

COMPLEMENTISER AND RELATIVISER IN THE ENGLISH SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

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Abstract

Words combine to form larger units; phrases, clauses, and sentences. The study of the structure of phrases, clauses, and sentences is referred to as syntax. Quirk, et, all (1985:47) distinguishes sentences into two types they are; simple sentences and multiple sentences which cover compound sentences and complex sentences. A simple sentence consists of one independent clause, a multiple clause contains more than one clauses, a compound sentence consists of two or more independent clauses, while a complex sentence consists of in subordinate and subordinate clauses.

Subordinate clause, in embedding the element of the in subordinate clause use either complementiser or relativiser. For example: (1) John said *that* he did not come to the party. *That* in (1) is considered to be complementiser since it introduces the subordinate clause. (2) John met the teacher *that* teaches you English. *That* in (2) is classified as relativiser because it is used to introduce the modifying clause.

This paper attempts to discuss complementiser and relativiser in the English subordinate clauses and describe the constituent structure in a tree diagram using the approach proposed by Kroeger (2005). The data were taken from a novel entitled *Saved by The Bride* by Fiona Lowe (2013).

Keywords: *complex sentences, subordinate clauses, complementiser or relativiser*

I INTRODUCTION

A sentence is mainly a group of words linking together and expressing an idea, event or description. The words in an English sentence have a certain order and rule regarding ways to either expand or shorten it. The boundaries of a sentence are easily identified, as it begins with a capital letters and ends with terminal punctuation mark (period, punctuation mark or exclamation mark).

Quirk, et, all (1985:47) distinguishes sentences into two types they are; simple sentence and multiple sentences which cover compound sentences and complex sentences). Compound sentence consists of two or more independent or in subordinate clauses while complex sentence is a sentence consisting of a main clause or independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses. According to Van Valin, JR, (2004:133) complex sentences are non-coordinate sentences containing more than one clause or more than one VP.

Kroeger (2005:218) states that a clause can be embedded within another in two simple ways, they are coordination vs. subordination. When two constituents belonging to the same category are adjoined to form another constituent of that category, it is referred to as a coordinate structure or a compound sentence, such a structure is considered to be doubly headed, because both of the adjoined elements function as heads of the larger unit. Coordinate sentences in English are usually connected by conjunctions such as *and*, *but*, and *or*, as in the example: (1) *Jack came into the room and Jane stood up*. The clauses: *Jack came into the room* and *Jane stood up* are independent clauses since they can stand by themselves. The coordinate conjunction used to conjoin the two independent clauses in (1) is coordinator *and*.

In contrast, in a complex sentence, the subordinate clause functions as a dependent rather than a co-head. There are three types of subordinate clauses; they are (a) complement clauses, adjunct (or adverbial) clauses, and relative clauses, such as in (2)

(2) a. Fred believes *that* John married Mary.

b. *After* entering the room, Jack took off his coat.

c. I saw the man *who* had helped you.

The clause in (2a) is linked with conjunction *that*, to introduce the subordinate clause, *John married Mary*. The subordinate clause in (2a) is referred to as a complement clause and *that* is referred to as complementiser. In (2b) the subordinate clause is initiated by the preposition *after* to introduce the subordinate clause *entering the room* therefore it is called an adjunct clause since it takes the function as

an adjunct in the matrix clause. And in (2c) the clauses are conjoined by the use of conjunction *who* to introduce the subordinate clause, *had helped you*. The subordinate clause in (2c) is referred to as a relative clause and the relative pronoun *who* is considered as a relativiser. A relativiser is a kind of complementiser which introduces the modifying clause. The terms complementiser and relativiser are often caused confusion for the students learning syntax therefore this paper attempts to discuss the use of these two terms and try to describe the constituent structure by applying tree diagrams.

II MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study is classified as a library research and the data source was a novel entitled *Saved by The Bride* by Fiona Lowe (2013). The complex sentences involving complement and relative clauses were the data of this study. The data were analysed in a descriptive qualitative way based on the theory proposed by Kroeger (2005). To clarify the differences between the use of complementiser and relativiser the tree diagrams describing their constituent structures are presented.

III RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 COORDINATE VS SUBORDINATE CLAUSES

Prior to the discussion of complementiser used in complement clauses, and relativiser in relative clauses it is important to show the distinction of coordinate and subordinate clauses. A clause can be expanded in two basic ways that is by the use of coordination and subordination. When two constituents belonging to the same category are conjoined to form another constituent of that category it is called as coordinate clause. Such a structure is usually considered to be doubly headed, since both of the conjoined elements function as heads of the larger unit. While a subordinate clause is a clause which functions as a dependent, rather than a co-head. Kroeger (2005:218). This can be seen in the following examples:

- (3) a. Marry left the room *and* Jack came.
 b. I liked this red scarf, *but* Leslie liked that one.
 c. Marry believes *that* Max is honest.

In (3a and b) the conjunctions, *and* and *but* conjoin independent clauses, clauses that can stand by themselves so they are classified as coordinate clauses. Both of the conjoined clauses function as heads of the larger unit, and can be described in the following tree diagram.

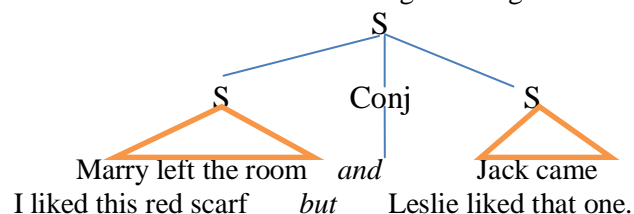


Diagram. 1.

In (3c) the conjunction *that* introduces the dependent clause which is required by the verb *believe* that precedes it, the verb *believe* needs an NP or a clausal complement. This type of conjunction is referred to as complementiser by Kroeger (2005), Brown and Miller (1980) and Fromkin, et al (1984). The constituent structure of sentence (3c) can be seen in diagram.2.

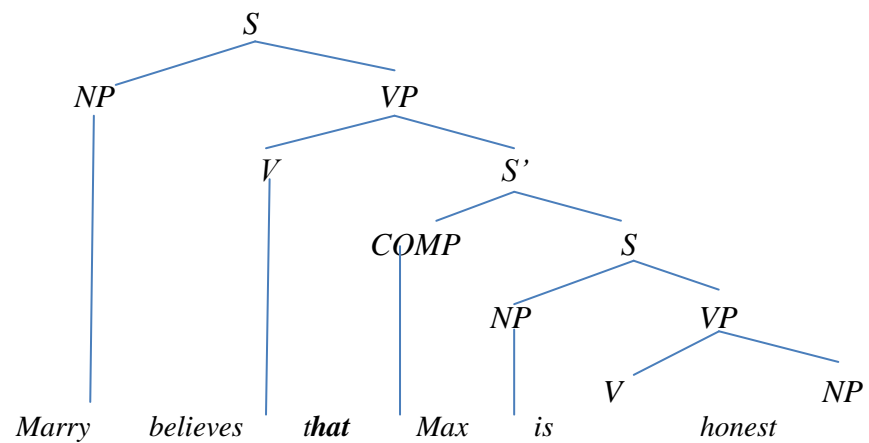


Diagram. 2. Subordinate clause using Complimentiser

Diagram 2 shows that the verb *believe* and the dependent clause introduced by *that*, are under the VP (the daughters of VP), it is required by the verb *believe*. Therefore it is classified as a subordinate clause.

According to Kroeger (2005:219) subordinate clauses are classified into three they are: *complement clauses*, *adjunct* (or *adverbial*) *clauses*, and *relative clauses*. In this paper complement and relative clauses will be discussed since it focuses on complimentiser and relativisers.

