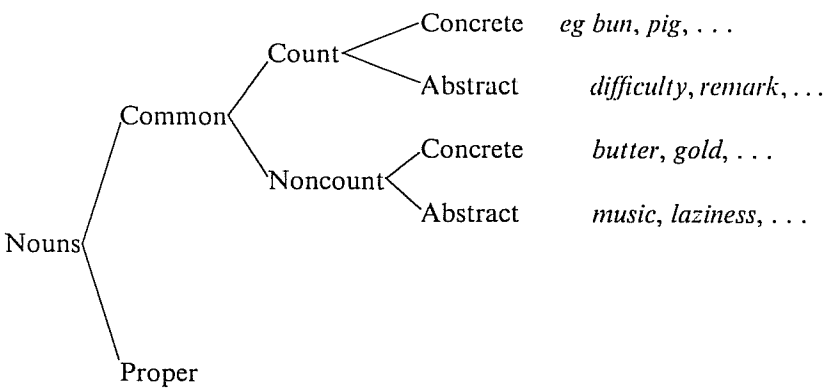


Fig 5.1

The distinction between *concrete* (accessible to the senses, observable, measurable, etc) and *abstract* (typically nonobservable and nonmeasurable) is important semantically. Of more relevance to *grammar*, however, is the distinction between *proper* and *common* nouns. Since the former have unique reference (*cf* 5.25*ff*), determiner and number contrast cannot occur: **the Indonesia*, **some Chicagos*. Contrast with common nouns *the butter*, *some difficulties*. But among nouns, we have the further distinction between *count* (also called 'countable') and *noncount* (also called 'mass') nouns. Like the distinction between proper and common, we have here a difference that has both semantic and grammatical significance, since count and noncount nouns permit a different range of determiners. In Table 5.1, we display the various determiner constraints as they affect the classes of nouns, the fourth column showing that some common nouns can be used as both count and noncount. Thus nouns like *cake* or *brick* can refer either to the substance (noncount) or to units made of the substance (count). The lines (a)–(e) represent different determiner constraints: Can the singular noun occur (a) without a determiner? (b) with the definite article? (c) with the indefinite article? (d) with the partitive *some*, /səm/? Can the plural noun occur (e) without a determiner?

Table **5.1**

	PROPER	COMMON		
		COUNT	NONCOUNT	COUNT or NONCOUNT
(a)	Freda	*book	music	brick
(b)	*the Freda	the book	the music	the brick
(c)	*a Freda	a book	*a music	a brick
(d)	*some Freda	*some book	some music	some brick

NOTE **[a]** On apparent exceptions like '*The Chicago* of my youth', see 5.26*f*.
[b] The absence of article in *I like Freda* and *I like music* makes the two nouns only superficially similar; in the former there is *no article* where in the latter there is *zero article* which can contrast with *the*. Compare

*I like *Freda*, but *the Freda* this evening is boring.
I like *music*, but *the music* this evening is boring.

But *cf* 5.22*f*.

Partitive constructions

5.2 Both count and noncount nouns can enter constructions denoting part of a whole. Such partitive expressions may relate to (a) quantity or (b) quality, and in either case the partition may be singular or plural. It thus affords a means of imposing number on noncount nouns, since the partition is generally expressed by a count noun of partitive meaning (such as *piece* or *sort*, which can be singular or plural), followed by an *of*-phrase.

(a) QUANTITY PARTITION

(i) Of noncount nouns; *eg*:

a *piece of* cake — two *pieces of* cake
an *item of* clothing — several *items of* clothing

These partitives (as also the informal *bit*) can be used very generally, but with some nouns specific partitives occur; *eg*:

a *blade of* grass
some *specks of* dust
two *slices of* meat/bread/cake

(ii) Of plural count nouns; here we tend to have partitives relating to specific sets of nouns; *eg*:

Please come at noon, by *which* time I shall be back in my office.
The woman *whose* book you reviewed is on TV tonight.
They will disapprove of *whatever* music is played.
Which house do you prefer?
What time is it?

(d) The NEGATIVE DETERMINER *no*:

He has *no* car/*no* children/*no* concentration.

All these determiners (sometimes with a modification of form as in *theirs*, *none*) have a pronominal role as well, and they will be treated in more detail below (6.16*ff*).

Like the indefinite article, there are determiners that cooccur only with singular count nouns.

(a) The UNIVERSAL DETERMINERS *every* and *each*.

We need to interview *every/each* student separately.

(b) The NONASSERTIVE DUAL DETERMINER *either*:

There is no parking permitted on *either* side of the street.

(c) The NEGATIVE DUAL DETERMINER *neither*:

Parking is permitted on *neither* side of the street.

5.6 Like the zero article, there are determiners that cooccur only with noncount nouns and plural count nouns:

(a) The GENERAL ASSERTIVE DETERMINER *some* [səm]:

I would like *some* bread/*some* rolls, please.

(b) The GENERAL NONASSERTIVE DETERMINER *any*:

We haven't *any* bread/*any* rolls left.

(c) The QUANTITATIVE DETERMINER *enough*:

We have *enough* equipment/*enough* tools for the job.

These determiners will be discussed in more detail when we come to their pronominal functions (6.25*f*).

NOTE [a] When stressed in some circumstances, *any* can occur with singular count nouns, as in 'She will consider "*any* offer – however small'.
[b] A stressed form of *some* [sʌm] is used with the meaning of strong indefiniteness ('one unidentified, a certain') and this has the same distribution potential as items in 5.4:

You will win *some* day; *some* days she feels better; I found *some* stranger waiting for me; they are playing *some* peculiar music that no one has heard before.

Predeterminers

5.7 Predeterminers form a class in generally being mutually exclusive, preceding those central determiners with which they can cooccur, and in having to do with quantification. It is useful to distinguish two subsets:
(a) *all*, *both*, *half*
(b) the multipliers

NOTE The items *such* and *what* are exceptional in referring to quality rather than quantity ('*what* a day we had; I can't remember *such* a time') and this accounts for combinations like *all such*.

All, both, half

5.8 These have in common the positive characteristic of being able to occur before the articles, the demonstratives, and the possessives:

$$\left.\begin{matrix}all\\both\\half\end{matrix}\right\}\left\{\begin{matrix}the\\these\\our\end{matrix}\right\}\ students$$

They also have the negative characteristic of not occurring before determiners that themselves entail quantification: *every*, *each*, *(n)either*, *some*, *any*, *no*, *enough*. Beyond these generalizations, their occurrence needs to be described on an individual basis:

ALL occurs with plural count nouns and with noncount nouns, as in

all the books	all the music
all books	all music

BOTH occurs with plural count nouns, as in

both the books	both books

HALF occurs with singular and plural count nouns and with noncount nouns, as in

half the book(s)	half the music
half a book	(*but* *half music)

NOTE [a] As well as being predeterminers, *all*, *both* and *half* can, like demonstratives, be used pronominally:

$$\left.\begin{matrix}All\\Both\\Half\end{matrix}\right\}\text{ the students sat for their exam}\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{and}\left\{\begin{matrix}all\\both\end{matrix}\right\}\text{ passed.}\\\text{but }\ half\ \text{ failed.}\end{matrix}\right.$$

They can also be followed by an *of*-phrase:

All/Both/Half of the students . . .

Moreover, *all* and *both* may appear at the adverbial *M* position (after the operator: 8.11), as in:

Do you see *the* bird sitting on *the* lower branch?
Oh dear! *The* stain hasn't come out of *the* carpet.

In such cases, the identity of the particular bird, branch, stain, and carpet is obvious because they are physically present and visible. But the reference might be obvious because the situational reference was in the minds of speaker and listener:

When *the* policeman had gone, I remembered that I hadn't told him about *the* damaged window-pane.

Secondly, we have the LARGER situation, where identification of the reference depends on assumptions about general knowledge more than on the specific experience of the particular speaker and listener:

I do most of my travelling by overnight train, and of course in *the* dark one has no idea of what *the* countryside looks like.

So also with reference to *the Pope*, *the President*, *the government*, *the Equator*, *the stars*; and as we see in these examples, the shared assumption of *uniqueness* in reference is often matched by use of an initial capital in writing. *Cf* 5.25*ff*.

NOTE The same phrase may involve *the* with immediate or larger situational reference:

Would *the* children like to go out and play?
When we design schools, do we ask ourselves what *the* children would like?

As with the latter example, larger situational reference often overlaps with generic use: *cf* 5.22*ff*.

5.13 Special cases of the larger situation occur with the use of *the* for SPORADIC reference and for reference to the BODY. In *sporadic* reference, we promote to institutional status a phenomenon of common experience. Thus in contrast to the particular newspaper that a particular individual buys, or the particular theatre that stands in a particular street, we may use *the paper* or *the theatre* more broadly:

You'll probably see it in *the paper* tomorrow.
I like to go to *the theatre* about once a month.

Cf also:

She's not on *the* telephone yet, though she may have one installed soon.
I won't come by car; I'll take *the* train.
Everyone would sleep better with *the* windows open.

With reference to parts of the body, *the* is often used in prepositional phrases instead of a possessive such as *my* or *her*:

I grabbed him by *the* arm.
She banged herself on *the* forehead.

He has a fracture of *the* collarbone.
The child has a pain in *the* chest.

In medical usage, *the* can replace a possessive without the body part or function being in a prepositional phrase; thus (doctor to patient):

How is the chest now? Has the breathing been affected?

5.14 The use of *the* may be determined by *logical* and *grammatical* factors. The uniqueness of a referent may be recognized not by general knowledge of the world but be logically imposed by meaning. Nouns premodified by superlatives, ordinals and similar restrictive items such as *sole* will thus be made logically unique:

When is *the* next flight?
She was *the* sole survivor.
They judged him to be *the* most original painter.

Grammatical determination is of two kinds:

(a) *Anaphoric* reference, where *the* indicates identity of reference with that established earlier in the discourse:

Fred bought a radio and a video-recorder, but he returned *the* radio.

Here the anaphora is 'direct'; but anaphoric reference may be 'indirect', requiring some support from general knowledge:

When she tried to open her front door, she couldn't get *the* key into *the* lock.

Here the two definite articles are correctly interpreted as grammatically anaphoric only because we know that a front door has a lock, and opening one involves using a key.

(b) *Cataphoric* reference, where *the* indicates that the identity of the reference will be established by what follows:

I am trying to find *the* book that I wanted to show you.

Here, *the* is only justified by the addressee knowing that the speaker had planned to show him or her a book. Similarly, in

How did you get *the* (='that') mud on your coat?

there is the presumption that the addressee knows there is mud on the coat. Contrast:

Do you know that you have { **the* mud / mud } on your coat?

The indefinite article

5.15 In contrast to *the*, an indefinite article is used when a reference cannot be regarded as uniquely identifiable from the shared knowledge of speaker and addressee

NOTE [a] We should note also the contrast between restrictive and nonrestrictive apposition (17.27):

Prime Minister Gandhi ~ *the* Prime Minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi

[b] In institutional usage, zero replaces *the* in a way that implies proper-name status for an item:

Council will consider this in due course ~ *The* Council will . . .

[c] Articles are usually omitted in headlines ('Crew deserts ship in harbour') and on official forms ('Please state reason for application and give names of two supporters').

5.19 Analogous to the use of *the* with sporadic reference (5.13), we have zero with implication of definite rather than indefinite meaning. This is especially so with idiomatically institutionalized expressions relating to common experience.

(a) *Quasi-locatives* (where a particular activity or role in connection with the location is implied):

be in / go to	town	beside	*The* town is very old.
	bed		It's on *the* bed.
	church		How far is *the* church?
	prison		Don't stop near *the* prison.
be at, go	home		This was *the* home of a financier.
go to	sea		*The* sea looks calm.
	college		She drove to *the* college.

Frequently there is a distinction in meaning between zero and *the*; thus *on stage* will usually refer to a play or participant in current theatrical production, while *on the stage* refers to literal physical location or is an idiom denoting the acting profession: 'She was a teacher but now she's on the stage.' Again, there are distinctions in meaning between AmE and BrE; thus *in school* would be used in AmE for the state of being a school pupil (BrE *at school*) but in BrE it would refer merely to being inside the building; *in the hospital* in AmE is used of a patient (BrE *in hospital*) but in BrE denotes physical location.

(b) *Transport and communication*: when *by* precedes the mode in question, zero occurs:

travel / come / go by	bicycle	beside	*The* bicycle was damaged.
	bus		She was on *the* bus.
	train		Should we take *the* train?
	car		etc
	plane		
send it by	telex		
	post ⟨esp BrE⟩		*The* post/mail is late today.
	mail ⟨esp AmE⟩		*The* satellite is a new one.

Cf also: 'The message came *by hand/by special delivery*'.

(c) *Time expressions*: zero is common, especially after the prepositions *at*, *by*, *after*, *before*:

at dawn/daybreak/sunset/night
by morning/evening ('when morning/evening came')
by day/night ('during')
after dark/nightfall
before dawn/dusk

Cf also '(They worked) day and night', 'It's almost dawn', 'I'll be travelling all night/week/month'.

In less stereotyped expressions, *the* is used, as in '*The* sunrise was beautiful', 'I'll rest during *the* evening', 'Can you stay for *the* night?'

With *in*, seasons may also have zero, unless a particular one is meant:

In winter/spring/autumn (*but AmE* in *the* fall), I like to have a break in Switzerland.
This year I am going to Switzerland in *the* winter/spring/autumn.

(d) *Meals*: as with seasons, zero is usual unless reference is being made to a particular one:

What time do you normally have breakfast/lunch/supper?
(The) breakfast/lunch/dinner was served late that day.

(e) *Illness*: zero is normal, especially where the illness bears a technical medical name:

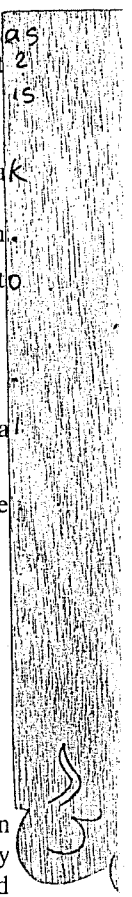
She has anaemia/cancer/diabetes/influenza/pneumonia/toothache.

But *the* is also used for afflictions less technically designated:

She had (*the*) flu/hiccups/measles/mumps.

Some conditions call for the indefinite article:

a cold (*but* catch cold), *a* fever, *a* headache, *a* temperature



Fixed phrases

5.20 We noted of several expressions in 5.19 that zero corresponded to a certain idiomatic fixity as compared with analogous expressions using *the*. Fixity is particularly notable with some common prepositional phrases and complex prepositions (9.3):

on foot, in step, out of step, in turn, by heart, in case of, by reason of, with intent to

Zero is characteristic of binomial expressions used adverbially:

Paganini was *a* great violinist.
My daughter is training as *a* radiologist.
When were you appointed (as) (*a*) professor?
My book will be on Jung as (*a*) thinker.

5.24 The DEFINITE ARTICLE with *singular* nouns conveys a rather formal tone in generic use:

No one can say with certainty when *the wheel* was invented.
My work on anatomy is focused on *the lung*.

But in more general use we find *the* used with musical instruments and dances:

Marianne plays *the* harp, frequently accompanied by her brother on *the* piano.
Do you remember when everyone was keen on *the* rumba?

When the noun is meant, however, to represent a class of human beings by such a typical specimen, *the* often sounds inappropriate and artificial:

? As *the* child grows, there is always a rapid extension of vocabulary.
? *The* Welshman is a good singer.

With *plural* nouns, *the* is used to express generic meaning:
(a) where the referent is a national or ethnic group, as in *the Chinese*, *the Russians*;
(b) in phrases comprising an adjective head with human reference: *the blind*, *the affluent*, *the unemployed*.

It could be argued, however, that in neither case are the noun phrases so much generic as collective phrases with unique and specific denotation.

NOTE Nationality names that have distinct singular and plural forms (such as *Frenchman*, *Frenchmen*; *German*, *Germans*) are treated differently in respect of generic and collective statements from those which do not (such as *British*, *Swiss*, *Chinese*):

The Welsh are fond of singing.	[generic]
Welshmen are fond of singing.	[generic]
The Welshman is fond of singing.	[generic or specific]
The Welshmen are fond of singing.	[specific]
*Welsh is/are fond of singing.	

On nationality names, see further 5.33*f*.

Proper nouns

5.25 Proper nouns are basically *names*, by which we understand the designation of specific people (Gorbachev), places (Tokyo, Park Lane) and institutions (*The South China Morning Post*, *Thames Polytechnic*). But as can be seen from these examples, names embrace both single-word nouns (*Tokyo*) and quite lengthy phrases, often incorporating a definite article as part of the name with or without premodifying items (*The Hague*, *The (New York) Times*). Moreover, the concept of name extends to some markers of time and to seasons that are also festivals (*Monday*, *March*, *Easter*, *Passover*, *Ramadan*).

NOTE Names reflect their uniqueness of reference in writing by our use of initial capitals. This device enables us, if we so wish, to raise to the uniqueness of proper-noun status such concepts as *Fate* and *Heaven*, including generics such as *Nature*, *Truth*, *Man*.

Grammatical features

5.26 As we saw in 5.1, proper nouns of their nature exclude such features as determiner and number contrast. Likewise, the transparent elements of phrasal names are treated as parts of a unique whole and are grammatically invariant:

*The Newer York Times
*The *thoroughly* Asian Wall Street Journal

But there are many apparent exceptions to these restrictions. Since it is only the *referent* that is unique, and different referents may share the same name, the nouns or phrases conveying the name can be used as though they were common nouns. Thus if we can say

There are several places called *Richmond*.

we can equally say

There is *a Richmond* in the south of England and *a Richmond* in the north, not to mention a dozen *Richmonds* outside the British Isles.

So too:

I'm trying to find *Philip Johnson* in the phone book but unless he's one of the several *P. Johnsons* he's not in.

The situation is very different with the admission of number and determination with the names of days, months, and festivals. These derive their proximity to uniqueness largely in respect of specific instances. Thus in

She'll be here on *Monday*/in *October*/at *Christmas*.

the reference in each case is to a particular time of a particular year; *Monday* is as uniquely contrasted with *Tuesday* as *Tokyo* is with *Kyoto*. But we know that there is a Monday every week and a Christmas every year, that the former is characterized by being (for example) the first working day of each week and that every Christmas has even more sharply

Names without article

5.30 Whether names have articles (as in 5.28*f*) or not, they operate without a determiner contrast, and while it is normal for names to reflect the uniqueness of their referents by having no article, it must be clearly understood that 'No article' does not mean 'Zero article' (*cf* 5.1 Note). There are two major classes of names to consider: names of *persons* and names of *places*. On smaller classes, such as the names of months, see 5.25.

Personal names

5.31 These comprise:

(a) *Forenames* (also called first, given, or Christian names), used alone to or of family or friends:

It's good to see you, *Frank*; how are you?
Unfortunately, *Jacqueline* was unable to be present.

(b) *Family* names (surnames), used alone without discourtesy in address only in certain male circles (for example, in military use) and in 3rd person discourse for rather formal and distant (for example, historical) reference:

What time do you have to report, *Watkinson*?
The theories of *Keynes* continue to be influential.

(c) *Combinations of forenames and family names*, occasionally found in epistolary address ('Dear Mildred Carter') but chiefly used where 'full name' is required in self-introduction or in 3rd person reference:

I am *Roger Middleton*; the manager is expecting me.
Freda Johnson is writing a book on *Wilfred Owen*.

(d) *Combinations involving a title* are bipartite in address but can be tripartite in 3rd person reference:

You are very welcome, *Mrs Johnson/Mrs Green/Mr Parker/Dr Lowe/Major Fielding/Sir John*.
The committee decided to co-opt *Mrs (Freda) Johnson/Ms (Jacqueline) Green/Mr (D R) Parker/Dr (James F) Lowe/Major (William) Fielding/Sir John (Needham)*.

NOTE [a] Favourite animals (especially household pets) are given names, which in the case of pedigree animals are bestowed and registered with special care. Names of ships, often connotatively female, are also usually without article; but *cf* 5.29.
[b] Some terms of close kinship are treated as names in family discourse:

Where's *Grandma/Dad*?

Some others are used as titles, as in 'Where's *Uncle Harry*?'

Locational names

5.32 These are used without article and comprise a wide range of designations:

(a) extraterrestrial: *Jupiter*, *Mars* (but *the moon*, *the sun*);
(b) continents: *Asia*, *(South) America*;
(c) countries, provinces, etc: *(Great) Britain*, *Canada*, *Ontario*, *(County) Kerry* (but *the United Kingdom*, *(the) Sudan*);
(d) lakes: *Lake Michigan*, *Loch Ness*, *Ullswater*;
(e) mountains: *(Mount) Everest*, *Snowdon*;
(f) cities, etc: *New York*, *Stratford-upon-Avon* (but *The Hague*, *the Bronx*);
(g) streets, buildings, etc: *Fifth Avenue*, *Park Lane*, *Brooklyn Bridge*, *Canterbury Cathedral*, *Scotland Yard*, *Waterloo Station*, *Oxford Street* (but *the Old Kent Road*).

