

Breithutová-Chládková, Helga

[Edgren, Eva. *Temporal clauses in English*]

Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. A, Řada jazykovědná.
1973, vol. 22, iss. A21, pp. 117-119

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/101156>

Access Date: 24. 02. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

Ils peuvent être utilisés pour un entraînement de la compréhension de l'expression orale et pour perfectionner la prononciation. Mais le niveau élémentaire du vocabulaire et de la grammaire de ces leçons ne présente pas un contenu répondant aux exigences de ce niveau, ce qui diminue l'intérêt des étudiants. „Le Français actuel“, donnant de larges possibilités d'utilisation et permettant même un équipement minimum — le magnétophone — sera, croyons-nous, accueilli avec beaucoup de satisfaction par des enseignants qui cherchent à profiter des moyens techniques pour augmenter l'efficacité de leur enseignement.

Zdeňka Stavinohová

Eva Edgren: Temporal Clauses in English. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Anglistica Upsaliensia 9, Uppsala 1971, 252 pp.

With E. Edgren's book many readers interested in English linguistics get a grammatical treatise that they have long been missing. Though English temporal clauses are mentioned and exemplified in most books dealing with English syntax and some particular aspects of the subject have been investigated in a few papers, the book under review is the first all-round analysis of English temporal clauses. It is based on a large corpus of written material representing current British English, both informative and fictional, and comprising about 5,000 T-structures. (A T-structure is constituted by some kind of head and a subordinate clause introduced by a conjunction that is usually called a temporal conjunction though it does not always perform a temporal function.) It follows that also clauses that are not purely temporal are included; they have proved especially helpful in ascertaining those formal features that are essential for structuring a temporal clause (in the narrow sense of the word) or, alternatively, counteract it.

In separate chapters the author examines all the component parts of T-structures with a view to finding out to what extent they may affect the semantic function of the T-clause. Thus the treatise contains a detailed survey of temporal conjunctions in a wide sense of the word, including besides the established conjunctions a great variety of items linking the T-clause with its head, though not always performing a temporal function. (They will be further referred to as T-conjunctions.) The author presents a list of all T-conjunctions found in the investigated material, classifies them and arrives at the conclusion that they do not form a closed set, though the possibility of adding new items is restricted (p. 36). A number of tables and diagrams represent the frequencies of the various conjunctions and their distribution among different types of text (documentary texts, newspapers and fictional prose). A separate chapter gives a survey of expressions that are used to modify T-conjunctions in that they provide additional information or add emphasis to the information conveyed by the conjunction. The modifiers are listed together with the conjunctions with which they collocate, they are classified according to their form and semantic function, their frequencies and distribution are tabulated and a detailed treatment of their semantic function is offered. The author also adds a few observations on the intonation of T-clauses with a view to finding a relation between the type of conjunction and the intonation pattern.

Attention has been paid to the nominal constituents of T-clauses in order to ascertain their significance for the function of the clause. The material has indeed revealed several types of such relationship as well as certain regularity regarding the position of coreferent nouns and pronouns.

Both the verbs of the head clauses and those of the subordinate clauses of the T-structures are examined with regard to the verbal types (modal auxiliaries, catenatives, different classes of lexical verbs) and the tense forms; this examination discloses various relations obtaining in the T-structures between the type of verb and the type of subordinate clause. One example may be worth mentioning. Modal auxiliaries (except *can/could*) and active modal catenatives (*want to, hope to, decide to*) are very rare in temporal clauses (97—110). This is an extension of the well-known characteristic of temporal clauses, namely the absence of future tense forms. On the other hand, modal auxiliaries are markedly more frequent in T-clauses that are not purely temporal. Studying verbal forms, the author tries to keep apart tense forms (i.e. the so-called simple tenses) and aspect forms (i.e. the progressive and perfect forms). Examining the use of tenses in this way, she makes a distinction between complete tense discrepancy (simple present versus simple past) and partial tense discrepancy (e.g., present perfect versus simple past). A few examples may be again adduced in illustration. Complete tense discrepancy is normal in one-activity *since*-structures (*It is years since I saw you*) (115). In *while*-clauses it signals a non-temporal function of the T-clause (115).