3.2 COMPLEMENT CLAUSES AND RELATIVE CLAUSES

Complement clauses and relative clauses belong to subordinate clauses since both occur in what is referred to as complex clauses by Quirk, et, al (1985), Brown and Miller (1980) and Fromkin, et al (1984). They both involved conjunctions such as: *that*, *who*, *which*, *where*, *why*, *whom*, etc as complementiser to introduce the subordinate clause. However, in a complement clause the subordinate clause with complementiser is licensed by the subcategorisation of the verb and normally functions as subject or object, of the other clause which is referred to as the matrix clause but in relative clause, the subordinate clause introduced by the complementiser functions as a modifier within an NP. This can be clarified by data (4):

- (4) a. He knew *that being a klutz ... could lead to a black eye?* (p. 1)
 b. He decided to wait and see *how she played it* (p. 24)
 c. He knew *which he preferred.* (p. 27)
 d. They too had joined the parade *that led out of town toward jobs in Madison, Milwaukee,...* (p. 10)
 e. He much pre-ferred women *who didn't say very much.* (p. 22)
 f. A strangled sound *that was half groan and half laugh floated up to him* (p.22)

The clauses in italics in data (4) are classified as subordinate clauses. In data (4a – c) the subordinate clauses belong to complement clauses which are introduced by the complimentisers: *that*, *how*, and *which*. These subordinate clauses occur as complements, or are required by the subcategorization feature of the verbs (*knew*, *see*, *knew*) that proceed them.

Whereas in (4d-f) the subordinate clauses introduced by complementisers *that*, *who*, and *that* are the modifiers of the preceding NP, these types of complementisers are considered as relativisers. The NP modified by the subordinate clauses *that* and *who* in (4d and e) function as the objects of the matrix clauses while in (4f) the NP modified by the subordinate clause introduced by complementiser *that* functions as the subject of the matrix clause. The difference between the use of complementisers and relativisers in (4) can be described in the following tree diagrams:

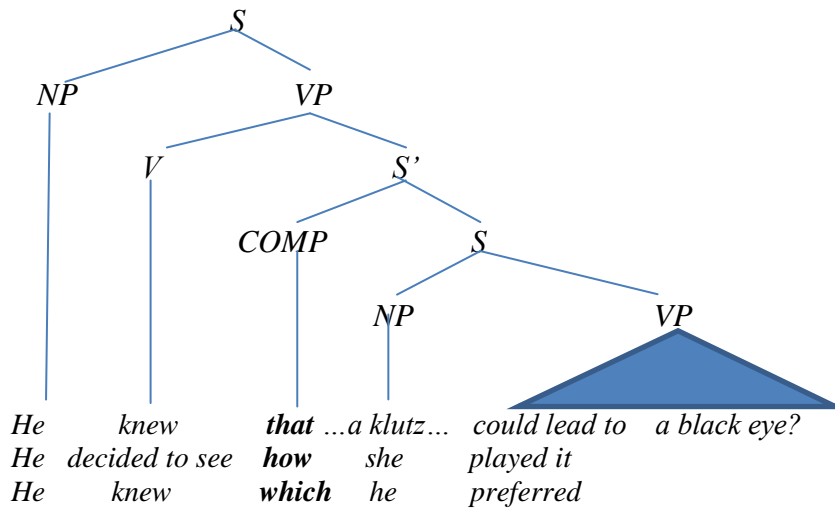


Diagram. 3 Compliment clauses using complimentisers

It is clearly shown by the tree diagrams that the subordinate clauses, S' in diagram (3) is licensed by the V, and both V and S' are the daughters of VP, whereas in diagrams (4 and 5), the S' is the daughter of the NP.