On examples with *the*, *cf* 5.28*f*.

Nouns relating to region and nationality

5.33 Many names of regions and countries yield corresponding adjectives and noun forms of the following pattern, all reflecting their 'proper' affinity by being written with an initial capital. Thus, related to *Russia*, we have:

I General adjective:

A new *Russian* spacecraft has just been launched.
Both the men are *Russian*.

II Language name:

She reads *Russian* but she doesn't speak it very well.

III Singular noun with specific reference:

He is *a Russian*, I think.

IV Plural noun with specific reference:

There are several *Russians* among my students.

V Plural nouns used generically:

The Russians are a deeply patriotic people.

Normally, the form of II–V is predictable from I; for example *Greece*: I *Greek*, II *Greek*, III *a Greek*, IV *Greeks*, V *the Greeks*. In many instances, of course, there is no language corresponding to form II ('*She doesn't speak *European*'), but leaving this aside, the following sets are regularly predictable and behave as illustrated above:

Africa ~ African	America ~ American
Asia ~ Asian	Australia ~ Australian

and all other names in *-(i)a*. So too:

for example: /deɪ/ ~ /deɪz/ /bed/ ~ /bedz/

– add /s/ if the singular ends with a voiceless consonant other than a sibilant

for example: /kat/ ~ /kats/

(b) In SPELLING:
With the vast majority of nouns, we simply add *-s* to the singular; for example:

horse ~ horses, prize ~ prizes

But, quite apart from the nouns that are fundamentally irregular in respect of number (5.37*ff*), the *-s* rule requires amplification and modification for many nouns:

(i) If the singular ends with a sibilant (see (a) above) that is not already followed by *-e*, the plural ending is *-es*; for example: *box ~ boxes, bush ~ bushes, switch ~ switches*; *cf language ~ languages*.

(ii) If the singular ends with *-y*, this is replaced by *i* and the plural ending is then *-ies*; for example: *spy ~ spies, poppy ~ poppies, soliloquy ~ soliloquies*. But *-y* remains, and the plural ending is *-ys*, if the singular ends with a letter having vowel-value as in *-ay*, *-ey*, *-oy* (thus *days, ospreys, boys*), or if the item is a proper noun (*the two Germanys*; *cf* 5.26).

(iii) If the singular ends with *-o*, the plural is usually regular (as with *studios, kangaroos, pianos*), but with some nouns the plural ending is *-es* (as with *echoes, embargoes, heroes, potatoes, tomatoes, torpedoes, vetoes*), and in a few cases there is variation, as with *buffalo(e)s, cargo(e)s, halo(e)s, motto(e)s, volcano(e)s*.

NOTE [a] Some further spelling points: In a few words requiring *-es* there is doubling as with *quiz ~ quizzes*. With unusual plurals such as numerals or initials, an apostrophe is sometimes introduced (thus *in the 1990's, some PhD's*). In formal writing, some abbreviations can show plural by doubling: *p ~ pp* ('pages'), *c ~ cc* ('copies'); with *f ~ ff*, the abbreviations are to be understood as 'the following numbered unit(s)', where the unit may be a section, page, chapter, or even volume.
[b] Compound nouns are usually regular in adding *-(e)s* to the final element (as in *babysitters, grown-ups*). But in some cases where the compound has an obvious head noun, it is to this element that the plural ending is affixed (as in *passers-by, grants-in-aid*), and with a few there is variation (as in *mouthfuls ~ mouthsful, court martials ~ courts martial*). With some appositional compounds (of the form *XY*, where 'The *X* is a *Y*') both elements have the plural inflection (*woman doctor ~ women doctors*).
[c] Where a title applies to more than one succeeding name, it can sometimes be pluralized, as in *Professors Wagner and Watson, Drs Brown, Smith, and Weindling*; but the commonest cannot (*Mrs Kramer, Mrs Pugh, and Mrs Hunter*), though *Mr* can have a plural *Messrs* /'mesəz/, especially in BrE commercial use ('the firm of *Messrs Gray and Witherspoon*'). Members of the same sex sharing a name can have the name in the plural: 'The two *Miss Smiths* as well as their parents were present at the ceremony.'

Irregular plural formation

Voicing

5.37 While in spelling the pair *house ~ houses* is regular, in pronunciation it is not, the final voiceless fricative consonant of the singular becoming voiced in the plural: /haus/ ~ /hauziz/. Several singulars ending in /f/ and /θ/ undergo voicing in this way, the former reflected in spelling, the latter not:

knife ~ knives /naɪf/ ~ /naɪvz/
mouth ~ mouths /mauθ/ ~ /mauðz/

Like *knife* are *calf, half, leaf, life, loaf, self, shelf, thief, wife, wolf*, and a few others. With some nouns, such as *handkerchief, hoof*, and *scarf*, the plural may involve voicing or be regular (-/fs/); with others, such as *belief, cliff, proof*, the plural is always regular.

Like *mouth* are *bath, oath, path, sheath, truth, wreath, youth*, though in most cases the plural can equally be regular (-/θs/). In other cases, only the regular plural is found, as with *cloth, death, faith, moth*, and where there is a consonant preceding the fricative this is always so (as with *birth, length*, etc).

Vowel change

5.38 In a small number of nouns, there is a change of vowel sound and spelling ('mutation plurals') without an ending:

foot ~ feet goose ~ geese
louse ~ lice man ~ men
mouse ~ mice tooth ~ teeth
woman /'wumən/ ~ women /'wɪmɪn/

NOTE [a] Compounds in unstressed *-man* such as *fireman, Frenchman* have plurals that are often identical in sound since both the *-man* and *-men* have schwa.
[b] The plural of *child* involves both vowel change and an irregular ending, *children* /tʃɪldrən/. The noun *brother*, when used in the sense 'fellow member', sometimes has a similar plural formation, *brethren* /breðrən/. *Cf* also, without vowel change, *ox ~ oxen*.

Zero plural

Words for some animals

5.39 The nouns *sheep, deer, cod*, while being unquestionably count, have no difference in form between singular and plural:

This *sheep* has just had a lamb.
These *sheep* have just had lambs.

Nouns referring to some other animals, birds, and fishes can have zero plurals, especially when viewed as prey:

They shot two *reindeer*, though this is strictly forbidden.
The *woodcock/pheasant/herring/trout/salmon/fish* are not very plentiful this year.

express my *regrets*'). Intensification accounts also for the plural of some concrete noncount nouns; for example, *wood* in the sense of 'forest':

This is a beautiful little *wood*.
Their house is in the middle of those extensive *woods*.

(c) The noun *news* and certain other items ending in *-s*:
(i) nouns in *-ics* such as *acoustics*, *physics*
(ii) names of diseases such as *mumps*, *shingles*
(iii) words for some games such as *billiards*, *dominoes*, *fives*
But when *politics* refers to an individual's views, it is treated as plural ('Her politics *are* becoming more extreme') and for some speakers such disease words as *mumps* can also be plural. Again, when *statistics* is used loosely to mean 'figures' it can be plural and have a corresponding singular: 'There is one surprising *statistic* in your report.'

(d) Collective nouns such as *committee*, *council*, *government*, *team* (though in BrE these are often treated as plural aggregate nouns: 'The *committee* were unanimous'; *cf* 5.44).

NOTE Unlike aggregate nouns, collective nouns retain singular determiners even where plural concord is used: *'This committee were unanimous.'

Ordinarily plural

5.44 (a) *Binary* nouns are those that refer to entities which comprise or are perceived as comprising two parts: tools and instruments such as *binoculars*, *forceps*, *scissors*; articles of dress such as *jeans*, *pants*, *trousers*:

These *scissors* are too blunt.
Those *trousers* don't match your shirt.

Number contrast is usually achieved through quantity partition (5.2) with *a pair of*, *several pairs of*. With binary nouns like *gloves* or *socks*, where the two pairs are more obviously separate, the unit is readily divisible into two singulars.

He was wearing a green *sock* and a brown *sock*.

Contrast:

There is a stain on { the left leg of your *trousers*. / (?) your left *trouser*. }

(b) *Aggregate* nouns are those that refer to entities which comprise or may be perceived as comprising an indefinite number of parts. These may be *plural in form*, as for instance *arms* ('weapons'), *communications* ('means of communication'), *data*, *goods*, *media*, *outskirts*, *remains*, *troops*, *works* ('factory'). With some items there is vacillation between singular and plural; for example

This *barracks* is / These *barracks* are } heavily defended.

The *data* is/are insufficient.

But many aggregate nouns are *not plural in form*; thus *cattle*, *clergy*, *offspring*, *people*, *police*, *poultry*, *vermin*. Here again there is vacillation between singular and plural with some items:

The *clergy* is/are strongly opposed to divorce.

Cf 5.43(d).

NOTE Some nouns could be regarded either as 'ordinarily plural' or as having zero plural (5.39). Thus

She has one *offspring*/several *offspring*.
Did he leave *offspring*?

We are organizing { a new *series* / three further *series* } of lectures.

Others have a singular with some shift of meaning. Thus beside 'She used her *brains* in defeating her opponent', we can have 'She has a good *brain*', meaning approximately '*brains* of good quality'; beside 'He didn't receive his *wages* last week', we can have 'He has a living *wage*', meaning 'a level of *wages* that can support him'.

Gender

5.45 In English, gender is not a feature of nouns themselves (as in such languages as German or Russian). Rather, it relates directly to the *meanings* of nouns, with particular reference to biological sex. Gender then enters the province of grammar by determining the selection of reference pronouns: *wh-*, personal, and reflexive (6.2*ff*, 6.13, 6.17). The *wh-* items *who* and *which* oblige us to distinguish two broad gender classes, personal and nonpersonal, the former largely human in reference, the latter largely nonhuman and including inanimates:

This is the *pedestrian who* witnessed the accident.
That is the *cow which* has just had a calf.

Then within the personal gender class, the personal and reflexive pronouns relate to male and female sex:

Please help my { *husband*; *he* has hurt *himself*. / *wife*; *she* has hurt *herself*. }

But the sex-related pronouns can be used of items marked as nonpersonal by the *wh-* pronouns, as in

referred to as *he* or *she*, but for the most part they are treated grammatically as though they were inanimate:

Do you see that *spider*? *It's* hanging from the beam.
Do you see that *balloon*? *It's* hanging from the beam.

Case

5.48 As distinct from pronouns (6.6*f*), English nouns have only two cases, the unmarked COMMON case and the marked GENITIVE. The latter is sometimes called the 'possessive', by reason of one of the main functions of the case (as in *The child's coat*, 'The coat belonging to the child').

The genitive inflection is phonologically identical with the regular plural inflection (5.36) with a consequent neutralization of the case distinction in the plural:

The /kau/ was grazing. The /kauz/ were grazing.
One /kauz/ tail was waving. All the /kauz/ tails were waving.

With irregular nouns where no such neutralization can occur, a fourfold distinction is observed:

The /man/ was watching. The /men/ were watching.
The /manz/ car was locked. The /menz/ cars were locked.

Orthographically a fourfold distinction always obtains, since the genitive ending is always spelled with an apostrophe: before the ending for the singular, after it for the plural:

One *cow's* tail All the *cows'* tails

NOTE [a] Where noun phrases with postmodification do not have the plural inflection at the end (5.36 Note [b]) there is a distinction between genitive and plural; compare:

The chief of staff ~ The chiefs of staff
The chief of staff's role ~ The chiefs of staff's role

But where postmodification is less institutionalized, such a 'group genitive' – though common informally – is often avoided in favour of the *of*-construction (5.49): 'The name *of the man in the dark suit*.'

[b] In being phonologically identical with the plural, the regular genitive plural is sometimes called the 'zero genitive'. Such a zero genitive is common with names that end in /z/, especially if they are foreign names:

Socrates' /-tiːz/ doctrines
Moses' /-zɪz/ laws

But Dickens' novels /dɪkɪnz/ *or* /dɪkɪnzɪz/

Note the zero genitive also in some expressions such as *for goodness' sake*.

The genitive and the *of*-construction

5.49 We frequently find a choice between using a premodifying genitive and a postmodifying prepositional phrase with *of*; the similarity in meaning and function has caused the latter to be called by some the '*of*-genitive'. For example:

There were strong objections from { *the island's* inhabitants. / the inhabitants *of the island*.

But although both versions in this instance are equally acceptable, with a choice determined largely by preferred focus (*cf* 18.5*ff*), for the most part we must select either the genitive or the *of*-construction. For example:

These are *father's* trousers. *These are the trousers *of father*.
Let's go to the front *of the house*. *Let's go to *the house's* front.

Genitive meanings

5.50 The meanings expressed by the genitive can conveniently be shown through paraphrase; at the same time, we can compare the analogous use of the *of*-construction (*cf* 5.50*f*).

(a) Possessive genitive:

Mrs Johnson's coat. Mrs Johnson owns this coat.
The ship's funnel. The ship has a funnel.

Cf The funnel *of the ship*.

(b) Genitive of attribute:

The victim's outstanding courage. The victim was very courageous.

Cf The outstanding courage *of the victim*.

(c) Partitive genitive:

The heart's two ventricles. The heart contains two ventricles.

Cf The two ventricles *of the heart*.

(d) Subjective genitive:

The parents' consent. The parents consented.

Cf The consent *of the parents*.

(e) Objective genitive:

The prisoner's release. (. . .) released the prisoner.

Cf The release *of the prisoner*.

(f) Genitive of origin:

Where did you find these children's clothes?

(*Either* '*These children* had lost their clothes'; genitive as determiner. *Or* '*These clothes* were obviously made for children'; genitive as modifier.)

The independent genitive

5.54 It is common to ellipt the noun following the genitive if the reference is contextually clear. For example:

Jennifer's is the only face I recognize here.
(*ie* Jennifer's face)
He has a devotion to work like *his father's*.
(*ie* his father's *devotion to work*)

By contrast, with the *of*-construction, *that* or *those* usually replaces the corresponding item:

The wines *of France* are more expensive than *those of California*.
(*ie the wines* of California)

A special case of the independent genitive occurs when the unexpressed item refers to homes or businesses:

When I arrived at *Fred's*, I found I'd come on the wrong day.
My butcher's stays open late on Fridays.
She wouldn't miss *St Martin's* on Easter morning.

In most such instances of the 'local genitive', one could not specify uniquely the unexpressed item, and in many cases it would sound artificial if one attempted a fuller phrase, often because what is meant is more abstract and general than any specific noun would convey:

I hate going to *the dentist's* (? surgery, ? place, ? establishment).

NOTE With the names of major firms, what begins as a local genitive develops into a plural, often so spelled and observing plural concord:

Harrod's is a vast store.
Harrods are having a sale.

A further development is to drop the ending and to treat the item as a collective (*cf* 5.46).

The 'post-genitive'

5.55 Since in its determiner role, the genitive must be definite (5.52), we can be in some difficulty with a sentence like

George's sister is coming to stay with us.

If it needs to be understood that George has more than one sister, this can be expressed in one of two ways, each involving a partitive *of*-construction:

One of George's sisters is coming to stay with us.
A sister of George's is coming to stay with us.

It is the latter that is called the 'post-genitive' (or 'double-genitive').

Bibliographical note

On noun classes, see Algeo (1973); Allerton (1987); Seppänen (1974).

On reference and determiners, see Auwera (1980); Burton-Roberts (1977); Declerck (1986); Hawkins (1978); Hewson (1972); Kaluza (1981); Kramsky (1972); Perlmutter (1970); Takami (1985).

On number, see Hirtle (1982); Juul (1975); Lehrer (1986); Sørensen (1985). On gender and case, see Dahl (1971); Jahr Sørheim (1980).

Nobody but *she* objected.

Even in object territory, *but* can be followed by either form, as with *as* and *than*:

Nobody objected but *she/her*.

[b] The frequency of the coordination *you and I* seems to have resulted in a tendency to make it case-invariant, though such examples as the following are felt to be uneasily hypercorrect:

Let's *you and I* go together then.
Between *you and I*, there was some cheating.

Specific reference

6.8 Central pronouns resemble noun phrases with *the* in normally having definite meaning, and they also usually have specific reference. In the case of 3rd person pronouns, the identity of the reference is typically supplied by the linguistic context, anaphorically as in [1] or cataphorically as in [2] (*cf* 5.14):

There is *an excellent museum* here and everyone should visit *it*. [1]
When *she* had examined the patient, *the doctor* picked up the telephone. [2]

In [1], *it* is understood as 'the museum'; in [2], *she* is understood as 'the doctor'. Cataphoric reference is conditional upon grammatical subordination; thus [2] could not be restated as:

**She* examined the patient and then *the doctor* picked up the telephone.

Anaphoric reference has no such constraint, and [2] could be replaced by:

When *the doctor* had examined the patient, *she* picked up the telephone.

On the other hand, the relative freedom of anaphoric reference can result in indeterminacy as to identification:

Ms Fairweather asked Janice if *she*^{1} could come into *her* room; *she*^{2} seemed to be more upset than *she* had ever seen *her*.

English grammar determines only that the italicized items have singular feminine reference; it does not determine the specific identities. In such a case, the speaker/writer would have to make sure that the larger context or the situation left it clear whether, for example, *she*^{1} referred to Ms Fairweather or to Janice and whether *she*^{2} had the same reference as *she*^{1}. Did Ms Fairweather ask for the interview because Janice seemed upset or is Janice reflecting that the interview is sought because Ms Fairweather seemed upset?

The pronoun *it*

6.9 Any singular noun phrase that does not determine reference by *he* or *she* is referred to by *it*; thus collectives, noncount concretes, and abstractions:

The committee met soon after *it* had been appointed.
He bought *some salmon* because *it* was her favourite food.
When you are ready to report *it*, I would like to know *your assessment of the problem*.

Since this last noun phrase is a nominalization (17.23) of a clause ('You are assessing the problem'), it is easy to see that *it* can refer to the content of whole sentences and sequences of sentences:

I don't like to say *it* but I must. *You have lost your job because you didn't work hard enough. You have only yourself to blame.*

Such a cataphoric use of *it* with sentential reference is analogous to the extrapositional *it* (18.23*ff*):

It has to be said *that you have lost your job because* . . .

Analogous too is the anticipatory *it* in cleft sentences (18.18*f*):

It was only last week that the death was announced.

In many cases where *it* seems to be superficially anaphoric, it is to be explained in terms of this anticipatory use with subsequent ellipsis. Compare:

I asked where she lived and *it* turned out to be in my street.
The phone rang and *it* was the police.

On the other hand, *it* as a prop ('dummy') subject frequently occurs where no plausible sentential reference can be claimed:

If *it* stops raining, we can go out for a walk; but we must be home before *it* gets dark.

NOTE A prop *it* is not confined to subject function:

I take *it* that she has declined the invitation.
He had a hard time of *it* in the army.

The 1st person plural forms

6.10 The pronoun for the 1st person plural is a device for referring to 'I' and one or more other people. The latter may be INCLUSIVE of the addressee(s):

I'm glad to see you, Marie, and I hope *we* (*ie* 'you and I') can have a long talk.
Ladies and gentlemen, I hope *we* (*ie* 'you and I') can agree this evening on a policy for the future.

The latter is akin to the persuasive *we* associated with sermons and political speeches as well as with scholarly writing; for example:

> *We* must increase our vigilance if *we* are not to fall victim to temptation.
> As *we* saw in Chapter Three, *we* can trace the origins of human conflict to . . .

The artificial nature of the inclusiveness in this last example (which really means 'As I hope *you* saw in Chapter Three . . .') is accentuated in the rhetorical use of *we*, where the reference is to a general human collectivity – possibly in the remote past – and where paraphrase by 'you and I' may be unthinkable:

> In the eighteenth century, *we* had little idea of the effect that industrial inventions would have.

Artificial inclusiveness of a different kind is found in the informal *we* used by doctor to patient:

> And how are *we* (*ie* 'you') feeling today?

The obverse of this occurs in the *exclusive* use of the 1st person plural where 'you' the addressee is not included:

> Ms Rogers and I have finished the report, Minister; shall *we* (*ie* 'she and I') leave it on your desk?

Related to this is the traditional 'editorial' *we*:

> *We* can now reveal that the visit was cancelled because of threatened terrorist activity.

NOTE The royal *we*, now restricted to highly formal material such as charters, can be regarded as an extreme form of exclusive *we*.