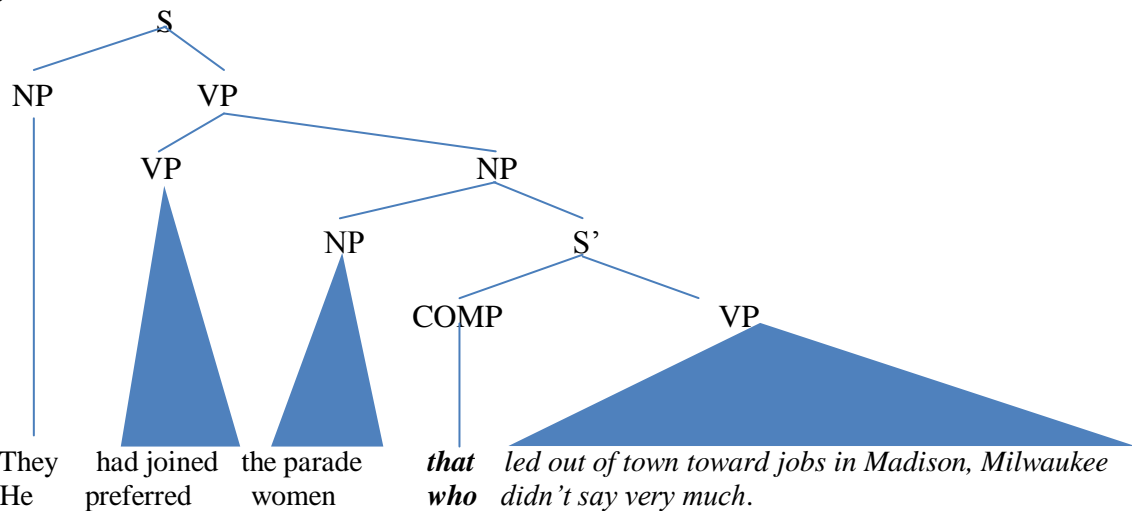


diagram.4, Relative clauses using complementisers as relativisers

Diagram 4, shows that the dependent clauses introduced by *that* and *who* (S') are licensed by the NPs and the clauses function as modifiers within the NPs are referred to as relative clauses Kroeger (2005:89). The NP containing the relative clause functions as the object of the main clause. This is considered as the "external" grammatical relation of the NP by Kroeger (2005:236). While the head nouns (*parade* and *women*) are interpreted as the subjects of the modifying clauses (*led out of ...* and *didn't say very much*). Kroeger refers to this "internal" grammatical relation as the relativized function: the grammatical relation that is assigned to the head noun within the modifying clause.

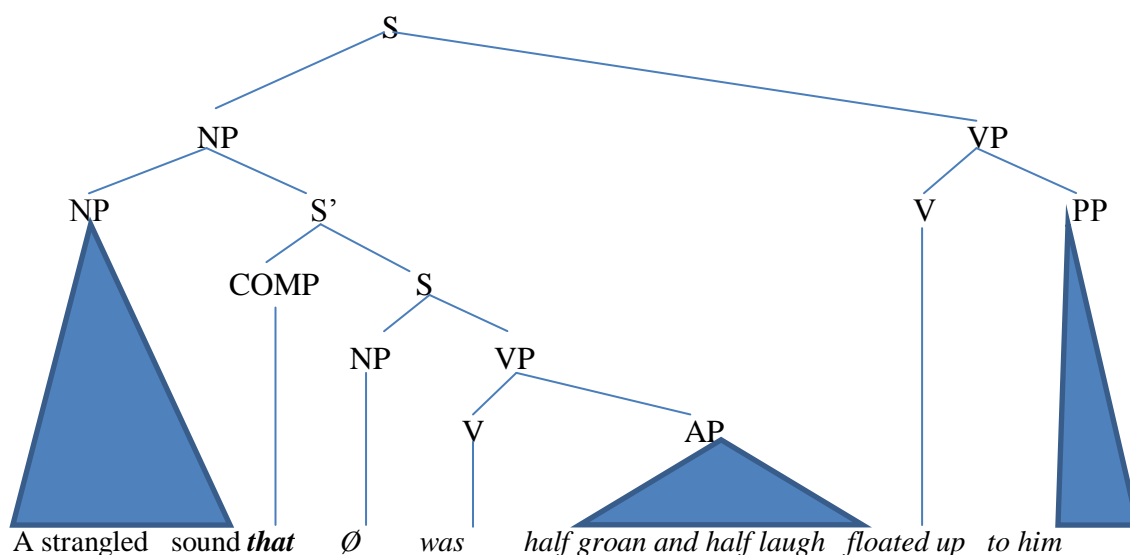


Diagram. 5. Relative Clauses Using complementiser as Relativiser

In (5) the NP containing S' precedes the VP, since the external grammatical relation of the NP is the subject of the main clause and the internal grammatical relation or the relativized function: is the subject of the modifying clause (*was half groan and half laugh floated up to him*), the NP dominated by S is considered to be empty (\emptyset) because it is coreference with the NP which is the sister of the S'.