Modification of pronouns

6.11 There is very limited scope for modification and it largely concerns the personal pronouns with the objective case (*cf* 6.7):

(a) Adjectives, chiefly in informal exclamations:

> *Poor me*! *Clever you*! *Good old him*!

(b) Appositive nouns, with plural 1st and 2nd person:

> Will *you others* please wait here?
> *You nurses* have earned the respect of the entire country, and *we politicians* must see that you get a proper reward.
> *Us locals* are going to protest. ⟨familiar⟩

(c) *Here* and *there*, with 1st person plural and 2nd person respectively (the latter tending to sound rude):

> Whatever you others do, *we here* would be willing to leave now.
> Could *you there* collect your passports at the desk?

(d) Prepositional phrases, with 1st person (usually plural) and 2nd person:

> It is very much the concern of $\left\{\begin{matrix} you \\ us \end{matrix}\right\}$ *in the learned professions.*

(e) Emphatic reflexives:

> *I myself, she herself, they themselves*

(f) Universal pronouns, with plurals:

> *We all* accept responsibility.
>
> $\left.\begin{matrix} You\ both \\ They\ each \end{matrix}\right\}$ need help.

(g) Relative clauses, chiefly in formal style:

> *We who fought for this principle* will not lightly abandon it.
> *He or she who left a case in my office* should claim it as soon as possible.

They that (**They who*) is rare, *those who* being preferred.

Generic reference

6.12 In the type of modification illustrated in 6.11(g), most instances have generic rather than specific reference, as in the proverbial

> *He* (*ie* 'Anyone') *who hesitates* is lost.

For ordinary purposes, the pronouns *we*, *you*, and *they* have widespread use as generics; for example:

> *We* live in an age of moral dilemmas. [1]
> *You* can always tell if someone is lying. ⟨informal⟩ [2]
> *They*'ll soon find a cure for cancer. ⟨informal⟩ [3]

In each case, the subject could be replaced by the generic *one* but with major stylistic and semantic differences. Stylistically, *one* would be more formal in each case, but especially so in [3]. Semantically, *we* retains the inclusionary warmth of implied 1st person involvement (6.10), *you* comparably implies special interest in the addressee, while *they* detaches the general observation equally from both the speaker and the addressee. In consequence, it is especially convenient in relation to regret or disapproval:

> I wonder why *they* don't repair the roads more often.

The reflexives

6.13 The reflexive pronouns are always coreferential with a noun or another pronoun, agreeing with it in gender, number, and person:

Veronica *herself* saw the accident. [1]
The dog was scratching *itself*. [2]
He and his wife poured *themselves* a drink. [3]

The reflexives here are coreferential with *Veronica* (as appositive subject), *The dog* (as object), and *He and his wife* (as indirect object). By contrast, in

He and his wife poured *them* a drink. [4]

the indirect object *them* refers to people other than the subject.

The coreference must be within the clause; thus we have a contrast between

Penelope begged Jane to look after *her*. (=Penelope)
Penelope begged Jane to look after *herself*. (=Jane)

But the item determining the reflexive may be absent from the clause in question; for example, imperative clauses are understood to involve 2nd person, and nonfinite clauses may reveal the subject in a neighbouring main clause:

Look at *yourself* in the mirror!
Freeing *itself* from the trap, the rat limped away.

NOTE [a] Where a pronoun object is only partially coreferential with the subject, the reflexive is not used. Thus beside '*I* could make *myself* an omelette', '*We* could make *ourselves* an omelette', we have '*I* could make *us* an omelette'.
[b] Appositive use of reflexives is associated with the need for emphasis.

6.14 A few transitive verbs require that subject and object are coreferential:

They pride *themselves* on their well-kept garden.
The witness was suspected of having perjured *himself*.

So also *absent oneself*, *ingratiate oneself*, *behave oneself*, though with this last the reflexive can be omitted. With some other verbs, there is a threefold choice:

She dressed *herself* with care. [1]
She dressed with care. [2]=[1]
She dressed *him* with care. [3]

So also *wash*, *shave*, *hide*, *prepare* etc.

6.15 Prepositional complements coreferential with an item in the same clause take reflexive form where the preposition has a close relationship with the verb (as in the prepositional verbs *look at*, *look after*, *listen to*: *cf* 16.5*ff*). The same holds in sequences concerned with representation:

Janet { took a photo of / told a story about } { *herself* (=Janet) / *her* (≠Janet) }

But where the prepositional phrase is adverbial (especially relating to space: *cf* 8.2, 8.16*ff*), coreference can be expressed without the reflexive:

Fred closed the door behind *him*.
Fred draped a blanket about *him*.

In such cases, context alone would show whether *him* referred to *Fred* or to someone else; replacement of *him* by *himself* would of course remove any doubt but this would be unusual unless emphasis were required.

NOTE With some common existential expressions (18.30*ff*), the reflexive is rare or impossible in the prepositional complement:

She hadn't any money on *her*.
I have my wife with *me*.

On the other hand, there are idiomatic phrases in which the prepositional complement must be reflexive:

They were beside *themselves* with rage.
I was sitting by *myself*.

Contrast:

They were beside *me*. ('near')
I was sitting by *her*. ('near')

The possessives

6.16 As shown in Table 6.2, most of the possessive pronouns differ in form according as they function as determiners or as independent items. Compare:

These are { Miriam's / *her* } books. ~ These books are { Miriam's. / *hers*. }

That is *my* bicycle. ~ That bicycle is *mine*.
Which are *their* clothes? ~ Which clothes are *theirs*?
Is this *his* car? ~ Is this car *his*?
BUT Those are *its* paw-marks. ~ *?Those paw-marks are *its*.

When the emphatic (*very*) *own* follows a possessive (the only form of modification admitted), there is no difference between determiner and independent function:

That is *my own* bicycle. ~ That bicycle is *my own*.

With this modification, even *its* can now sometimes assume enough weight for independent status:

The cat knows that this is *its (very) own* dish. ~ The cat knows that this dish is *its (very) own*.

NOTE Possessives are used with items such as parts of the body without any feeling of tautology:

She shook *her* head:
I tried to keep *my* balance.

Pronouns without a person contrast

Relative pronouns

6.17 Relative pronouns comprise two series:

(1) *wh-* items: *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*
(2) *that* and zero, the latter indicated below as ( )

Compare:

I'd like to come and see the house { *which* / *that* / ( ) } you have for sale.

In neither series are there distinctions of person or number, but in (1) we have some distinctions of *gender* and *case*. With *who* and *whom* the antecedent must have personal gender (5.45); with *which* it must have nonpersonal gender; with *whose* the antecedent is usually personal but can also be nonpersonal. Thus:

Are you the doctor *who* looked after my daughter?
That is the hospital *which* is to be expanded.
That is the { doctor / hospital } *whose* phone number I gave you.

While *who* and *whom* share gender reference, their difference in form reflects the case distinction, subjective and objective respectively, within the relative clause:

The man { *who* greeted me / *whom* I greeted / *to whom* I spoke } is a neighbour.

But see 17.8*ff*.

In series (2), *that* can be used without reference to the gender of the antecedent or the function within the relative clause, except that it cannot be preceded by a preposition:

The actor / The play } { *that* pleased me / *that* I admired / *that* I was attracted to } is new to London.

Zero has a similar range, lacking only the subject function:

The actor / The play } { ( ) I admired / ( ) I was attracted to } is new to London.

A major difference between the two series is that items in (2) can operate only in restrictive clauses. See 17.8.

Interrogative pronouns

6.18 There are five interrogative pronouns:

who whom whose which what

The first four are identical with series (1) of the relative pronouns (6.17), but there are notable differences both in their reference and in their grammar within the clause. *Whose* as well as *who* and *whom* can be used only with reference to items of personal gender; nor is *whose* restricted to determiner function. While *whom* can function only as the objective case, *who* can be both subjective and (especially in speech) objective except after a preposition. To illustrate these points:

Who owns this house?
Who(m) does this house belong to?
To whom does this house belong? ⟨formal⟩
Whose is this house?

With *which*, reference can be both personal and nonpersonal:

Of these { cars, / students, } *which* { is best? / do you like most? }

When *what* is used as a pronoun, the questioner assumes that the reference is nonpersonal:

What { is in that box? / were you wearing that day? }

But *what* and *which* can also be determiners (5.3), and in this function the noun phrase can be personal or nonpersonal, the difference then being that *which* assumes a limited choice of known answers:

What doctor(s) would refuse to see a patient?
Which doctor (s) [of those we are discussing] gave an opinion on this problem?

As determiner, *whose* retains its personal reference:

Whose house is this?

NOTE The distinction between *who*, *what*, and *which* is brought out in a set like the following:

Who is his wife? The novelist Felicity Smith. (*cf* 5.11)
What is his wife? A novelist. (*cf* 5.15, 23)
Which is his wife? The woman nearest the door.

Demonstrative pronouns

6.19 The demonstratives have the same formal range and semantic contrast both as pronouns and as determiners (5.5), *this/these* suggesting relative proximity to the speaker, *that/those* relative remoteness:

We shall compare { *this* (picture) / *these* (pictures) } here with { *that* (picture) / *those* (pictures) } over there.

But while all can be used as determiners irrespective of the gender of the noun head, as pronouns the reference must be to nouns of nonpersonal (and usually inanimate) gender:

In the garden, I noticed { *this* plastic bag. ~ *this* / *this* kitten. ~ ?*this* / *this* woman. ~ **this* }

An exception is where the demonstrative pronoun is subject of a *be*-clause with a noun phrase of specific reference as complement:

That is my kitten.
These are the children I told you about.

Cf also 'Who is *that*?' 'Who is *it*?' beside 'Who are *you*?' 'Who is *she*?' Occasionally too the demonstratives may be used as pronouns with animate reference where there is ellipsis:

I attended to *that* patient but not *this* (one).

As in the example, however, it would be usual to add the pronoun *one*.

A further partial exception is that *those* with postmodification (17.2) can readily have personal reference:

Will *those seated in rows 20 to 30* now please board the aircraft.
Success comes to *those who have determination*.

NOTE Whether as determiners or pronouns, the demonstratives can be modified by predeterminers (5.7*ff*):

She painted *all (of) those* (pictures) last year.
His fee was twenty dollars but now it's *twice that* (amount).

6.20 The deictic or 'pointing' contrast between *this/these* and *that/those* is not confined to spatial perception. While *this morning* usually refers to 'today', *that morning* refers to a more distant morning, past or future. More generally, *this/these* have more immediate or impending relevance than *that/those*:

These figures have just been compiled; *those* of yours are out of date.

In consequence, *this/these* tend to be associated with cataphoric reference (5.14), *that/those* with anaphoric reference:

Watch carefully and I'll show you: *this* is how it's done.
So now you know: *that*'s how it's done.
This is an announcement: will Mrs Peterson please go to the enquiry desk.
And *that* was the six o'clock news.

NOTE Especially in informal usage, a further extension of the polarity tends to equate *this/these* with the speaker's approval, and especially *that/those* with disapproval:

How can *this* intelligent girl think of marrying *that* awful bore?

Indefinite pronouns

6.21 Indefinite pronouns are heterogeneous in form and they embrace also a wide range both of meanings and of grammatical properties. They are characterized as a whole, however, by having a general and nonspecific reference which the term 'indefinite' seeks to capture. Equally, they are characterized by having functions directly involved in expressing *quantity*, from totality ('all') to its converse ('nothing'). Reference in some cases invokes gender, such that items in *-body* are personal, items in *-thing* nonpersonal. Quantification in some cases invokes countability and number, such that *each* is singular count, *both* dual count, while *some* may be noncount or plural count.

Several of the indefinites can function both as determiners and as pronouns, as we shall see in what follows.

The universal items

6.22 We may first consider the compound indefinites (*everyone*, *everybody*, *everything*; *no one*, *nobody*, *nothing*), noting that all except *no one* are written as single words. These function only as pronouns, and despite their entailment of plural meaning they take singular verbs:

The room was full of youngsters and *everyone/everybody* was listening intently to the speeches.
I appealed to the whole crowd, but *no one/nobody* was willing to get up and speak.

Father was very particular about how his tools were arranged in the workshop; he knew where *everything* was supposed to be and he insisted that *nothing* was ever to be misplaced.

These and the other universal indefinites are shown together in Table 6.22.

Table 6.22: Universal indefinites

NUMBER	FUNCTION	COUNT		NONCOUNT
		PERSONAL	NONPERSONAL	
Positive		everyone everybody	everything	
singular	pronoun	each		
	determiner	every each		all
plural	pronoun	all/both		
	determiner	all/both		
Negative		no one nobody	nothing	
singular	pronoun	none		none
	pronoun and determiner	neither		
plural	pronoun	none		
singular or plural	determiner	no		

NOTE [a] The forms in *-one* are commoner in written usage than those in *-body*, but in speech it is the latter that are more frequent.
[b] The pronouns in *-one* and *-body* have a genitive:

Safety is *everyone's* responsibility, but in this case the accident seems to have been *nobody's* fault.

[c] Pronunciation obscures the origin of the compound *nothing*: /nʌθɪŋ/.
[d] Though *everywhere* and *nowhere* chiefly function as indefinite adverbials, they can also be pronouns:

Everywhere is draughty and *nowhere* is comfortable.

6.23 Two further indefinites are *each* and *none*, both able to operate irrespective of gender with singular reference:

Many members hesitated but although *each* was pressed to act, *none* was in the end willing.
There were several knives in the drawer, but although *each* was tried in turn, *none* was sharp enough to cut through the rope.

Each (but not *none*) can also function as a determiner, in which role it is closely paralleled by *every*:

Each / *Every* } candidate will be individually interviewed.

Where they differ is that *each* is more targeted on the individual among the totality, *every* on the totality itself. In consequence, *every* is subject to quantitative modification as in

Almost every candidate was over the age of twenty-five.

By contrast with *each*, *none* is not restricted to singular reference, though plurals like the following are objectionable to some users:

Hundreds were examined but *none were* acceptable.

With the determiner *no* which corresponds to *none*, however, plural is as universally used as the singular:

No photography is permitted during the ceremony.
There were *no* passengers on the train.

NOTE The individualizing role of *each* can be preserved in otherwise plural environments:

The knives were *each* tried in turn.

6.24 With *all* and *both*, we make plural and dual universal reference:

The factory produces luxury cars and *all* are for export.
Police interviewed the (two) suspects and *both* were arrested.

These two items also have a predeterminer function:

All these cars are for export.
Both (the) suspects were arrested.

The converse of *all* is *no(ne)* (6.23); that of *both* is *neither*, usually with singular verb concord:

Police interviewed the (two) suspects but *neither* was arrested.

It has a parallel determiner function:

Neither suspect was arrested.

NOTE As with *each* (6.23 Note), *all* and *both* can appear medially.

The cars were *all* for export.
The (two) suspects were *both* arrested.

In this function *all* is used freely with a noncount reference otherwise largely confined to its predeterminer function:

The money had *all* been spent.
All the money had been spent.

Partitive indefinites

6.25 In dealing with the partitives (see Table 6.25), we must make a primary distinction between (a) those in *assertive* use, and (b) those in *non-assertive* use (2.11):

(a) I can see {*someone* / *somebody*} climbing that tree.
There's *something* I want to tell you.
There are nuts here; please have *some*.
There is wine here; please have *some*.
All the students speak French and *some* speak Italian as well.

(b) Did you see {*anyone* / *anybody*} in the vicinity?
I couldn't find *anything* to read.
I'd like nuts, if you have *any*.
I'd like wine, if you have *any*.
All the students work hard and I don't think *any* will fail.

When used pronominally, *some* and *any* usually have clear contextual reference to a noun phrase. Both occur more freely as determiners:

(a) I would love *some* nuts and *some* wine, please.
(b) If you haven't *any* nuts, I'll not have *any* wine, thank you.

The examples above illustrate the use of these items with personal, nonpersonal, count, and noncount reference. But it should be further noted that with *any* the number distinction is typically blurred:

The woman said she'd seen *an animal* running for cover, but her companion said that he hadn't seen *any animal(s)* at all.

NOTE **[a]** On *-one* and *-body*, see 6.22 Notes [a] and [b].
[b] Corresponding fairly closely to the negative *neither* (6.24), there is the nonassertive *either*:

The police did not arrest *either* (suspect).

[c] Beside the partitive *some* [səm] as determiner, a stressed form [sʌm] can be used with singular count nouns in the sense 'a certain' (5.6 Note [b]):

'Some 'man stopped me to ask the way.

[d] Like *everywhere*, *nowhere* (6.22 Note [d]), we have *somewhere*, *anywhere*; in AmE also *-place*.
[e] Assertive forms can be used in nonassertive 'territory' when the presupposition is positive:

Can you see *someone* in the garden (= There is someone in the garden; can you see him/her?)
Would you like *some* wine (= I invite you to have some wine).

Table 6.25: **Partitive indefinites**

NUMBER	FUNCTION	COUNT		NONCOUNT
		PERSONAL	NONPERSONAL	
Assertive singular	pronoun	someone somebody	something	some
	determiner	a (an)		
plural	pronoun and determiner	some		
Nonassertive singular	pronoun	anyone anybody	anything	any
	determiner	either any		
plural	pronoun and determiner	any		

6.26 The partitives include quantifiers, which may (a) increase or (b) decrease the implications of *some*; thus beside 'There are *some* who would disagree', we have:

(a) There are *many* who would disagree.
(b) There are *a few* who would disagree.

Analogously with noncount reference:

The bread looked delicious and I ate {*some.* / *a great deal.* / *a little.*}

This use of quantifiers is not paralleled exactly in nonassertive contexts, where the contrast is rather between total and partial exclusion:

There aren't *any* who would disagree. (= No one)
There aren't *many* who would disagree. (= A few)
The wine was inferior and I didn't drink *any*. (= None)
The wine was inferior and I didn't drink *much*. (= A little)

As well as being pronouns, *many*, *a few*, *a little*, and *much* can be determiners.

The *of*-partitives

6.27 It is typical of the indefinites which have both a pronoun and a determiner role to fuse these roles in *of*-expressions where the final part is a personal pronoun or a noun preceded by a definite determiner; for example:

Some are doing well.
Some students are doing well.
Some of { *the students* / *these students* / *them* } are doing well.

Thus, with singular count partition:

{ *each of* / *one of* / *any of* / *either of* / *none of* / *neither of* } *(the students)*

With plural count partition:

{ *all of* / *both of* / *some of* / *many of* / *more of* / *most of* / *(a) few of* / *fewer, -est of* } *(our supporters)*

With noncount partition:

{ *all of* / *some of* / *a great deal of* / *much of* / *more of* / *most of* / *(a) little of* / *less of* / *least of* / *any of* / *none of* } *(Beethoven's music)*

NOTE Comparative forms can be preceded by items of absolute meaning:

There were *a few more of our supporters* than I had expected.
She played *much less of Beethoven's music* than we had hoped.

6.28 As well as *one*, the other cardinal numerals are readily used in *of*-partitives:

Three of my friends are coming to dinner.

So too the ordinals, and these can be used with both count and noncount expressions:

A/one quarter of his books were destroyed in the fire.
She regulates her life carefully, devoting at least *five-sixths of her free time* to practising at the piano.

With *half*, there is considerable freedom in usage; as a predeterminer, it must itself be without a preceding determiner:

I saw half the { performance. / players. }

In *of*-partitives or otherwise pronominally, it may be determined:

I saw { half / a half / one half } of the { performance. / players. }

Outside *of*-partitives, *another* has only limited use as a pronoun:

There was *another of those unexplained fires* in the city yesterday.

But *cf*:

There have been many fires in the city recently;
{ *another* was / *several* were } reported yesterday.

By contrast, *other* does not enter into *of*-partitives, but in its plural form is otherwise common in pronoun usage:

You should treat *others* as you would like to be treated yourself.

NOTE **[a]** In association with *each* and *one*, *other* and *another* function as reciprocal pronouns. For example:

One student will often help *another*.
Each of us must support *the other*.
The children were very fond of { *each other*. / *one another*. }

[b] The pattern (in figures and words) of the cardinal and ordinal numerals is as set out below. As ordinals, items are usually preceded by *the*, as fractions by *a* or *one*: '*the fourth* of July', '*a third* of a litre'.