Since complement clauses are required by the verbs, the complement clauses that take *that*, *who*, *which*, etc as complementisers, take finite verbs as in 4 (a, b, and c). However, the complement clause can also take nonfinite verb such as:

(5) a... you **need to stay** here.(p. 44)

b. He always *enjoys* **visiting** your gar-den. (p. 60)

c. This *involves* **finding** a replacement for Reggies and AKP has to be that replacement (p.74)

d. She *tried to read* the message behind the mild words but his handsome face gave nothing away. (p.99)

The verbs: *need* and *tried* in (5a and d) require to *infinitive verbs*, while the verbs *enjoys* and *involves* in (5b and c) needs verbs in *-ing*.

Meanwhile the form of a complement clause is often specified by certain verb occurring in the main clause, verbs belonging to the same general semantic class normally take the same type of complement therefore Kroeger (2005:223) proposes some examples of verbs with similar semantic types and complement verb form following them as follows:

	Semantic class	examples	Complement V-form
a.	Saying and knowing	<i>Know, think, say, report, suspect, fear, hope, imply, tell, etc</i>	finite
b.	manipulation verbs	<i>force, persuade, cause, request, urge, command, order</i>	infinitive
c.	modality predicates	<i>want, intend, plan, try, prefer, threaten, willing, afraid, eager, able, know how</i>	infinitive
d.	aspectual predicates	<i>begin, finish, keep on, go around</i>	progressive participle
e.	demands ("jussives")	<i>threaten, willing, afraid,</i>	present subjunctive

		<i>eager, able, know how</i> <i>insist, demand, essential (that),</i> <i>important (that)</i>	(= bare infinitive)
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Some data are presented in (6):

- (6) a. Only we both **know** [*I'm not your enemy*] because you ran a police check on me. Trust is a big issue for you isn't it? (p. 95)
- b. I **hope** [*you get your money back...*] (p. 96)
- c. Annika **persuaded** [*her husband to sell his old car*] (p.99).
- d. She **intends** [*to buy a new house....*] (p.98).
- e. Watching those eyes and that mouth was far too distracting on so many levels that she didn't **dare** [*count*]. (p. 92)
- f. She **wanted** [*to soothe him as well as ride with him on this out-of-control journey*], and give him what he wanted. (p.209)
- g. He **stopped** [*ricing*], turned his head and just like a marksman, he held her in his sights with those delicious cocoa eyes (p.93)
- h. The boat **kept** [*rocking*]. And tilted. (p.209)
- i. He **insisted** [(*that*) *the man be arrested and...*]. (p. 213)
- j. It is **important** [*that he get along well again*]. (p.225)

Data 6 (a and b) show that verbs: *know* and *hope* semantically belong to verbs of *Saying* and *knowing*, the following verb forms *am* in (6a) and *get* in (6b) are finite since they are in agreement with the tense and subject that precede them in this case the subject *I* in the complement clause in (6a) requires *to be* in the form of *am* as its verb. Meanwhile the subject *you* in the complement clause in (6b) needs verb in the form of present tense, *get*.

In 6 (c) the verb *persuaded* is classified into manipulation verb and in (6d, e, and f) the verbs *intends*, *dare*, and *wanted*, are classified into verbs of modality predicates which are followed by infinitive either to infinitive or bare infinitive (like in the verb *dare*). In (6g and h) the verbs *stopped* and *kept* belong to verbs of aspectual predicates, so they are followed by progressive participle (verb in *-ing*), meanwhile verbs in data (6 i and j): *insisted* and *be important* are verbs of demands ("jussives") therefore they are followed by bare infinitive.

This shows that the forms of verbs in the a complement clause is specified by certain verb occurring in the main clause, verbs belonging to the same general semantic class normally take the same type of complement.

IV CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis above it can be concluded that complementisers were types of conjunctions used to introduce the subordinate clauses in complex sentences. When the subordinate clauses introduced by complementisers are required by the verbs of the main clause, they are referred to as complement clauses, however when they are licensed by the head noun of the noun phrase they are referred to as relative clauses in this case the complementisers used are called relativisers.

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