0 nought, zero	
1 one	1st first
2 two	2nd second (*as fraction*, a half)
3 three	3rd third
4 four	4th fourth
5 five	5th fifth
6 six	6th sixth
7 seven	7th seventh

8 eight	8th eighth
9 nine	9th ninth
10 ten	10th tenth
11 eleven	11th eleventh
12 twelve	12th twelfth
13 thirteen	13th thirteenth
14 fourteen	14th fourteenth
15 fifteen	15th fifteenth
16 sixteen	16th sixteenth
17 seventeen	17th seventeenth
18 eighteen	18th eighteenth
19 nineteen	19th nineteenth
20 twenty	20th twentieth
21 twenty-one	21st twenty-first
22 twenty-two	22nd twenty-second
23 twenty-three	23rd twenty-third
24 twenty-four (etc)	24th twenty-fourth (etc)
30 thirty	30th thirtieth
40 forty	40th fortieth
50 fifty	50th fiftieth
60 sixty	60th sixtieth
70 seventy	70th seventieth
80 eighty	80th eightieth
90 ninety	90th ninetieth
100 a/one hundred	100th hundredth
120 a/one hundred and twenty	120th hundred and twentieth
1,000 a/one thousand	1,000th thousandth
1,500 a/one thousand five hundred	1,500th thousand five hundredth
2,000 two thousand (etc)	2,000th two thousandth (etc)
100,000 a/one hundred thousand	100,000th hundred thousandth
1,000,000 a/one million	1,000,000th millionth
1,000,000,000 a/one billion	1,000,000,000th billionth

Bibliographical note

On pronouns in general, see Bolinger (1979); Jackendoff (1968); Stevenson and Vitkovitch (1986).

On central pronouns, see Helke (1979); Jacobsson (1968); Saha (1987); Seppänen (1980); Thavenius (1983); on reciprocal pronouns, see Kjellmer (1982); on indefinite pronouns, see Sahlin (1979); on numerals, see Hurford (1975).

7 Adjectives and adverbs

Adjectives

Characteristics of the adjective

7.1 Four features are commonly considered to be characteristic of adjectives:

(a) They can freely occur in ATTRIBUTIVE function, *ie* they can premodify a noun, appearing between the determiner (including zero article) and the head of a noun phrase:

an *ugly* painting, the *round* table, *dirty* linen

(b) They can freely occur in PREDICATIVE function, *ie* they can function as subject complement, as in [1], or as object complement, as in [2], *eg*:

The painting is *ugly*. [1]
He thought the painting *ugly*. [2]

(c) They can be premodified by the intensifier *very*, *eg*:

The children are very *happy*.

(d) They can take COMPARATIVE and SUPERLATIVE forms. The comparison may be by means of inflections (*-er* and *-est*), as in [3–4], or by the addition of the premodifiers *more* and *most* ('periphrastic comparison'), as in [5–6]:

The children are *happier* now. [3]
They are the *happiest* people I know. [4]
These students are *more intelligent*. [5]
They are the *most beautiful* paintings I have ever seen. [6]

Not all words that are traditionally regarded as adjectives possess all these four features. The last two features generally coincide for a particular word and depend on a semantic feature, gradability. The adjective *atomic* in *atomic scientist*, for example, is not gradable and we therefore do not find **very atomic* or **more atomic*. Gradability cuts across word classes. Many adverbs are gradable, and since they also take premodification by *very* and comparison, these two features do not distinguish adjectives from adverbs.

The ability to function attributively and the ability to function predicatively are central features of adjectives. Adjectives like *happy* and *infinite*, which have both these features, are therefore CENTRAL adjectives. Those like *utter* that can be only attributive and those like *afraid* that can be only predicative are PERIPHERAL adjectives.

(c) They cannot take comparison:

*a *busser* station

Furthermore, nouns have other features which distinguish them from adjectives; for example article contrast (*the bus/a bus*), number contrast (*one bus/two buses*), genitive inflection (*the student's essays*), premodification by an adjective (*the young student*).

The basically nominal character of a premodifying noun, such as *garden* in *garden tools*, is shown by its correspondence to a prepositional phrase with the noun as complement: *tools for the garden*. Compare also:

the *city* council ~ the council *for the city*
a *stone* wall ~ a wall (made) *of stone*
August weather ~ weather (usual) *in August*

Such a correspondence is not available for attributive adjectives:

a *long* poem	a *thick* wall
the *urban* council	*hot* weather

Some items can be both adjectives and nouns. For example, *criminal* is an adjective in that it can be used both attributively (*a criminal attack*) and predicatively (*The attack seemed criminal to us*). On the other hand, *criminal* has been converted into a noun in *The criminal pleaded guilty* and *They are violent criminals*. Here are other examples of conversion from adjective to noun:

ADJECTIVES	NOUNS
an *annual* custom	She is hoping to publish an *annual* for children.
a *black* student	There was only one *black* in my class.
a *classic* book	You won't find many *classics* in our library.
intellectual interests	She considers herself an *intellectual*.
a *noble* family	The king greeted his *nobles*.
a *natural* skier	He's a *natural* for the job.
a *six-year-old* boy	Our *six-year-old* is at school.

NOTE **[a]** Like adjectives, nouns can function as subject complement after copular verbs, in particular after *be*:

That man is *a fool*.
The noise you heard was *thunder*.
She became *a nurse*.

Some nouns can also be used within the subject complement after *seem* ⟨esp BrE⟩:

He seems *a fool*. [=*foolish*]
Your remark seems (complete) *nonsense* to me. [=*nonsensical*]
My stay there seemed *sheer bliss*. [=*blissful*]
His friend seems very much *an Englishman*. [=very *English*]

Note however the change of premodifier in: *very much an Englishman* ~ *very English*; and the use of the indefinite article (a sure sign of noun status) in *a fool* and *an Englishman*.

[b] Some noun forms can function both attributively and predicatively, in which case we can perhaps regard them as adjectives. They denote style or material from which things are made:

that *concrete* floor ~ That floor is *concrete*.
Worcester porcelain ~ This porcelain is *Worcester*.
those *apple* pies ~ Those pies are *apple*. ⟨informal⟩

Adjectives and participles

7.5 There are many adjectives that have the same suffixes as participles in *-ing* or *-ed* (including other forms corresponding to *-ed*, *cf* 3.2, 3.9*f*). These are PARTICIPIAL ADJECTIVES:

PREDICATIVE USE	ATTRIBUTIVE USE
His views were very *surprising*.	~his *surprising* views
The man seemed very *offended*.	~the *offended* man

They include forms in *-ed* that have no corresponding verbs:

The results were *unexpected*.	~the *unexpected* results
Her children must be *downhearted*.	~her *downhearted* children
All his friends are *talented*.	~his *talented* friends
His lung is *diseased*.	~his *diseased* lung

When there are no corresponding verbs (**to unexpect*, **to downheart*, **to talent*, **to disease*), the forms are obviously not participles.

When there is a corresponding verb, attributively used *-ed* forms usually have a passive meaning, *eg*:

lost property ~ property that *has been lost*

NOTE **[a]** In some cases the *-ed* participle is not interpreted as passive. The passive interpretation is excluded if the corresponding verb can be used only intransitively:

the *escaped* prisoner ['the prisoner who has escaped']
the *departed* guests ['the guests who have departed']

But even in other instances, the participle relates to the intransitive use of the verb; thus the passive interpretation is impossible in:

a *grown* person ['a person who has grown (to maturity)']

It is unlikely in:

the *faded* curtains ['the curtains which have faded'.]
the *retired* manager ['the manager who has retired']

Predicative use occurs only with some of these participial adjectives:

The curtains are *faded* ['The curtains have faded']
Her father is now *retired*.

Adjectives are subject complement not only to noun phrases, but also to finite clauses and nonfinite clauses:

That you need a car is *obvious.*
Whether she will resign is *uncertain.*
To complain may be *dangerous.*
Playing chess can be *enjoyable.*

Adjectives can also be object complement to clauses:

I consider {what he did / taking such risks} *foolish.*

NOTE The adjective functioning as object complement often expresses the result of the process denoted by the verb:

He pulled his belt *tight.* [1]
He pushed the window *open.* [2]
He writes his letters *large.* [3]

The result can be stated for each sentence by using the verb *be*:

His belt is *tight.* [1a]
The window is *open.* [2a]
His letters are *large.* [3a]

Postpositive

7.8 Adjectives can sometimes be postpositive, *ie* they can immediately follow the noun or pronoun they modify. We may thus have three positions of adjectives:

PREDICATIVE: This information is *useful.* [1]
ATTRIBUTIVE: *useful* information [2]
POSTPOSITIVE: something *useful* [3]

A postpositive adjective can usually be regarded as a reduced relative clause:

something *that is useful* [3a]

Compound indefinite pronouns and adverbs ending in *-body*, *-one*, *-thing*, *-where* can be modified only postpositively:

Anyone (who is) *intelligent* can do it.
I want to try on *something* (that is) *larger.*
We're not going *anywhere very exciting.*

Of course, adjectives that can occur only attributively (*cf* 7.17*ff*) are excluded:

*something (which is) *main* *somebody (who is) *mere*

NOTE [a] Postposition is obligatory for *proper* in the meaning 'as strictly defined', *eg*: *the City of London proper.*

[b] In several institutionalized expressions (mostly in official designations), the adjective is postpositive, *eg*: *the president elect*, *heir apparent*, *attorney general*, *notary public*, *body politic*, *proof positive.*

[c] Adjectives ending in *-able* and *-ible* can be postpositive, as well as attributive, when they are modified by another adjective in the superlative degree or by certain other modifiers: *the best use possible*, *the greatest insult imaginable*, *the only actor suitable*; the adjective phrase is then discontinuous (*cf the best possible use* and 7.9). Some can be postpositive without this constraint, *eg*: *the stars visible*, *rivers navigable.* These convey the implication that what they are denoting has only a temporary application. Thus, *the stars visible* refers to stars that are visible at a time specified or implied, while *the visible stars* more aptly refers to a category of stars that can (at appropriate times) be seen.

Postposition is usual for *absent*, *present*, *concerned*, and *involved* when they designate temporary as opposed to permanent attributes:

The soldiers *present* were his supporters.

[d] *Appointed*, *desired*, *required*, *followed*, *past*, and *preceding* can also be postpositive as well as attributive, *eg*: *at the time appointed*, *in years past.*

Adjectives with complementation

7.9 Adjectives with complementation normally cannot have attributive position but require postposition. Compare:

a *suitable* actor BUT NOT: *a *suitable for the part* actor

The complementation can be a prepositional phrase or a *to*-infinitive clause:

I know an actor *suitable for the part.* [1]
They have a house *larger than yours.* [2]
The boys *easiest to teach* were in my class. [3]
Students *brave enough to attempt the course* deserve to succeed. [4]

If the adjective is alone or merely premodified by an intensifier, postposition is not normally allowed:

*They have a house *(much) larger.*
*The soldiers *(rather) timid* approached their officer.

However, if the noun phrase is generic and indefinite, we can postpone coordinated adjectives, or adjectives with some clause element added, though such constructions are formal and rather infrequent:

Soldiers *timid or cowardly* don't fight well. [5]
A man *usually honest* will sometimes cheat. [6]

The more usual constructions are premodification or a relative clause:

Timid or cowardly soldiers . . . [5a]
A man *who is usually honest* . . . [6a]

The adjective phrase can be discontinuous (*cf* 7.8 Note [c]): the adjective is attributive and its complementation is in postposition. Thus, equivalent to sentences [2] and [3]:

The latest (thing/news) is that he is going to run for re-election.

Unlike types (a) and (b), type (c) adjectives functioning as noun-phrase heads take singular concord:

They ventured into *the unknown*, which was . . .
The best is yet to come.

Type (c) is restricted chiefly to certain fixed expressions. Thus, for example, *the supernatural*, *the exotic*, *the unreal* are more likely to occur than *the lovely*, *the foreign*, *the exciting*, with abstract, generic reference.

NOTE [a] Some of these adjectives can be modified by adverbs:

The very best is yet to come.
He went from *the extremely sublime* to *the extremely ridiculous*.

[b] There are some set expressions in which an adjective with abstract reference is the complement of a preposition:

He left *for good*.	He enjoyed it *to the full*.
in public/private/secret	*from bad to worse*
in short	*out of the ordinary*
on the sly	*in common*

Verbless clauses

7.14 Adjectives can function as the sole realization of a verbless clause (*cf* 14.6, 15.34*f*) or as the head of an adjective phrase realizing the clause:

The man, *quietly assertive*, spoke to the assembled workers.
Unhappy with the result, she returned to work.
Glad to accept, the boy nodded his agreement.
Anxious for a quick decision, the chairman called for a vote.
Long and untidy, his hair played in the breeze.

The clause is mobile:

The chairman called for a vote, *anxious for a quick decision*.

Its implied subject is usually the subject of the sentence ('The chairman is anxious for a vote'). However, if the clause contains additional clause constituents, it can be related to a noun phrase other than the subject:

She glanced with disgust at the cat, *now quiet in her daughter's lap*.

Sometimes the adjective phrase can be replaced by an adverb phrase with little change of meaning:

Rather nervous, the man opened the letter.
Rather nervously, the man opened the letter.

In this function, the adverb phrase is like the adjective phrase in referring to an attribute of the subject ('The man, who was rather nervous, opened the letter'), but it normally does so specifically in relation to the performance of an action.

NOTE The implied subject of the clause can be the whole of the superordinate clause:

Strange, it was she who initiated divorce proceedings.
Most important, his report offered prospects of a great profit.
More remarkable still, he is in charge of the project.

Here too it is possible to substitute an adverb for the adjective with little or no difference in meaning (*cf* content disjuncts in 8.42):

Strangely, it was she who initiated divorce proceedings.

Contingent verbless clauses

7.15 One type of verbless clause, which is often introduced by a subordinator, expresses the circumstance or condition under which what is said in the superordinate clause applies:

(Whether) right or wrong, he always comes off worst in an argument because of his inability to speak cogently.
When fit, the Labrador is an excellent retriever.
If wet, these shoes should never be placed too close to the heat.

The contingent clause can also refer to the object of the superordinate clause, in which case it usually appears in final position:

You must eat it *when fresh*.

NOTE The clause can also refer to the whole of the superordinate clause (which would be realized in the subordinate clause by the pro-form *it*). In such cases the subordinator cannot be omitted:

When (it is) *necessary*, he can be taken to the doctor.
You must come *as soon as* (it is) *possible*.

Exclamatory adjective clauses

7.16 Adjectives can be exclamations, with or without an initial *wh*-element:

Excellent! (How) *wonderful!* (How) *good of you!*

Such clauses need not be dependent on any previous linguistic context, but may be a comment on some object or activity in the situational context.

Syntactic subclassification of adjectives

Attributive only

7.17 In general, adjectives that are restricted to attributive position, or that occur predominantly in attributive position, do not characterize the referent of the noun directly. For example, *old* can be either a central adjective or an adjective restricted to attributive position. In *that old man*

a *big* eater ['someone who eats a lot']
a *clever* liar ['someone who lies cleverly']
a *hard* worker ['someone who works hard']
a *heavy* smoker ['someone who smokes heavily']
a *sound* sleeper ['someone who sleeps soundly']

NOTE The noun can be inanimate:

rapid calculations ['calculations made rapidly']
occasional showers ['showers occurring occasionally']
a *fast* car ['a car that can go fast']
a *fast* road ['a road on which one can drive fast']

Adjectives related to nouns

7.21 Denominal adjectives (*ie* adjectives derived from nouns) tend to be restricted to attributive position:

an *atomic* scientist ['a scientist specializing in the theory of atoms']
a *criminal* court ['a court dealing with crime']
a *criminal* lawyer ['a lawyer specializing in cases of crime']
a *polar* bear ['a bear living near the pole']
a *medical* school ['a school for students of medicine']
musical comedy ['a comedy accompanied by music']
a *tidal* wave ['a wave produced by the tide']

Predicative only

7.22 Adjectives that are restricted, or virtually restricted, to predicative position are most like verbs and adverbs. They tend to refer to a (possibly temporary) condition rather than to a characteristic. Perhaps the most common are those referring to the health (or lack of health) of an animate being:

He felt *ill/poorly* ⟨both esp BrE⟩/*well/faint/unwell*.

However, many people use such adjectives as attributives too; for example:

A *well* person need see a doctor only for a periodic checkup.

A large group of adjectives that are restricted to predicative position comprises adjectives which can take complementation (*cf* 16.38*ff*):

able (*to* + infinitive)	*fond* (*of*)
afraid (*that*, *of*, *about*)	*glad* (*that*, *to*)
answerable (*to*)	*happy* (*that*, *to*, *with*, *about*)
averse (*to*, *from*)	*loath* (*to*)
aware (*of*)	*subject* (*to*)
conscious (*that*, *of*)	*tantamount* (*to*)

Some of these adjectives must take complementation (*eg*: *subject to* and *tantamount to*), and many normally do.

Many of these adjectives closely resemble verbs semantically:

He *is afraid to* do it. ['He *fears to* do it.']
They *are fond of* her. ['They *like* her.']
That *is tantamount to* an ultimatum. ['That *amounts to* an ultimatum.']

NOTE **[a]** *Sick* is the exception among the 'health' adjectives in that its attributive use is very common:

the *sick* woman ['The woman is sick.']

[b] Some of the adjectives that are restricted to predicative position have homonyms that can occur both predicatively and attributively, *eg*:

the *conscious* patient ~ The patient is *conscious*. [= 'awake']
Cf: He is *conscious* of his faults. [= 'aware']

Semantic subclassification of adjectives

Stative/dynamic

7.23 Adjectives are characteristically stative. Many adjectives, however, can be seen as dynamic. In particular, most adjectives that are susceptible to subjective measurement are capable of being dynamic. Stative and dynamic adjectives differ syntactically in a number of ways. For example, a stative adjective such as *tall* cannot be used with the progressive aspect or with the imperative:

*He's being *tall*. *Be *tall*.

On the other hand, we can use *funny* as a dynamic adjective:

I didn't realize he was being *funny*. Her story was very *funny*.

Adjectives that can be used dynamically include *brave*, *calm*, *cheerful*, *conceited*, *cruel*, *foolish*, *friendly*, *funny*, *good*, *greedy*, *helpful*, *jealous*, *naughty*, *noisy*, *tidy*.

Gradable/nongradable

7.24 Most adjectives are gradable. Gradability is manifested through comparison:

tall	~ tall*er*	~ tall*est*
beautiful	~ *more* beautiful	~ *most* beautiful

It is also manifested through modification by intensifiers:

very tall *so* beautiful *extremely* useful

Gradability applies to adverbs as well as adjectives (*cf* 7.39*ff*).

All dynamic and most stative adjectives (*eg*: *tall*, *old*) are gradable; some stative adjectives are not, principally denominal adjectives like *atomic* (*scientist*) and *hydrochloric* (*acid*), and adjectives denoting provenance, *eg*: *British*.

We paid him a very large sum. *So* he kept quiet about what he saw. [1]

If we reverse the order of the clauses, the relationship between the two clauses is changed, and *so* must now refer to some preceding clause:

So he kept quiet about what he saw. We paid him a very large sum. [2]

However, the conjunct adverbs differ from coordinators in that they can be preceded by a coordinator:

We paid him a very large sum, *and so* he kept quiet about what he saw. [1a]

Reaction signal and initiator

7.29 Certain other items must be positioned initially. They are important because of their high frequency in spoken English. Some are restricted to the spoken language. These can be assigned to two small classes:

(i) 'reaction signals', *eg*: *no*, *yes*, *yeah*, *yep*, *m*, *hm*, *mhm*
(ii) 'initiators', *eg*: *well*, *oh*, *ah*; *oh well*, *well then*, *why* ⟨esp AmE⟩

Adverb and preposition

7.30 There are various combinations of verbs plus particles (*cf* 16.3*ff*). Since a preposition is normally followed by its complement, the particle is an adverb if the verb is intransitive:

The plane has taken *off*.

When a noun phrase follows the particle, the latter may still be an adverb. The particle in the phrasal verb in [1] is an adverb because it can be transposed to follow the verb, as in [1a]:

They turned *on* the light. [1]
They turned the light *on*. [1a]

In contrast, *to* in [2] is a preposition, part of the prepositional verb *take to*, because its position is fixed, as we see from [2a]:

They took *to* us. [2]
*They took us *to*. [2a]

Syntactic functions of adverbs

Adverb as adverbial

7.31 ADJUNCTS and SUBJUNCTS are relatively integrated within the structure of the clause (*cf* 8.13, 8.32). Examples of adjuncts:

Slowly they walked back home.
He spoke to me about it *briefly*.

Examples of subjuncts:

We haven't *yet* finished.
Would you *kindly* wait for me.

By contrast, disjuncts and conjuncts have a more peripheral relation in the sentence. Semantically, DISJUNCTS (*cf* 8.40) express an evaluation of what is being said either with respect to the form of the communication or to its meaning. We identify disjuncts with the speaker's authority for, or comment on, the accompanying clause:

Frankly, I'm tired.
Fortunately, no one complained.
They are *probably* at home.
She *wisely* didn't attempt to apologize.

CONJUNCTS (*cf* 8.43) express the speaker's assessment of the relation between two linguistic units, *eg*:

She has bought a big house, *so* she must have a lot of money.
We have complained several times about the noise, and *yet* he does nothing about it.
All our friends are going to Paris this summer. We, *however*, are going to London.
If they open all the windows, *then* I'm leaving.
I didn't invite her. She wouldn't have come, *anyway*.

Adverb as modifier

Modifier of adjective

7.32 An adverb may premodify an adjective. Most commonly the adverb is an intensifier or emphasizer (*cf* 8.36*f*):

extremely dangerous	*really* beautiful
deeply concerned	*very* good
perfectly reasonable	*just* impossible

Some premodifiers are related to adverbs that express such notions as manner and means but also have some intensifying effect:

easily debatable	*quietly* assertive
openly hostile	*readily* available

Some premodifiers express 'viewpoint' (*cf* 8.33):

politically expedient ('expedient from a political point of view')
theoretically sound *technically* possible

NOTE *Enough* may postmodify an adjective: *old enough*. Like *indeed*, it may also postmodify an adverb, though *indeed* tends to go with a premodifying *very*: *carefully enough*, *very easily indeed*.

constructions containing the corresponding adverbs. The simplest illustration is with adverbs equivalent to prepositional phrases containing a noun phrase with the corresponding adjective as premodifier:

He liked Mary *considerably*.
~He liked Mary *to a considerable extent*.
She explained the process *brilliantly*.
~She explained the process *in a brilliant manner*.
He wrote *frequently*.
~He wrote *on frequent occasions*.
Politically, it is a bad decision.
~*From the political point of view*, it is a bad decision.

Here are some other examples of adjective–adverb correspondences:

a *heavy* sleeper	somebody who sleeps *heavily*
a *former* student	somebody who was *formerly* a student
a *faithful* friend	a friend who acts *faithfully*
a *neat* typewriter	a typewriter that types *neatly*
his *legible* writing	He writes *legibly*
a *true* scholar	She is *truly* a scholar
the *main* reason	It was *mainly* the reason

Comparison of adjectives and adverbs

7.39 With gradable adjectives and adverbs there are three types of COMPARISON:
(a) to a higher degree
(b) to the same degree
(c) to a lower degree
The three types of comparison are expressed by these means:

(a) Comparison to a higher degree is expressed by the inflected forms in *-er* and *-est* or their periphrastic equivalents with *more* and *most*:

Anna is {*cleverer* / *more clever*} than Susan.

Anna is the {*cleverest* / *most clever*} student in the class.

(b) Comparison to the same degree is expressed by *as* (or sometimes *so*) . . . *as*:

Anna is *as tall as* Bill.

Anna is not {*as* / *so*} *tall as* John.

(c) Comparison to a lower degree is expressed by *less* and *least*:

This problem is *less difficult* than the previous one.
This is the *least difficult* problem of all.

For higher degree comparisons, English has a three-term inflectional contrast between ABSOLUTE, COMPARATIVE, and SUPERLATIVE forms for many adjectives and for a few adverbs. In Table 7.39 the three inflectional forms are displayed with their periphrastic equivalents.

***Table* 7.39 Comparison of adjectives and adverbs**

	ABSOLUTE	COMPARATIVE	SUPERLATIVE
INFLECTION			
adjective	*high*	*higher*	*highest*
adverb	*soon*	*sooner*	*soonest*
PERIPHRASIS			
adjective	*complex*	*more complex*	*most complex*
adverb	*comfortably*	*more comfortably*	*most comfortably*

NOTE Comparatives of adjectives and adverbs, whether inflectional or periphrastic, can be modified by intensifiers:

much easier	somewhat shorter
much more difficult	a lot more inconvenient
very much better	a good deal sooner
very much more carefully	a great deal more easily

Similarly, superlatives can be modified by intensifiers:

the youngest candidate ever
the most remarkable result ever
by far the best solution
the most absurd answer by far

Inflected superlatives can be premodified by *very*, if a definite determiner is present: *at the very last moment*, *the very youngest*. But neither periphrastic superlatives nor comparatives can be premodified by *very*.

7.40 The comparative is generally used to express a comparison between two persons, two items, or two sets:

Jane is *cleverer* than her sister.
Jane is *cleverer* than all the other students in the class.

The superlative is generally used when more than two are involved:

Jane is the *cleverest* of the three sisters.
Jane is the *cleverest* of all the students in the class.

With the superlative, Jane is included in the group and compared with the others.

NOTE [a] Participle forms which are used as adjectives regularly take only periphrastic forms:

interesting	~*more interesting*	~*most interesting*
wounded	~*more wounded*	~*most wounded*
worn	~*more worn*	~*most worn*

[b] Most adjectives that are inflected for comparison can also take the periphrastic forms with *more* and *most*. With *more*, they seem to do so more easily when they are predicative and are followed by a *than*-clause:

He is *more wealthy* than I thought.

Comparison of adverbs

7.44 For a small number of adverbs, the inflected forms used for comparison are the same as those for adjectives. As with adjectives, there is a small group with comparatives and superlatives formed from different stems. The comparative and superlative inflections are identical with those for the corresponding adjectives *good*, *bad*, and *far*, and the quantifiers *much* and *little*:

badly	~*worse*	~*worst*
well	~*better*	~*best*
little	~*less* (*lesser*)	~*least*
far	~*further* / ~*farther*	~*furthest* / ~*farthest*
much	~*more*	~*most*

Adverbs that are identical in form with adjectives take inflections if the adjectives do so: *fast*, *hard*, *late*, *long*, *quick*. They follow the same spelling and phonological rules as for adjectives, *eg*: *early*~*earlier*~*earliest*:

The unmarked term in measure expressions

7.45 We use the adjective *old* in measure expressions (*x years old*) when we refer to a person's age, regardless of the age:

Mr Jespersen is 75 years *old*.
His granddaughter is two years *old*.

In the scale of measurement, *old* indicates the upper range (*He is old*) but it is also the unmarked term for the whole range, so that *She is two years old* is equivalent to *Her age is two years*. The measure adjectives used in this way are the following, with the marked term in parentheses:

deep (*shallow*) *high* (*low*) *long* (*short*) *old* (*young*) *tall* (*short*)
thick (*thin*) *wide* (*narrow*)

These unmarked terms are also used in *how*-questions and, again, they do not assume the upper range. *How old is she?* is equivalent to *What is her age?* Other adjectives are also used in the same way in *how*-questions, *eg*:

big (*small*), *bright* (*dim*), *fat* (*thin*), *heavy* (*light*), *large* (*little*), *strong* (*weak*).

How heavy is your computer?
How accurate is that clock?

Some adverbs are also used as an unmarked term in *how*-questions, *eg*:

How much does it cost?
How far did you drive today?

NOTE If we use the marked term, as in *How young is John?*, we are asking a question that presupposes that the relevant norm is towards the lower end of the scale, *ie* that John is young, whereas the unmarked term in *How old is John?* does not presuppose that John is old. Notice that neither term is neutral in exclamations:

How young he is! ['He is extremely young!']
How old he is! ['He is extremely old!']

Bibliographical note

On adjectives and adverbs, see Bolinger (1967a); Vendler (1968); Warren (1984). On adverbs, see bibliographical note in Chapter 8.

On comparison and intensification, see Bolinger (1967b, 1972a); Bresnan (1973); Gnutzman et al. (1973); Rusiecki (1985).

Contingency

8.6 Here we have six types of meaning expressed adverbially:

(a) *Cause*, as in:

She died *of cancer*.

(b) *Reason*, as in:

He bought the book *through an interest in metaphysics*.

(c) *Purpose*, as in:

He bought the book *to study metaphysics*.

(d) *Result*, as in:

He read the book carefully, *so he acquired a good knowledge of metaphysics*.

(e) *Condition*, as in:

If he reads the book carefully, he will acquire a good knowledge of metaphysics.

(f) *Concession*, as in:

Though he read the book carefully, he didn't achieve much knowledge of metaphysics.

Modality

8.7 The truth value of a sentence can be changed (*eg* enhanced or diminished) by the use of adverbials. We distinguish three ways:

(a) *Emphasis*, as in:

She *certainly* helped him with his research.

(b) *Approximation*, as in:

They are *probably* going to emigrate.

(c) *Restriction*, as in:

I shall be in Chicago *only* until Thursday.

Degree

8.8 Like adverbials of modality in changing the truth value of a sentence, adverbials of degree add a special semantic component, gradability. There are two types:

(a) *Amplification*, as in:

He *badly* needed consolation.

(b) *Diminution*, as in:

She helped him *a little* with his research.

Formal realization

8.9 The A-element can be realized by a wide range of linguistic structures:

An adverb phrase (2.4) with a closed-class (2.6) adverb as head:

(Just) then, the telephone rang.

An adverb phrase with an open-class (2.6) adverb as head:

You should have opened it *((a bit) more) carefully*.

A noun phrase (17.1*ff*):

They had travelled *a very long way*.

A prepositional phrase (9.1):

Rowena hurried *across the field*.

A verbless clause (14.3):

When in doubt the answer is 'no'.

A nonfinite clause (14.3):

She realized, *lying there*, what she must do.

A finite clause (14.3):

We sent for you *because you were absent yesterday*.

8.10 Some of these realization types occur more frequently than others: prepositional phrases are very common and nonfinite clauses relatively rare, for example. Some are particularly associated with specific meanings, grammatical functions, and adverbial positions: noun phrases with time adjuncts, for example, and finite clauses with end position.

Position

8.11 As compared with other sentence elements (2.3), the A-element can be placed with relative freedom in several positions in a sentence:

I	*By then* the book should have been returned to the library.
iM	The book *by then* should have been returned to the library.
M	The book should *by then* have been returned to the library.
mM	The book should have *by then* been returned to the library.
eM	The book should have been *by then* returned to the library.
iE	The book should have been returned *by then* to the library.
E	The book should have been returned to the library *by then*.

As the notation implies, there are three main positions: *I(nitial)*, *M(edial)*, and *E(nd)*, but there are three subordinate variants of *M* (initial, medial, and end) and one of *E* (initial). *I* and *E* are self-

explanatory, but the primary *M* position may need clarification. It is the position immediately following the operator (2.10) or the copula *be*:

Timothy has *at last* finished his thesis.
Timothy is *at last* a doctor of philosophy.

Where no operator is present, there can be no variants such as *eM*, and *M* is simply the position between the *S* and the *V*; it is similarly the position before *V* when the *S* is ellipted:

The play *daringly* explores a hitherto forbidden subject.
Sharon spoke at this point and *strongly* supported the motion.

The choice of position for an adverbial is determined by semantic and grammatical factors as we shall see in the course of this chapter, but also by the demands of information processing and the principle of end-weight (18.5 and Note [a]). If no special factors determine otherwise, the adverbial is placed at *E*, the position in fact taken in the majority of cases.

NOTE Since the majority of verb phrases combine either the main verb alone or the main verb preceded by only one auxiliary (the operator), it is natural that the *M* position is normally felt to be immediately before the main verb form. This helps to account for the tendency (despite long-standing disapproval) to place an adverbial between *to* and an infinitive ('the split infinitive'). Compare the similarity between the following:

Martha *always* finishes first.
Martha had *always* finished first.
Martha tried to *always* finish first.

Grammatical functions

8.12 In terms of their grammatical functions, adverbials fall into four main categories:

Adjunct
Subjunct
Disjunct
Conjunct

We shall deal with these in turn, along with their respective subcategories.

Adjuncts

8.13 More than other adverbials, adjuncts have grammatical properties resembling the sentence elements S, C, and O. Like them, adjuncts can be the focus of a cleft sentence (18.18*f*):

Hilda [S] helped Tony [O] because of his injury [A].
It was *Hilda* that helped Tony because of his injury.
It was *Tony* that Hilda helped because of his injury.
It was *because of his injury* that Hilda helped Tony.

The parallels extend to the potentiality for being the focus of subjuncts (8.32*ff*):

Only Hilda helped Tony . . . [S]
Hilda helped Tony *only* because of his injury. [A]

to elicitation by question forms:

Who helped Tony? [S]
Who(m) did Hilda help? [O]
Why did Hilda help Tony? [A]

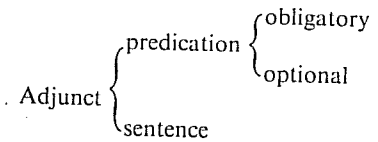
and to alternative interrogation and negation:

Did Hilda help *Tony* or did *Marjorie* (help him)? [S]
Did she help him *because of his injury* or (did she help him) *because she was bored*? [A]
Hilda didn't help *Tony* but (she helped) *Bill*. [O]
Hilda didn't help Tony *because of his injury* but (she helped him) *because she was bored*. [A]

Finally, irrespective of their position (8.11), adjuncts function like other post-operator elements in coming within the scope of predication ellipsis or pro-forms (12.20, 12.6*ff*). In consequence, the following sentences are synonymous:

Grace became *a teacher* [C] *in 1981* [A] and Hamish also became *a teacher* [C] *in 1981* [A].
In 1981, Grace became *a teacher* and so also did Hamish.

But while these characteristics hold generally for all adjuncts, there are three subcategories ranging in 'centrality' from the obligatory predication adjunct (which resembles an object in being both relatively indispensable and fixed in position) to the sentence adjunct whose position is more variable and whose presence is always optional:



Predication adjuncts

8.14 As their name implies, the relations of predication adjuncts are not so much with a whole sentence as with its predication, the post-operator section (2.10). This is true for both of the following:

She put the letter *on the kitchen table.* [1]
She found the letter *on the kitchen table.* [2]

But whereas in [2] the adverbial is *optional* and its omission leaves an acceptable sentence ('She found the letter'), omission is impossible with [1] (*'She put the letter') where the adverbial is thus an *obligatory* component of the sentence.

Predication adjuncts are normally placed at *E* but may be at *iE* if another post-verb element is lengthy and complex:

She put *on the table* a letter she had just received from her lawyer.

In striving for rhetorical effect, such adjuncts can even appear at *I*; for example in highlighting a balance or contrast, as in:

From Australia he came and *to Australia* he has returned.

Sentence adjuncts

8.15 Since we can utter 'Ralph kissed his mother' without needing to add an adjunct, it follows that in each of the following the adjunct is optional:

Ralph kissed his mother *on the cheek.* [1]
Ralph kissed his mother *on the platform.* [2]

But only in the second can the adjunct seem equally natural at *I*:

On the platform, Ralph kissed his mother.

This is a characteristic of the sentence adjunct, demonstrating its relatively 'peripheral' relationship to the rest of the sentence as compared with the relatively 'central' relationship of the predication adjunct in [1].

But the difference does not necessarily lie, as in [1] and [2], in the adjuncts themselves. The same phrase can be used as either predication or sentence adjunct, according as it pinpoints new information (18.4) in the predication or provides general background information for the sentence as a whole:

(I looked everywhere for it and eventually) I found the letter *in the kitchen.* [3]
(I had totally forgotten about the matter, but then, almost by chance,) I found the letter(,) *in the kitchen.* [4]

The contexts supplied show that the adjunct in [3] is predicational while that in [4] is sentential. The parenthesized comma further suggests the relatively peripheral relation of the adjunct, which might occupy a separate tone unit in speech (18.3), as it certainly would if moved from *E*:

. . . but then, *in the kitchen*, almost by chance, I found the letter.

NOTE In many cases, it is convenient to see predication adjuncts as 'object-related' and sentence adjuncts as 'subject-related'. Thus in the following the adjunct would normally be interpreted as relating to the date of the disaster:

We foresaw a disaster *in June.*

By contrast, the adjunct in the following seems naturally to relate to the subject and therefore to the time of the foreseeing:

In June, we foresaw a disaster.

The semantic roles of adjuncts

Adjuncts of space

8.16 Spatial adjuncts realize the roles set out in 8.2 chiefly by means of prepositional phrases since these roles can be clearly and conveniently specified through the respective prepositional meanings (9.4*ff*). But noun phrases can be used as predication adjuncts of distance:

They travelled { a very long way. / several miles.

So too adjuncts of direction with the determiners *this*, *that*, and *which*:

He came *this way* but *which direction* did he go then?

Clausal realization is common and is convenient in enabling one to transcend the specifics of location or even semantic role:

She still lives *where she was born.*
They want to know *where we are sending them.*

These examples reflect the fact that space adjuncts are elicited (again often neutralizing semantic role) by the question *where*:

Where did you stay? (position)
Where are they going? (direction)
Where is the train coming *from*? (source)

But *cf how far* as in:

How far did you drive yesterday? (distance)

NOTE **[a]** The spatial pro-forms *here* and *there* have 'near' and 'far' orientation as with *this* and *that* (6.19).
[b] The position role with respect to persons is often expressed by a *with*-phrase:

Where is Mildred? She is (staying) *with her brother.*

8.17 Direction adjuncts (whether goal or source) can normally be used only with verbs of motion or with verbs used dynamically so as to allow a literal or metaphorical motional meaning:

The boy kicked the ball *through the open window.*
She was speaking *into a tiny microphone.*

By contrast, position and distance adjuncts can be used freely with verbs in stative or dynamic use:

They live { *in London.* / *20 kilometres from here.* }

He's travelling { *in Yorkshire* at present. / *a long way.* }

With *be*, we can have position adjuncts:

Charles is *on the top floor.*

Given that the verb is appropriate, more than one space adjunct can be used in the same sentence; distance and position as in [1], direction and position as in [2], distance and direction as in [3]:

They swam *a mile* [A1] *in the open sea* [A2]. [1]
He fell *into the water* [A1] *near that rock* [A2]. [2]
She walked *a few steps* [A1] *towards him* [A2]. [3]

Since space adjuncts (especially of position) can enter a hierarchical relationship, we can also have two adjuncts even of the same semantic role:

Many people eat *in restaurants* [A1] *in London* [A2].

The order here is essential in order to match the logical relationship, but since the larger location is relatively peripheral, this referring adjunct (but not the other) may be at *I*:

In London, many people eat *in restaurants.*

Direction adjuncts of goal and source may also be paired, with a choice of order dependent largely on information processing (18.4*ff*):

We flew { *from Cairo* [A1] *to Istanbul* [A2]. / *to Istanbul* [A1] *from Cairo* [A2]. }

When adjuncts are coordinated, they must have the same semantic role:

We can meet you *in the theatre* or *at the station.*
I drove *down Gower Street* and *into University College.*

8.18 Irrespective of semantic role, space adjuncts are normally at *E*, but where two or more adjuncts are clustered at *E*, they are ordered as follows:

distance–direction (source, goal) – position

For example:

She walked *a few steps* [A1] *towards him* [A2] *in the darkened room* [A3].

Adjuncts of position can be more easily moved to *I*:

On the top of the building, two men were gesticulating wildly.

Some adjuncts, especially if short, can also be at *M*:

You could *there* catch a train to Manchester.

With *be*, it is very common for *there* and *here* to be at *I*, with subject–verb inversion (18.16) unless the subject is a pronoun:

There he was, waiting in the cold.
Here is the book.

In a similar way, predication adjuncts of position and direction can occur at *I*:

Down { swooped the hawk. / it swooped. }

In a neighbouring street lived my mother.

In negative sentences, predication adjuncts must be at *E*:

My mother did not live *in a neighbouring street.*

But sentence adjuncts can be at *I* and remain within the scope of negation:

In Delhi, it sometimes did not rain for months on end.

Adjuncts of time

8.19 We tend to use the language of spatial dimensions figuratively when we refer to time. In consequence, adjuncts of time are predominantly realized by prepositional phrases, with figurative adaptation of the prepositional meanings (*cf* 9.9*ff*). For example:

The music stopped *at midnight.*
On the following day, we decided to go out for a picnic.
I completed the painting *in two days.*

But in addition, a wider range of structures is available for time than for any other type of adjunct. Noun phrases, as in:

They visit her *every month.*

Finite verb clauses, as in:

Stay in bed *until your temperature comes down.*

Nonfinite clauses, as in:

Travelling on the Continent, I miss the English pub.

Verbless clauses, as in:

I go to the theatre *as often as possible.*

Closed-class adverb phrases, as in:

She *(almost) always* leaves home before 8 a.m.

Open-class adverb phrases, as in:

He spoke to me about it *quite recently*.

Time-position adjuncts

8.20 Time-position adjuncts can be elicited by the question word *when* and the time specified may be narrowly stated or left rather vague:

When did she arrive? { *At 10.15.* / *Some hours ago.*

Moreover, the time position itself may be narrow as in [1] or broad as in [2], irrespective of the specification:

Mozart was born { *in 1756.* / *in the eighteenth century.* [1]

Mozart lived { *in the eighteenth century.* / *in a period of great musical creativity.* [2]

The general anaphoric pro-form for time-position reference is *then* and it is normally associated with the past, especially in contrast to *now*:

I worked in publishing *then*, but *now* I work for an advertising firm.

But *then* can refer equally to a time in the future:

She will telephone you *tomorrow afternoon* and hopes that you will be able to speak to her *then*.

Nor is *now* necessarily confined to present-time reference; in the following example, *now* means 'by that time', 'then':

They had been courting for two years and he *now* felt that she knew his worst faults.

Like spatial adjuncts of position, time-position adjuncts can be in a hierarchical relation, usually with the one denoting the longer or superordinate period coming second:

I'll see you *at nine* [A1] on *Monday* [A2].
The doctor wants to see you *again* [A1] *afterwards* [A2].

But this sequence can be readily reversed if end-weight (18.5 Note [a]) or other communicative requirement is to be served:

I lived there *in the fifties* [A1] *when my first child was born* [A2].

NOTE Out of context, a *when*-clause may be ambiguous:

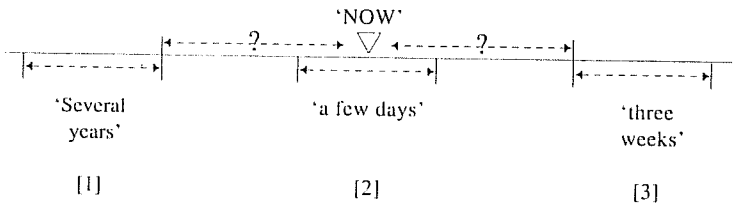
Tell me *when you're ready*.

This may be a noun clause as object ('Let me know *the time at which you'll be ready*') or a time-position adjunct ('*When you're ready*, let me know').

Adjuncts of duration and span

8.21 Adjuncts may express duration of specific ('for ten minutes') or indefinite ('for a short time') length, the durations in question being in the past, the present, or the future:

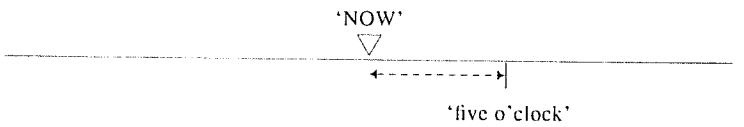
She worked in China *for several years*. [1]
At present his grandchildren are staying with him *for a few days*. [2]
I intend to go skiing *for three weeks*. [3]



Although in [3], we know the precise duration, in none of the sentences [1], [2], or [3] can we relate the beginning or end of the periods mentioned to the speaker's 'NOW'. By contrast, adjuncts of forward and backward span specifically relate duration to such a 'NOW' (or other fixed point of orientation), though again without necessarily being definite about the length of the duration itself.

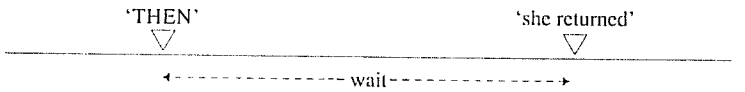
Forward span is particularly associated with *till* and *until*:

I shall be in my office *until five o'clock*.



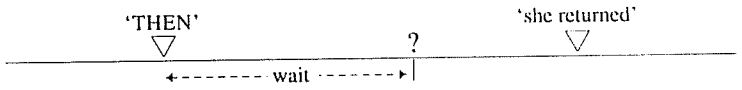
The beginning of the time span is fixed in relation to the speaker's orientation point, but its terminus is as indicated by the adjunct only if the clause is positive:

He waited *until she returned*.



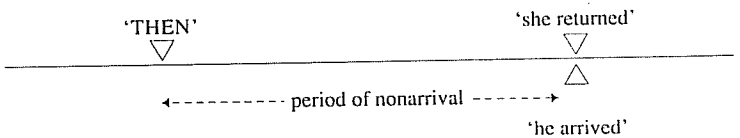
By contrast:

He didn't wait *until she returned.*



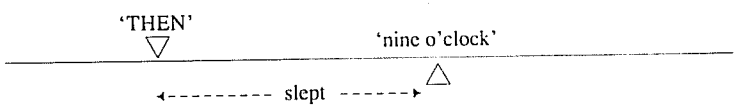
With negative clauses and verbs of momentary meaning, on the other hand, the span indicated by the adjunct marks the extent of the nonoccurrence of the momentary action:

He didn't arrive *until she returned.*

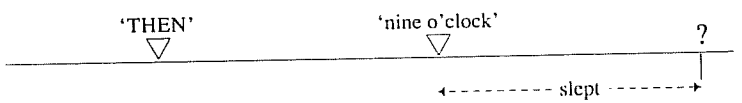


Compare also:

I slept *till nine o'clock.*

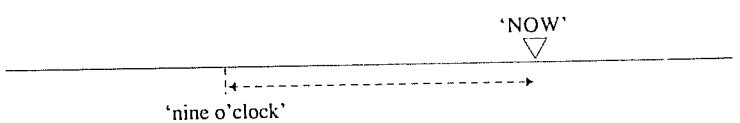


I didn't sleep *till nine o'clock.*



8.22 *Backward span* is particularly associated with *since* and the perfect aspect:

I have been in my office *since nine o'clock.*

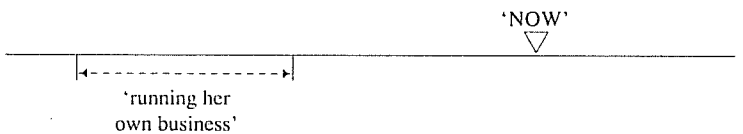


But adjuncts with *since* must specify a definite starting point; if the span is more general, *for* can be used or a noun phrase without *for*:

I have been in my office *(for) several hours.*

If the backward span is not to be related to the speaker's orientation point, the verb phrase is not in the perfect, and we are now dealing simply with duration which may be definite or indefinite. For example:

She was running her own business { *for three years.* / *(for) quite a long time.*



Finally, we may note *since*-clauses according as these clauses do or do not have verbs in the perfect:

She has become much better off *since she has worked with us.* [1]
She has become much better off *since she worked with us.* [2]

In both cases, the period of improvement extends to the present, but whereas [1] entails that she still works 'with us', [2] implies that she does not. If the verb in the *since*-clause does not itself involve duration, on the other hand, the contrast is less absolute:

He's been getting bad headaches { *since he has joined the army.* [3] / *since he joined the army.* [4]

While [3] certainly entails that he is still in the army, [4] leaves it open as to whether or not he is still in the army.

NOTE [a] Span may be specified also by *from*, *up to*, *over*, *by*, *before*, and by noun phrases like *this past (month)*, *these last (few days)*, *this next year*:

We'll be here *up to midday.*
She has worked here *only this last week.*

The beginning and end of a span can be indicated by the correlatives *from . . . to* ⟨esp BrE⟩, *from . . . through* ⟨esp AmE⟩, *between . . . and*:

The office is closed *between one and two o'clock.*

[b] Especially informally, especially in AmE, and especially where the main clause refers to the present, backward span can be expressed without the perfect:

Things *are* much worse *since you left*.
I never *saw* you here *before*.

[c] Adjuncts of duration and span usually answer questions of the form *How long* . . . ? or more specifically *Till when* . . . ? *Since when* . . . ?

Time-frequency adjuncts

Definite frequency

8.23 It is necessary to distinguish frequency of *occasion* ('How many times?') from frequency of *period* within which occasions took place ('How often?'). The former are normally predication adjuncts, the latter sentence adjuncts, and when in a hierarchical relation these are placed in the more peripheral position:

Veronica came to see me *twice*. [occasion]
Veronica came to see me *daily*. [period]
Veronica came to see me *twice* [o] *daily* [p].
Each year [p] I have to make a presidential address *three times* [o].

Indefinite frequency

8.24 Here we must, on both semantic and grammatical grounds, distinguish four subsets:

(a) Denoting usual occurrence (*normally*, *generally*, *ordinarily*, etc), as in

Jenny *usually* goes to bed before midnight.

Since one can speak of something normally *not* occurring, it is a characteristic of these adjuncts to be sentential and to be capable of preceding a clausal negative:

Usually, Jenny doesn't go to bed before midnight.

(b) Denoting universal frequency (*always*, *continually*, *permanently*, etc), as in

He has been asking for you *incessantly*.

(c) Denoting high frequency (*often*, *time and again*, *repeatedly*, etc), as in

She has had plays broadcast *frequently*.

(d) Denoting low frequency (*occasionally*, *rarely*, *seldom*, *never*, etc), as in

I *very seldom* play golf these days.

If placed at *I*, some items in (d) can oblige us to invert subject and operator:

Never have I experienced such rudeness.

Unlike the adjuncts in (a) and (b), some of those in (c) and (d) can be used in antithetic sentence sequences:

Often he takes his medicine, but *often* he doesn't.
She *occasionally* greets me but *occasionally* she doesn't.

Items from (a) and other subsets as sentence adjuncts can readily cooccur with predication adjuncts from (b), (c), or (d):

Generally (a), they are *continually* (b) complaining.
He (*almost*) *never* (d) goes out at night, *normally* (a).
Sometimes (d), the dog barks *repeatedly* (c).

Time-relationship adjuncts

8.25 The time adjuncts which express a relationship between two time positions are of three types:

(a) Typically denoting a temporal sequence, as in

When did you *previously* go to the dentist?

(b) Typically implying a concessive relation, as in

I don't understand (*even*) NÔW.

(c) Typically contrasting one time with another, as in

Maureen should complain about it *again*.

NOTE But time relationship is often expressed by subjuncts (*cf* 8.35) such as *already*, *still*, *yet*.

Positions of time adjuncts

8.26 Although like other adjuncts, time adjuncts are most frequently at *E*, all types can readily take the 'scene-setting' *I* position:

In 1982, the economy started to recover.
For many years, no one seemed interested in buying the house.
Normally, late nights have a bad effect on me.
Even after that, he refused to cooperate.

But *M* is also common for time adjuncts, especially those realized by adverbs:

She has *recently* completed a new play.
We may not *often* get such an opportunity.

Where time adjuncts cooccur in the same sentence, time duration tends to be most 'central', time position most 'peripheral', so that if the three main types all occurred at *E* they would most likely be ordered as in:

I was there *for a short while* [dur] *every day or so* [freq] *last year*. [pos]

NOTE Placing of a time adjunct is acutely affected if there is a decided orientation towards either the subject or the object; *cf* 8.15 Note.

Process adjuncts

Manner adjuncts

8.27 Manner adjuncts are chiefly realized by adverb phrases, by *like*-phrases, *as*-clauses, and by prepositional or noun phrases involving such nouns as *way* and *manner*; for example:

She looked at him *coldly*.
He walks *like his father*.
Please don't speak *in that rude way*.
They cook *((in) the) French style*.
I wish I could write *as you do*.

Manner adjuncts are almost always at *E*, but although thus associated with the greatest rhetorical weight in a clause, there is no simple interrogative device for eliciting them.

Adjuncts of means, instrument, and agency

8.28 There are close semantic similarities between means, instrument, and agent, and there is considerable overlap in realization. The means and the agent are often expressed with *by*-phrases, but the latter is grammatically distinct in correlating with the passive (and hence corresponding to a transitive clause); for example:

He was killed *by a terrorist*. (~A terrorist killed him.)

A means adjunct, on the other hand, can easily occur in a transitive clause:

She influenced me *by her example*.

Instrument adjuncts differ from both means and agent adjuncts in generally being realized by *with*-phrases:

He was killed *with a hunting knife*.

But means and instrument adjuncts can share realization with adverbs; thus means in:

They decided to treat the patient *surgically*. (='by means of surgery')

Similarly, instrument in:

She examined the specimen *microscopically*. (where the adverb is here intended to mean 'with a microscope')

NOTE [a] If in the last example, *microscopically* meant 'in microscopic detail', the adjunct would be one of manner (8.27) and could be gradable, '(quite) microscopically'. [b] Means and instrument adjuncts can be elicited by *how*-questions: '*How* are you travelling to Hamburg?' '*By air*/*By Lufthansa*'.

[c] All process adjuncts are normally placed at *E*, though manner adjuncts can be at *M*. Cooccurrence of process adjuncts is by no means unusual; for example:

She was *accidentally* [manner] struck *with a racket* [instrument] *by her partner* [agent].

Adjuncts of respect

8.29 A wide range of realization is available for adjuncts that express the respect in which the truth value of a sentence is being claimed. For example:

A neighbour is advising me { *legally.* / *on legal issues.* / *so far as legal matters are concerned.* / *in respect to law.* / *from a legal standpoint.* }

Respect is a relationship often expressed by subjuncts or disjuncts (8.33, 8.41), but when adjuncts are involved they are usually predicational and are placed at *E*.

Adjuncts of contingency

8.30 Contingency relations are commonly expressed by disjuncts (8.41), but adjuncts are often used for *reason* and its correlate *purpose*, both of which can be elicited by the same question forms, *Why* . . . ? *What* . . . *for*? as in:

He did it { *because he was angry.* [reason] / *to relieve his anger.* [purpose] }

As well as by finite clauses, reason adjuncts are realized by prepositional phrases and nonfinite clauses; for example:

She made the sacrifice *for her son*.
There were many deaths *from malnutrition*.
With him being so angry, I didn't tell him the worst part.

Purpose adjuncts are realized by nonfinite (infinitive) clauses:

The driver slowed down { *(in order)* / *(so as)* } *to avoid an accident.*

In formal style, finite clauses can occur:

Inoculation must be carried out *lest the disease spread.*
He died *(in order) that others might live.*

But some forms of finite clause are used more generally:

Turn the gas off *in case there's an explosion.*
We'd better leave now *so we can get home before dark.*

When the *concessive* relation is expressed by an adjunct, this takes the form of a prepositional phrase:

She gave the lecture *despite her illness.*

Contingency adjuncts are usually sentential and although normally at *E* they are commonly (especially those of purpose and concession) placed at *I*.

Relative positions of adjuncts

8.31 Looking now at the whole range of adjunct types (8.16–8.30), we can consider some general principles of their relative ordering in cooccurence:

(a) the order, especially of sentence adjuncts, can be dictated by such considerations as what can be taken for granted and what needs to have most impact (*cf* 18.4*ff* on information processing);

(b) shorter adjuncts tend to precede longer ones.

But subject to (a) and (b), where adjuncts cluster at *E*, they will tend to occur in the following sequence:

respect – process – space – time – contingency

It is less usual to find more than one adjunct at *I*, but any such cluster would tend to follow a converse order; *eg*: space (or process) – time.

Subjuncts

8.32 Subjuncts have a subordinate and parenthetic role in comparison with adjuncts; they lack the grammatical parity with other sentence elements that we saw as criterial in 8.13. There are two main types, each with subtypes (Fig 8.32). Those with *narrow orientation* are chiefly related to the predication or to a particular part of the predication. Those with *wide orientation* relate more to the sentence as a whole, but show their subjunct character in tending to achieve this through a particular relationship with one of the clause elements, especially the subject.

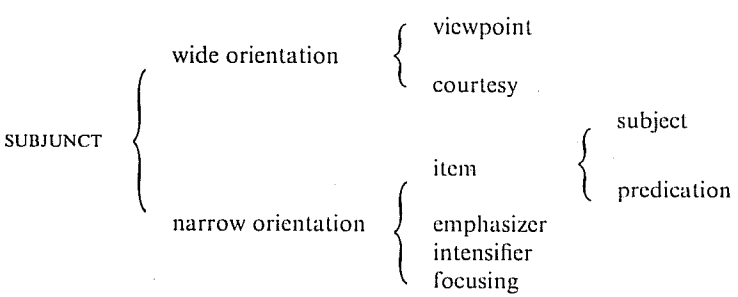


Fig 8.32

Wide orientation

Viewpoint subjuncts

8.33 The subjuncts which express a viewpoint are largely concerned with the semantic concept of respect, are predominantly expressed by nongradable (7.1) adverb phrases, and are characteristically placed at *I*. For example:

Architecturally, the plans represent a magnificent conception.

But there can be other forms of realization:

From a personal viewpoint, he is likely to do well in this post.
Looked at politically, the proposal seems dangerous.

Especially in AmE, we find adverbs in *-wise*:

Weatherwise, the outlook is dismal.

Courtesy subjuncts

8.34 A small number of adverbs in *-ly*, along with *please*, serve to convey a formulaic tone of politeness to a sentence. They normally occur at *M*:

You are *cordially* invited to take your places.
He asked if I would *please* read his manuscript.

Courtesy subjuncts obviously involve the semantic category manner but are quite distinct from manner adjuncts. Contrast:

She *kindly* [subjunct] offered me her seat.
('She was kind enough to offer . . .')
She offered me her seat *kindly* [adjunct].
('She offered me her seat *in a kind manner*.')

NOTE Though *thanks* (or *thank you*) communicatively matches *please* as a response form, there are few grammatical similarities except that both can occur in isolation:

'Would you like a drink?' '*Please*'.
'Here is your drink.' '*Thanks*'.

While *please* usually occurs at *M* (= *I* with the imperative), *thanks* is at *E*:

'(Will you) *please* have another helping.'
'I really have had enough, *thanks*.'

Narrow orientation

Item subjuncts

8.35 The commonest item to be associated with subjuncts is the *subject* of a clause, with the subjunct operating in the semantic area of *manner* but distinguished from the corresponding manner adjunct by being placed at *I* or *M*:

She has *consistently* opposed the lawyers's arguments.

This does not mean that her own arguments have been conducted consistently but that she has been consistent in always opposing the lawyer's.

Many such subjuncts express volition, as in:

Intentionally, they said nothing to him about the fire.
With great reluctance, he rose to speak.

Since many *predication* subjuncts are idiomatically linked with particular verbs, they are best treated under phrasal verbs in 16.2*ff*. Here, however, we should mention the subjuncts associated with the expression of time. The uses of *already*, *still*, and *yet* as time-relation subjuncts can be summarized as follows:
Declarative positive:

I {*already* / *still*} admire him. (*but*: *I *yet* admire him.)

Declarative negative, with subjunct *preceding* the negative:

I *still* haven't spoken to him. (*but*: *I *already/yet* haven't . . .)

Declarative negative, with subjunct *following* the negative:

He can't {*yet* drive. / drive *yet*.}

?He can't *still* drive/drive *still*. (*He can't *already* drive.)

Interrogative positive:

Is he *already/still/yet* here? (all three – esp *yet* – also at *E*)

Interrogative negative:

Isn't he *already/still/yet* here? (all three – esp *yet* – also at *E*)

NOTE [a] *Any more* and *any longer* function as nonassertive, and *no more* and *no longer* as negative time-relation subjuncts:

He doesn't work for us *any more/longer*.
He *no longer* works for us.
She said she would see me *no more*.

[b] Other common time subjuncts are *just*, *(n)ever*, the first cooccurring mainly with the perfect or progressive:

I've *just* finished my supper.
She was *just* talking to him a moment ago.
They {don't *ever* / *never*} seem to read books.

Emphasizers

8.36 Emphasizers are subjuncts expressing (largely at *iM* or *M*) the semantic role of *modality* with a reinforcing effect on the meaning of a sentence. For example:

I {*just* / *really* / *simply*} can't believe a word he says!

Some emphasizers are characteristic of very informal speech; for example:

I wish I could *darned well* find that book.
They told him to get *the hell* off their land.

Others occur only in certain grammatical environments, notably *always* and *well* with modalized verb phrases:

Even if you didn't know where I was, you could *always* have telephoned to ask.
She said that she had no money and that may *well* be true.

NOTE Emphasizer subjuncts can frequently occur as responses; thus to the question 'Are you willing to help?' we might have

(Yes) *certainly*.
Sure(ly). ⟨esp AmE⟩
(Yes) *indeed*.
Certainly not.

Intensifiers

8.37 The intensifier subjuncts are broadly concerned with the semantic category of *degree*, indicating an increase or decrease of the intensity with which a predication (usually containing an attitudinal verb) is expressed. They characteristically appear at *M*.

(a) Increased intensification to various degrees is realized by *amplifiers*, as in:

They *fully* appreciate the problem.
He has *completely* ignored my question.
She was *badly* in need of help.
How (very much) they must have suffered!

(b) Decreased intensification to various degrees is realized by *downtoners*, as in:

They have *practically* forced him to resign.
In spite of his manners, I *rather* like him.
She *sort of* laughed at the idea. ⟨informal⟩
I was *only* joking.
He didn't *in the least* enjoy the party.

Especially at the extremes of intensity, subjuncts of (a) and (b) can be given emphasis by appearing at *E*:

I understand your attitude *totally*.
She won't mind *in the slightest*.

NOTE [a] Some intensifiers occur only in specific environments; for example, *possibly* with *can('t)* in nonassertive clauses:

She can't *possibly* expect you to wait so long.

[b] As well as relating to attitude, intensifiers are used in respect of quantity and time:

I paid him *a great deal* for his advice.
She slept *a little* in the afternoon.

Focusing subjuncts

8.38 Special attention may be called to a part of a sentence as broad as predication or as narrow as a constituent within a phrase. There are two types of focusing subjunct that can so operate; one is *restrictive*, as in:

I *merely* wanted to know his name. (*ie* I didn't want to know anything else)
Only her sister visited her in hospital. (*ie* No one else did so)

The other is *additive*, as in:

Fred had *also* invited his mother-in-law. (*ie* in addition to others)
Even on Sundays, my doctor is willing to come and see me. (*ie* in addition to ordinary working days)

With most focusing subjuncts, the usual position is immediately before the part to be focused, and if that is the whole or part of the predication, the position is *M*. As with negation, therefore, there is the possibility of ambiguity:

She had $\left\{\begin{matrix} not \\ only \\ also \end{matrix}\right\}$ questioned her patients the previous week.

Since it is normal to give the prosodic emphasis to the final phrase of a sentence, this would usually be spoken, read, and understood with the focus on the time adjunct. But of course in speech, the focus could be clearly placed on any of the three post-operator constituents.

. . . QUÈSTIONED her patients . . . (*ie* as opposed to examining them)
. . . questioned her PÀTIENTS . . . (*ie* as opposed to her colleagues)
. . . questioned her patients the PRÈVIOUS week . . . (*ie* as opposed to the current week)

In writing, care can be taken to place a focusing subjunct in close proximity to the part required (and prescriptive tradition urges this particularly with *only*). Usually this is before the item ('*only* her patients') but may be after it ('the previous week *only*'), and this is obligatory with *alone* and *too* ('her patients *too*') but is disallowed with *just* and generally with *even* (*?'the previous week *even*').

NOTE In focusing *wh*-items, *exactly* and *just* are common:

I know *exactly* where to find him.
Just when did you send in your application?

8.39 Focusing can involve correlative constructions. For example:

I saw her *neither* that day *nor* the day after.
They had *neither* met the author *nor (even)* read any of his novels.

With either of these items at *I*, there is subject–operator inversion:

They had *neither* met the author, *nor* had they (*even*) read any of his novels.

Cf also:

She had *both* written poems *and (also)* had some published.
We must ignore *not only* his manners *but (also)* the way he is dressed.

Such correlation is frequently achieved through a construction resembling a cleft sentence (18.18):

It was *not just* that she ignored me; it was *particularly* that she was so pointedly nice to my wife.

More formally, *not only* and *not merely* can be in *I*-position with consequent subject–operator inversion:

Not merely have I lent you money; I have (*also*) helped you get jobs.

Disjuncts

8.40 Where adjuncts are seen as on a par with such sentence elements as S and O, while subjuncts are seen as having a lesser role, disjuncts have by contrast a superior role to sentence elements, being somewhat detached from and superordinate to the rest of the sentence. There are two broad types, each with subtypes (see Fig 8.40). First we have the relatively small class of STYLE disjuncts, conveying the speaker's comment on the style and form of what is being said and defining in some way the conditions under which 'authority' is being assumed for the statement. Thus where [1] is stated as an unsupported fact, [2] is conditioned by a style disjunct:

Mr Forster neglects his children. [1]
From my personal observation, Mr Forster neglects his children. [2]

The second type is the much larger class of CONTENT disjuncts, making an observation on the actual content of an utterance and on its truth conditions:

To the disgust of his neighbours, Mr Forster neglects his children. [3]

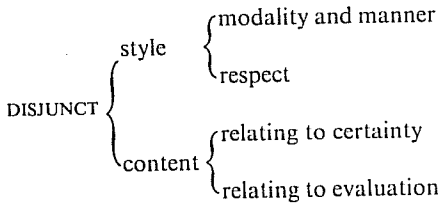


Fig 8.40

Although not restricted as to position (and while some, as we shall see, are often at *M*), most disjuncts appear at *I*.

Style disjuncts

8.41 Many style disjuncts can be seen as abbreviated clauses in which the adverbial would have the role of manner adjunct:

Frankly, I am tired.
(*cf*: 'I tell you *frankly* that I am tired'.)

Sometimes the disjunct has full clausal form:

If I may say so without giving you offence, I think your writing is rather immature.

More often, a clausal disjunct is nonfinite, as in *to be frank*, *putting it bluntly*, *considered candidly*.

The semantic roles of disjuncts fall under two main heads:

(a) Manner and modality, thus involving items such as *crudely*, *frankly*, *honestly*, *truthfully*; *eg*:

(To put it) briefly, there is nothing I can do to help.
You can, *in all honesty*, expect no further payments.

(b) Respect, thus involving items such as *generally*, *literally*, *personally*, *strictly*; *eg*:

Strictly (in terms of the rules), she should have conceded the point to her opponent.
I would not, *(speaking) personally*, have taken offence at the remark.
From what he said, the other driver was in the wrong.

It will be seen that disjuncts in (b) often constitute ways of guardedly 'hedging' the accompanying statement. A particular case of this arises in *metalinguistic* comment in which the disjunct draws attention to a point of terminology:

In a word, he is a traitor, though I would not say that he had *literally* betrayed anyone.

NOTE [a] When used in questions, disjuncts in (a) may relate to the speaker or to the addressee:

Privately, was Henry ever in prison?

This can mean either 'I ask you privately to tell me' or 'I ask you to tell me privately'.
[b] Disjuncts in (b) can be expressed by *if*-, *since*- and *because*-clauses, but the latter must be at *E*:

He was drunk, *because he couldn't stand.*

Content disjuncts

8.42 Comment on the content of an utterance may be of two kinds:
(a) relating to *certainty*;
(b) relating to *evaluation*.
Both can be expressed by a wide range of adverb phrases, by prepositional phrases and – especially those in (a) – by clauses.

(a) *Certainty*. These disjuncts comment on the truth value of what is said, firmly endorsing it, expressing doubt, or posing contingencies such as conditions or reasons. For example, beside the statement 'The play was written by Francis Beaumont', we may have:

The play was { *undoubtedly* / *apparently* / *perhaps* } written by Francis Beaumont.

Compare also:

In essence, the judge called her evidence in question.
Since she had no time to have the car fixed, Rachel telephoned for a taxi.
The proposal would have been accepted *if the chairman had put it more forcibly.*

(b) *Evaluation*. These disjuncts express an attitude to an utterance by way of evaluation. Some express a judgment on the utterance as a whole, including its subject:

Wisely, Mrs Jensen consulted her lawyer.
('Mrs Jensen was wise in consulting her lawyer.')

So also *correctly*, *cunningly*, *foolishly*, *justly*, *rightly*, *stupidly*, etc. Other evaluation disjuncts carry no implication of comment on the subject:

Naturally, my husband expected me home by then.
('It was natural for my husband to expect me back by then' – *not* 'My husband was natural . . .')

So also *curiously*, *funnily (enough)*, *strangely*, *unexpectedly*, *predictably*, *understandably*, *disturbingly*, *pleasingly*, *regrettably*, *fortunately*, *happily*, *luckily*, *sadly*, *amusingly*, *hopefully* ⟨esp AmE⟩, *significantly*. Prepositio-

nal phrases and relative clauses (sentential and nominal) involving such lexical bases are also used:

To my regret, she did not seek nomination.
What is especially fortunate, the child was unhurt.
We were not, *which is surprising*, invited to meet the new members of staff.

NOTE [a] The semantic difference between the relationships in (a) and (b) is underlined by the fact that sentence paraphrases for (a) cannot involve putative *should* (14.14), whereas those for (b) always can:

(a) *Obviously*, the child is recovering.
~'It is obvious that the child is recovering.'

(b) *Fortunately*, the child is recovering.
~'It is fortunate that the child {is / should be} recovering.'

[b] Just as in *to my regret* (in contrast to *regrettably*) it is made explicit as to who feels the regret, so with some adverbs we may add such a specification with a *for*-phrase. For example:

Luckily (for Peter), the doctor arrived speedily.

Conjuncts

8.43 As their name implies, conjuncts serve to conjoin two utterances or parts of an utterance, and they do so by expressing at the same time the semantic relationship (*eg* of time or contingency) obtaining between them. For example:

The candidate is a fine teacher, a broadcaster of some experience, and a respected drama critic. *All the same*, there is a feeling on the committee that someone younger should be appointed.

The conjunct *all the same* here connects two separate sentences, indicating a concessive relation between them: *despite* the candidate's high qualifications, some members of the committee were not satisfied.

As in this example, conjuncts are usually at *I*, but their connective role is often achieved more smoothly when they are placed at *M*:

The cinema has lost none of its attractions in India and the film industry has *in consequence* continued to flourish.

Although some conjuncts (such as the informal *though*) commonly appear at *E*, this position can somewhat obscure the connective role.

NOTE [a] Conjuncts often correspond to adverbials in an otherwise unexpressed clause:

My wife is very busy this evening, and [I tell you something] *in addition*, she is not feeling very well.

[b] As well as *connecting* utterances, some of the commonest conjuncts such as *now* and *so* have a major role as discourse *initiators*. Consider the following as the first words of a street encounter:

So you're better again, Bill!

Here an *extralinguistic* situation seems to be conjoined as it were, with an appropriate *linguistic* reaction to it: 'I see you up and about, *so* I conclude you've recovered from your illness.'

The commonest discourse initiator of all (*well*) is less easy to account for plausibly. When used connectively it has a *transitional* function ('Given that my previous point is *well* founded, my next point is . . .'), as in:

I hear you've bought a new house; *well*, when are you moving?

Note the following exchange in Matt Cohen's novel *Flowers of Darkness* (1981):

'Well,' said Donna.
'Well,' Annabelle replied. *Well* was always Donna's opening remark, delivered in a way to make clear that she knew Annabelle was in the midst of some inadmissible train of thought.

[c] Conjuncts can semantically endorse a connection already expressed by grammatical subordination; for example:

I see her regularly because she is, *by the way*, a friend of my brother's.

The semantics of conjuncts

8.44 We now group some of the commoner conjuncts according to their semantic roles:

A: LISTING

(i) *Enumerative*, as in:

In the first place, the economy is recovering, and *secondly* unemployment is beginning to decline.

Cf also *for one thing* (. . . *for another thing*), *next*, *then (again)*, *finally*; especially in formal and technical use, we find *a . . . b . . . c . . .*, *one . . . two . . . three . . .*

(ii) *Additive*, as in:

She has the ability, the experience, and *above all* the courage to tackle the problem.

Cf also *furthermore*, *moreover*, *what is more*, *similarly*, *in addition*, *on top of that*.

B: SUMMATIVE, as in:

He was late for work, he quarrelled with a colleague, and he lost his wallet; *all in all*, it was a bad day.

Cf also *altogether*, *overall*, *therefore*, *in sum*, *to sum up*.

C: APPOSITIVE, as in:

There was one snag; *namely*, the weather.

Cf also *that is (to say)*, *ie*, *for example*, *eg*, *in other words*, *specifically*.

D: RESULTIVE, as in:

I got there very late, *so* I missed most of the fun.

Cf also *therefore*, *as a result*, *accordingly*, *in consequence*, *of course*.

E: INFERENTIAL, as in:

You haven't answered my question; *in other words*, you disapprove of the proposal.

Cf also *in that case*, *so*, *then*, *otherwise*, *else*.

F: CONTRASTIVE

(i) *Reformulatory* and *replacive*, as in:

She's asked some of her friends – some of her husband's friends, *rather*.

Cf also *(or) better*, *more accurately*, *in other words*, *alias*, *worse*.

(ii) *Antithetic*, as in:

They had expected to enjoy being in Manila but *instead* they both fell ill.

Cf also *on the contrary*, *by contrast*, *on the other hand*, *then*.

(iii) *Concessive*, as in:

My age is against me: *still*, it's worth a try.

Cf also, *however*, *nevertheless*, *yet*, *all the same*, *of course*, *that said*, and several informal expressions such as *anyhow*, *anyways* ⟨esp AmE⟩, *still and all* ⟨esp AmE⟩, *only*, *though*.

G: TRANSITIONAL

(i) *Discoursal*, as in:

Let me introduce you to my sister, and *by the way*, did I tell you that I'm moving?

Cf also *incidentally*, *now*.

(ii) *Temporal*, as in:

The ambulance got stuck in rush-hour traffic and *in the meantime* the child became delirious.

Cf also *meanwhile*, *originally*, *subsequently*, *eventually*.

Cooccurrence and correlation

8.45 Conjuncts from different sets can appear in the same sentence:

So [resultive] I did reasonably well, *all in all* [summative].
Then [inferential] she'll get the job *nevertheless* [concessive]?

Conjuncts from the same set are sometimes used in reinforcement; for example, the additive items in:

Moreover, he had *in addition* a qualification in accountancy.

More usually, such reinforcement occurs through conjuncts appearing along with compatible conjunctions. These may involve coordination (as with *and so*, *but yet*, *or rather*) or subordination (as with *if . . . then*, *although . . . still*):

Even if you're taking the car only a short distance, you should *nevertheless* have your driving licence with you.

NOTE Correlation often seems excessively heavy and formal, especially perhaps in causal relationships (*because . . . therefore*). By contrast, reinforcement where no subordination is involved often seems over-informal (as in '*But still*, she got the job, *though*') and in some cases it is regarded as objectionably tautologous (as in the sequence *but however*).

Bibliographical note

For general studies of adverbials, see Buysschaert (1982); Greenbaum (1969); Guimier (1988); Huang (1975); Nilsen (1972); with a theoretical emphasis, Bartsch (1976), Emons (1974); Schreiber (1972); Ungerer (1988).

On particular subsets of English adverbials, see Aarts (1989b); Bolinger (1972); Dudman (1984); Hartvigson (1969); Heny (1973); Jacobson (1978, 1981); Lee (1987); Schiffrin (1985); Svartvik (1980).

On adverbial collocations, see Bäcklund (1970); Crystal (1966); Greenbaum (1970).

On adverbial positions, see Jacobson (1964, 1975).

On intonational aspects of adverbial usage, see Halliday (1967); Taglicht (1983).

Other relevant studies include: Anderson (1976); Greenbaum (1973); Halliday and Hasan (1976); Lakoff (1975); Larson (1985).

9 Prepositions and prepositional phrases

9.1 Prepositions are a closed class of items (2.6, but *cf* 9.3) connecting two units in a sentence and specifying a relationship between them. For example:

(I don't like to) drink *out of* a cracked cup. [1]
(He was) very grateful *for* her help. [2]
The elderly man *in* the raincoat (looks ill.) [3]

In all three, the second unit is the *prepositional complement*, but in [1] the link is to a verb phrase, in [2] an adjective phrase, and in [3] a noun phrase. The sequence of preposition and its complement is known as a *prepositional phrase*, and its role may be to act as a postmodifier in noun-phrase structure (such that the whole sequence *The elderly man in the raincoat* of [3] constitutes a complex noun phrase: 17.1*ff*). But as we have seen in Chapter 8, prepositional phrases can also function as adverbials, and the 'link' can then be between the prepositional complement and a whole clause. Compare, for example, the adverbial in [4]:

In a few minutes, we'll know the result of the blood test. [4]

Prepositions may be simple or complex (9.3), and in either case their complements are usually noun phrases; but they can also be nonfinite (*-ing*) clauses or nominal (*wh-*) clauses. For example:

near / *on top of* } + the control tower

from / *in terms of* } + { the financial estimates / scrutinizing the results / what you were saying / where she was sitting }

NOTE **[a]** Although also having a nominal function, *that*-clauses and infinitive clauses cannot be prepositional complements. Compare:

I was surprised { *at* her angry response. / *at* hearing her objection. / *at* what she said. / to hear her objection. / that she responded so angrily. }

[b] A prepositional complement is 'object territory' (6.7) and personal pronouns are therefore in the objective case:

They moved towards *me/us/him/her/them*.

After *and*, however, subjective forms are sometimes found in hypercorrect usage; *cf* 6.7 Note [b].

Deferred prepositions

9.2 Though prepositions normally precede their complements, there are circumstances in which this cannot happen:

(a) Where the subject of a passive construction corresponds to the prepositional complement in the active analogue; thus

We have paid *for the car*.
~ *The car* has been paid *for*.

(b) Where the prepositional complement is thematized (18.23*ff*) in sentences with infinitive or *-ing* clauses; thus

It is unpleasant to work *with that man*.
~ *That man* is unpleasant to work *with*.
It is not worth listening *to his advice*.
~ *His advice* is not worth listening *to*.

In addition, there are circumstances where deferment is optional, depending chiefly on stylistic preference. Where the prepositional complement is an interrogative pronoun, deferment indeed is normal:

What are you looking *at*?
Who is she talking *about*?

In such cases, the close relation between the verb and the preposition (16.5*f*) makes alternative arrangement awkward and rare. Elsewhere, there can be a choice:

Who did you sell your house *to*?
To whom did you sell your house? ⟨formal⟩

A similar choice is more general where the prepositional complement is a relative pronoun:

The building (*that*) you're standing *in front of* was designed by Lutyens.
The building *in front of which* you are standing was designed by Lutyens. ⟨formal⟩

NOTE **[a]** With some simple prepositions (such as *through*) and most complex ones (such as *because of*, *in addition to*), deferment is virtually disallowed.
[b] Superficially resembling deferred prepositions are *prepositional adverbs*, identical in form with the corresponding prepositions except that, unlike them, they are never unstressed. Compare:

Until you recover, you must 'stay *in the 'house.*
Until you recover, you must 'stay *'in.*
I should have parked the car *behind the house* but I left it *in front.*

Simple and complex prepositions

9.3 The commonest prepositions are a small number of monosyllabic items such as *at, for, in, on, to, with*, typically unstressed and often with reduced vowel except when deferred. Compare:

What are you looking *at* [at]?
I'm looking *at* [ət] *this huge telephone bill.*

But in addition there are polysyllabic prepositions, some of them compounds formed historically from the monosyllabic ones (such as *inside, within*) or derived from participles (such as *during*) or adopted from other languages (such as *despite, except*). Thus although prepositions are a closed class in comparison with truly open classes like nouns, they are less literally a closed class than determiners or pronouns.

The number of prepositions has been increased partly by using still more participles (for example, *barring, concerning, granted*) but chiefly by combining prepositions with other words to form 'complex prepositions'. These are of two main types:

(a) a simple preposition preceded by a participle, adjective, adverb, or conjunction, as with *owing to, devoid of, away from, because of*;
(b) a simple preposition followed by a noun and then a further simple preposition, as with *in charge of, by means of, at variance with, in addition to, as a result of.*

NOTE [a] Some prepositions of foreign origin are not thoroughly 'acclimatized' in general use; for example, *qua, re, vis-à-vis, à propos.*
[b] Items of quasi-preposition status include *near (to)* which admits comparison ('He came and sat *nearer the front*') as well as *than* and *as* which can also be – and for some people can only be – conjunctions:

She is taller *than* I am. (*than* as conjunction)
She is taller *than* I. (*than* as conjunction with ellipsis: rather formal)
She is taller *than me.* (*than* as preposition)

[c] Some complex prepositions ending in *of* admit alternative genitive constructions:

for the sake of the family ~ for the family's sake
on behalf of my friend ~ on my friend's behalf

Prepositional meanings

9.4 Though the relationship between two linguistic units as mentioned in 9.1 may be wide-ranging in meaning, most of them are either spatial or figuratively derived from notions of physical space. Consider *in* as used in the following examples:

I like being *in this room.* [1]
She'll finish the work *in the present month.* [2]
His life is *in danger.* [3]
They told me this *in all seriousness.* [4]

The period of time in [2], the danger in [3], and the seriousness in [4] are to be understood as having the capacity to envelop in a kind of three-dimensional space analogous to the physical room in [1]. We must therefore begin by understanding the ways in which prepositions refer to some of the basic spatial dimensions, as set out in Fig 9.4. This shows three different kinds of distinction.

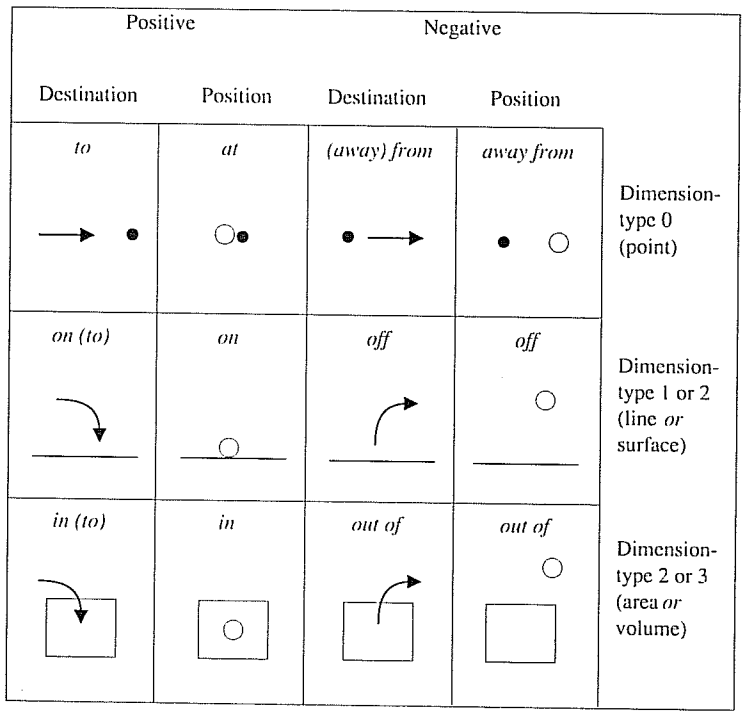


Fig 9.4

First, the prepositions are contrasted as 'positive' or 'negative' (such that *off*, for example, means 'not *on*'). Secondly, the prepositions distinguish between 'destination' (movement with respect to an intended location) and 'position' (static location). Thirdly, we have three dimension types: one which ignores dimension altogether, treating location as a point even if in reality it is a continent:

He walked *to the lamp-post.*
They flew *to Australia.*

The second dimension type embraces what is in real space either one-dimensional or two-dimensional:

She put her toe *on the line.*
They were alone *on the tennis-court.*

The third dimension similarly straddles two actual dimensions: two-dimensional or three-dimensional space:

Some cows were grazing *in the field.*
My coat is *in the wardrobe.*

Space

Position and direction

9.5 Between the notions of directional movement and static position there is a cause-and-effect relation which applies equally to (a) the positive prepositions and (b) the negative prepositions:

(a) Jack ran *to the corner* and then stood *at the corner.*
Put the book *on(to) the top shelf* and leave it *on the top shelf.*
She went *into her office* and stayed *in her office.*
(b) Mildred moved *from Bloomsbury* last year and enjoys living *away from the city centre.*
Take the typewriter *off the table* and leave it *off the table.*
He walked *out of the house* and stayed *out of the house* all afternoon.

Where places are regarded as points on a route or as institutions to which one is attached, dimension-type 0 is invoked:

Does this train stop *at Lincoln*?
Our daughter is *at Oxford* studying philosophy.

But where that same place is thought of in terms of residence, dimension-type 2/3 is appropriate:

I've never lived either *in Lincoln* or *in Oxford.*

Analogously, if the referent is considered as a surface, dimension-type 1/2 is appropriate, while if it is considered as necessarily enclosing, then dimension-type 2/3 comes into play:

They were rowing *on* } *Lake Windermere.*
I was swimming *in* }

I'll lie *on the bed* for a few minutes.
There was a child asleep *in the bed.*

NOTE [a] While *to* usually implies achieving the destination, *towards* is more neutrally directional:

She drove *to Edinburgh* (and arrived at noon).
She drove *towards Edinburgh* (but that may not be her destination).

[b] Though the relationship 'X is on Y' usually involves Y being a horizontal surface below X, this is by no means necessary:

There are several people on the mountain-side.
. . . pictures . . . wall
. . . flies . . . ceiling
. . . apples . . . tree

Contiguity with a side surface is often expressed by *against* ('Who left the ladder *against the fence*?').
[c] The use of *at*, *in*, *on* is often idiomatic; thus *on earth* but *in the world*; 'She is doing well *at school*' is often preferred in BrE, while '. . . *in school*' is general in AmE. *Cf* (with different determiner constraints: 5.19) '*on* land, *at* sea, and *in* the air'.

Relative position

9.6 Rather than absolute position, many prepositions indicate the position of something relative to the position of something else:

The police station is *opposite my house.*
~My house is *opposite the police station.*

Some prepositions form antonymic pairs, as indicated in Fig 9.6. A is *above X* and B is *below X* (as X is *below A* and *above B*); C is *in front of X* and D is *behind X* (as X is *behind C* and *in front of D*).

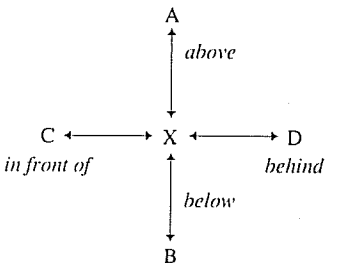


Fig 9.6

Similar to *above* and *below* are *over* and *under* respectively, though the latter tend to mean '*directly* above' and '*directly* below'. Similar to *in front of* and *behind* are *before* and *after*, though the latter tend to imply relative precedence rather than physical position. Like *under* are the less common *beneath* (somewhat formal) and *underneath*. With *on top of* we combine the sense of 'above' with abutment.

Abutment is also normally implied with *by*, *beside*, and *with*:

She left the keys { *by* / *with* / *beside* } *her purse.*

By contrast, *close to* and *near (to)* generally exclude actual contact; these prepositions are unique in admitting comparative inflection (7.39):

Please move this desk { *close(r) to* / *near(er) (to)* } *the wall.*

With *between*, we positionally relate two objects or groups of objects, whereas with *among* (and *amid(st)*, more formally) we are dealing with a more general plurality:

There must be space to walk *between the chairs and the wall.*
I left the letter *among my birthday cards.*

The converse of *between* and *among* is to some extent expressed by *around* (esp AmE, *round* is esp BrE):

There were trees *around the house.*
~There was a house *among the trees.*

NOTE [a] The reciprocal relativity of *opposite (to)* and *facing* is reflected in their frequently having reciprocals (6.28 Note [a]) as their complement:

Let's sit { *opposite (to)* / *facing* } *each other.*

[b] Especially in BrE, *about* is used like *around*:

She put her arms *about him.*

[c] Most prepositions of relative position can also be used of relative direction and destination; for example:

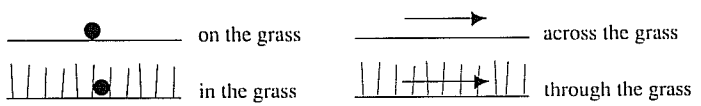
The mouse scampered *under the bookcase* and disappeared.

Passage

9.7 The notion of passage combines position and motion, disregarding destination:

The referee complained because people were moving *behind the goalposts.*
I love walking *through woods* in spring.

Other prepositions commonly used for passage are *by*, *over*, *under*, *across*, and *past*. It is worth noting the parallel between positional *on* and *in* on the one hand and *across* and *through* on the other:



Passage and direction are frequently related to conceptual axes, especially the vertical and horizontal, as shown in Fig 9.7. With *(a)round*, on the other hand, the relation is to a real or fancied point such as a corner or a centre:

Be careful as you drive *round corners.*
The children were playing *around the park.*

But spatial relations are often expressed by orientation to the speaker, so that 'He lives *down the hill*' will relate not only to the vertical axis as in Fig 9.7 but will imply 'further down from where I am speaking' or 'further down from the place I am speaking about'. Similarly:

Their house is *past the church.* (ie 'beyond the church' in relation to the orientation point)
They have gone *across the moors.* (ie 'from here')

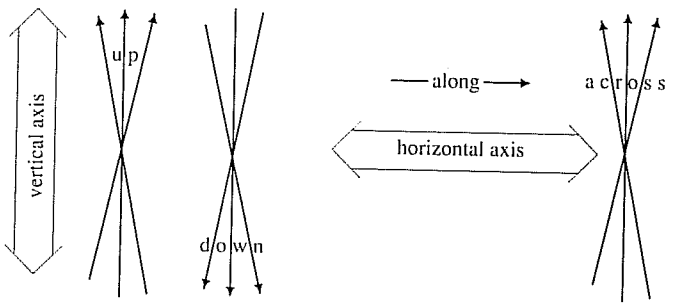


Fig. 9.7

Note that the difference between '(coming) *up the road*' and '(going) *down the road*' may have more to do with personal orientation than with relative elevation. *Cf* also:

There's someone walking *up and down the drive.*

NOTE [a] Just as verbs like *come* and *go* strongly imply the personal orientation, so others are congruent with prepositional meaning, even to the extent of enabling the preposition to be omitted; for example *climb (up)*, *jump (over)*, *flee (from)*, *pass (by)*.

[b] Prepositions that can convey motion or direction can be used also to express the static resultative meaning of having reached the destination:

The horse has successfully jumped *across the gap.*

[c] Especially when preceded by *all* and *right*, prepositions such as *over*, *(a)round*, and *through* express pervasive meaning:

Crowds were cheering *(all) along the route*
There were police *(right) round the house.*

Metaphorical extension with spatial prepositions

9.8 With many spatial prepositions, metaphor enables similar but abstract relations to be expressed. This is particularly striking with time (9.9) but a wide range of other meanings must also be noted, where the proximity to literal use can be readily perceived. For example:

in the room	:	in this book, in some difficulty
out of the bottle	:	out of danger, out of the competition
beneath the branches	:	beneath contempt
under the floorboards	:	under suspicion
up the hill	:	up the social scale
downhill	:	down market
beyond the post office	:	beyond endurance
over the mountain	:	(she is getting) over her illness when her temperature was over 40 °C
from Boston to Bangor	:	from generation to generation
between the trees	:	between ourselves
through the tunnel	:	through the ordeal

NOTE Some prepositions are used in what would seem a converse relationship:

The cow is *in calf*. (~?the calf is *in the cow's womb*)
The office is *out of envelopes*. (~?All envelopes seem to be *out of the office*).

Note also: *in/out of luck*

Time

Time position

9.9 Three prepositions, *at*, *on*, and *in*, are used in expressions answering the question 'When?' and they reflect a concept of time as analogous to space. Thus *at* is used for points of time, where time is conceived as being 'dimensionless':

The film will begin *at 7.20 p.m.*

It is not only instants that can be so considered:

What are you doing *at the weekend*?
She last saw her parents *at Christmas*.
Chaucer frequently speaks of books because *at that time* they were rare and highly valued.

Where time is regarded as a period, the usual preposition is *in*, reflecting analogy with two- or three-dimensional space:

In the evening, I listened to some Beethoven records.
Where did he live *in his childhood*?
I saw her *in March/in 1988/in the following week*.

But in expressions referring to *days*, the preposition is *on*:

We can come *on Monday* or *on any other day that you may prefer*.
The baby was born *on July the twelfth*.

So too with an interval that is specifically part of a day:

on Sunday afternoon; *on Thursday night*.

NOTE [a] Reference to *night* may disregard its 'dimension' as in:

I have to sleep *in the afternoon* because I cannot sleep *at night* very easily.

But it can also be viewed as a period, with the regular use of *in*:

We heard her coughing several times *in the night*.

[b] A phrase like *in three days* may be used to indicate a duration or a point three days hence; thus 'He'll do it *in three days*' may mean *either* 'He'll take three days to do it' (without commitment to when the three days will be) *or* 'He'll do it three days from now' (the converse of 'He did it three days ago').

Time duration

9.10 In answer to *How long?* we have above all phrases with *for*:

We stayed in a rented cottage *for the summer*.

The same meaning, with some emphasis on the duration, can be expressed with *throughout* and *all through*. By contrast, *during* indicates a stretch of time within which a more specific duration can be indicated:

During the summer, we stayed in a rented cottage *for a month*.

But with appropriate lexical support in the context, the difference between *during* and *for* (*throughout*, etc) can be neutralized:

Try to stay alert $\left\{\begin{matrix}\textit{throughout}\\\textit{during}\end{matrix}\right\}$ *the entire ceremony*.

Duration expressions with *over* carry the implication of a period containing some divisions or 'fences'. Thus one can stay *overnight*, *over the weekend*, *over the Christmas period* but hardly *?*over the ceremony*, *?*over the evening*.

Duration can be specified by reference to the beginning and ending:

The office will be open *from Monday to Friday*.

While *from . . . to* corresponds to *for* ('The office will be open *for five days*'), *between . . . and* can be used in the more general sense of *during*:

The office will be open *between Monday and Friday*. (*ie* '*for a period* within the stretch specified').

NOTE The expression *from x to y* is chiefly BrE and although it normally means that the periods *x* and *y* are both included, there can be uncertainty. The corresponding AmE expression *(from) x through y* is inclusive.

9.11 Duration specifying only a starting point or a terminal point is expressed by phrases with *by, before, from, after, since, till, until, up to*. For example:

She will be here *by Friday night.*
She will not be here *before Friday night.*
I worked *from eight o'clock (onwards).*
I began working (at some time) *after eight o'clock.*
I have been working *since eight o'clock.*

He did not set out $\left\{\begin{matrix}till\\until\end{matrix}\right\}$ *Monday afternoon.*

You can stay here *till /until/up to lunch time.*

Note the contrast in:

We slept *until midnight.* (=we stopped sleeping then)
We didn't sleep *until midnight.* (=we started sleeping then)

NOTE With the rather formal *pending*, the complement usually denotes a period and the preposition thus roughly corresponds to 'up to the start of and during (the period)':

They should cease action *pending negotiations.*

But the complement can also refer to a point of time and in such cases the preposition means 'until':

They should cease action *pending the court's decision.*

The items *prior to* and *in advance of* can replace *before* in formal style.

Cause and purpose

9.12 There is a spectrum of relations extending from cause to purpose. For the part covering cause, reason, and motive, we have prepositional phrases with items such as *because of, on account of, for, out of*:

He lost his job *because of his laziness.*
She was fined *for dangerous driving.*
He misdirected the letter *out of spite.*
They died *from exposure.*
She can't turn the heating on *for fear of a fire outbreak.*
The plane crashed *through some navigational error.*

But of course the notion of 'motive' shades into purpose, goal, and target, for all of which the common preposition is *for*:

An appeal is being opened *for a new hospital.*
They are appealing *for donations.*
We had better set out *for home.*
She is applying *for a better job.*

Where the complement is animate, the phrase usually means 'intended recipient':

He built a play-pen *for the little girl.*

By contrast, *to* is used with the 'actual recipient':

She presented a plaque *to the retiring supervisor.*

With *at*, the goal or target is usually viewed with hostility; contrast:

He shouted *at them.* ('loudly reproved')
He shouted *to them.* ('called')
The police rushed *at the house.* ('charged')
The police rushed *to the house.* ('hurried')

But with *aim, point*, and above all *smile*, the target can be viewed neutrally; contrast:

She smiled (kindly) *at the child.*
They laughed (unsympathetically) *at the idea.*

NOTE [a] The converse of goal is source, expressed usually by *from* or *out of* (but *cf* 9.14 Note [c]):

She made it *for me*~*from a piece of pigskin.*
X lends *to Y*~Y borrows *from X.*

Compare also 'He comes *from America*' (='He is an American') in contrast to

'He has come *from America* (='He was in America recently').

[b] When *as* is used in the sense 'in the role of', the phrase comes close to expressing reason:

As a subscriber, I ought to have been consulted.

From means to stimulus

9.13 Another spectrum of relations expressed by prepositions covers means, instrument, agency, and stimulus. The first two respond to the question 'How?' with *by* used for means and *with* for instrument, as in:

I go to work *by car.*
Please send this to the Delhi office *by telex.*
The burglar entered *by the back door.*
She won the match *with her fast service.*
He levered it up *with a crowbar.*

Note the corresponding negative of *with*:

He managed to open the car *without a key.*

In contrast to means and instrument, the agent is an animate which instigates or causes something. It is expressed by the preposition *by*, the

complement of which frequently corresponds to the subject of a transitive verb:

This picture was painted *by Degas*.
~ *Degas* painted this picture.
I was bitten *by a neighbour's dog*.
~ *A neighbour's dog* bit me.

But an agent phrase need not be accompanied by a passive verb phrase:

People thought the play was *by Webster*.

Stimulus and reaction are expressed chiefly by *at*:

I'm surprised *at her attitude*.

In AmE this is general, but in BrE *with* is preferred if the stimulus is a person:

They were furious *with Paul*.

Other stimulus and reaction prepositions include *about*, *in*, *of* and *to*:

I was pleased *about the choice of date*.
Are you interested *in quantum theory*?
I think he's jealous *of her*.
To me, her proposal is broadly acceptable.

NOTE With means of transport, *on* plus article can often be used in place of *by* plus zero:

I often go to work *on the 8.15 train*.

The use of *on* here is shown to be means and not locative, since the latter sense would require *in* (9.5).

Accompaniment

9.14 Especially when the complement is animate, *with* conveys the meaning 'in the company of', *without* the converse:

I hope you will come to dinner *with your husband*. (*ie* 'accompanied by')
I hope you will come to dinner *with us*. (*ie* – usually – 'at our home')
He is going for a walk *with his dog*.
For once, Jill went *without her husband*.

But the complement need not be animate:

What will you drink *with your meal*?
I cannot concentrate *without silence*.

The accompaniment may therefore become a circumstance and the phrase connote 'manner':

He entered the room *with a worried look*.
She set off *without a care*.

NOTE [a] Manner is also expressed with *(un)like*:

He spoke *with a barrister's skill*. (Contrast: 'He spoke with a barrister')
Fred, *(un)like his brother*, is trusted by few. (Contrast: 'Fred is (un)like his brother')

[b] The sense of accompaniment can shade into or even cooccur with opposition:

She was arguing *with her brother*. (*cf* 'She and her brother were arguing')

But there is also a contrast between *with* and *against*, *for* and *against*:

I would rather have him *with me* than *against me*.

Are you $\left\{\begin{matrix}with\\for\end{matrix}\right\}$ the government or *against it*?

[c] Expressions of accompaniment are used also for possession, so that there is some interchange between *with(out)*, *of*, and the genitive:

The pianist has great talent. ~ A pianist *with great talent*
~ A pianist *of great talent*
~ The pianist's great talent

Another close tie is with the notion of 'ingredients', expressed by *with* and *(out) of*:

The sauce was made *with fresh cream*.
The fence is *of wood* but the posts are *of concrete*.

Concession and other relations

9.15 Prepositions expressing *concession* include *in spite of* and its more formal synonym *despite*, the still more formal *notwithstanding*, and the somewhat informal *for all*, *with all*:

The article is being published $\left\{\begin{matrix}in\ spite\ of\\for\ all\end{matrix}\right\}$ her disapproval.

For *exception*, the chief prepositions are *except (for)*, *excepting*, *with the exception of*, *excluding*, *apart from* ⟨esp BrE⟩, *aside from* ⟨esp AmE⟩, *but*, and the rarer *save*, *bar*, and *barring*:

Except for the weather, our stay in Scotland was enjoyable.
Everyone seemed tired *but me*.

The converse of exception is *addition*, expressed by *besides*, *as well as*, *in addition to*; compare:

The orchestra was disappointing $\left\{\begin{matrix}except\ for\\as\ well\ as\end{matrix}\right\}$ the soloist.

Negative condition is expressed by *but for*, as in:

But for me, the case would have been lost. (*ie* 'If it hadn't been for me')

For the relationship *respect*, we have the prepositions *as for*, *as to*, *about*, *on the matter of*, *concerning*, *as regards*, *with regard to*, and the more formal *with reference to*, *with respect to*, and *re*.

Now, *about your application*, are you sure you would like a job of this kind?
The coat is splendid *as to the material*, but I'm less happy *as regards the cut*.

The pair *as to* and *as for* differ in that the latter tends to introduce a topic transition:

The coat is splendid but *as for the hat* I don't think it suits you.

Many expressions of respect occur in complementation of verbs and adjectives (Chapter 16):

He told her *of his problems* but was silent *on his failed marriage*.
They argued *about the children* and quarrelled *over money*.

One aspect of respect is to make explicit a *standard* by which assessment is made; for this, several prepositions are in common use:

For a teacher, he seems extraordinarily ignorant.
I'm better *at squash* than I am *as a tennis player*.
She is very clever *with her hands*.

Modification

9.16 Both prepositions and prepositional adverbs (9.2 Note [b]) can be modified in terms of *measure* and *degree* by being accompanied by intensifiers (7.33). For example:

She arrived { *shortly after ten.* / at ten or *shortly after*.

He expected to be *well ahead of Compton* but he finished in fact *just behind*.
Please rehang the picture *about half a metre further down* (*the wall*).

Though in many cases such modification seems clearly to apply to the preposition, there are equally cases where it seems to apply to the whole prepositional phrase:

Should I stand at one side or *right in the middle?*
Many people are *against public ownership completely*.

Bibliographical note

For general and theoretical studies of prepositions, see Bennett (1975); Vestergaard (1977). Guimier (1981) provides a valuable bibliography.

On specific issues, see Buyssens (1987); Jacobsson (1977); Jaworska (1986); Leech (1969); Lindkvist (1976); Quirk (1968, Ch. 14).