When dealing with the functions of the different tense forms, the author points out that the present tense forms rarely refer to actually present activities except in non-temporal contexts. In

temporal contexts they as a rule signal either seriality (i.e. recurrence) or futurity of the activities (119—124). With regard to the significance of the perfect and progressive forms for the function of T-clauses, the author finds that the choice of the progressive form in the head clause of a *when* structure implies a temporal function of the dependent clause while the use of the perfect form in a *while*-clause signals a non-temporal function. In addition to this a few more particular uses of the progressive and perfect forms are mentioned and exemplified (127—134).

Perusing the chapter on verbal constituents of T-structures, the reader may miss a definition of the author's concepts of simultaneity and sequence, which are introduced in the first chapter. Though they seem unambiguous at first, they become so when the reader is confronted with the author's treatment of some T-structures (e.g., the first example on p. 24 or the mention of *now that*-clauses containing perfect forms and, at the same time, expressing simultaneity, on p. 127). Some illustrative examples might have been welcome here.

Valuable information may be gathered from numerous tables and diagrams providing a survey of the occurrence, relative frequencies and distribution of different types of verbs and verbal forms.

Another T-structure component investigated in the book is the adverbial. The author concentrates on adverbials related to the concepts of time and aspect, classifies them, provides a survey of their frequencies and distribution, and inquires into their relation to the function of the T-clause as well as into the relation between their position in the sentence and their information value. She comes to the conclusion that adverbial positions inside the T-clause have less information value than the corresponding positions in a main clause or in an independent sentence. The most prominent position of some adverbials (in the narrow sense specified by the author) in *when*-structures, e.g., is that immediately preceding the T-clause. Particular prominence is attained by a time adverbial immediately preceding the T-clause in an emphatic T-structure transform, e.g. *It was in 1936 when...* (149—150).

The author next examines the sentence forms and clause forms of T-structures, classifying them according to different criteria. Some of the terms employed are normally used also in classifying other structures, others have been introduced for the purpose of dealing with some special types of T-structures. The classification has revealed some formal features characteristic of certain types of T-structures. The following observation may be adduced as an example: the presence of a negative word as a rule affects the semantic function or the aspect of the T-clause (169).

Another phenomenon treated in detail are the emphatic T-structures, examined both from the formal and the semantic point of view. The material has shown that they are far more frequent in newspapers and novels than in documentary texts (179).

The examination of T-clause heads has yielded the relative frequencies of different types of heads (main clauses, bound clauses, nominal groups, non-finite constructions, etc.) and their co-occurrence with the various conjunctions in connection with the syntactic and semantic functions of the T-clause. A more systematic analysis of the syntactic function of T-clauses is the subject of a separate chapter (193—198) dividing T-clauses into sentence modifiers (performing the function of an adverb, complement or subject) or word (-group) modifiers with adjectival (restrictive or non-restrictive) or appositional function. A distinction is made between modifiers on different levels of sentence structure.

The following are a few examples of the results yielded by the examination of the positions occupied by the T-clause. A T-clause as a word-group modifier is placed after its head. There is an interrelation between the position and the semantic function of the T-clause as a sentence modifier. In an emphatic transform, a systemic T-clause (i.e. a T-clause used in a structure where the time relation is the primary information) occurs in front of the head clause, but in all other cases it is end-placed. On the other hand, the position of a non-systemic T-clause further depends on the form of the head clause or the type of T-structure (199—203). The different types of this relationship are examined in detail and exemplified.

In the semantic analysis of T-clauses the author starts from a division of T-conjunctions into informative and semantically weak. Informative conjunctions usually generate temporal T-clauses unless there are formal features counteracting their information. They may be further subdivided into those conveying only temporal information and those conveying both temporal and aspectual information. T-structures with some of the lexically weak conjunctions display specific formal features when performing a temporal function; these features are different from those typical of the non-temporal function (211). T-clauses are further divided into a number of subgroups, each of which is described from the semantic point of view and exemplified.

One of the aims of the treatise under review is to define the systemic function of the temporal clauses. The author bases her definition on the concept of information and arrives at the following

formulation: "When the time relation is the primary information of the structure, the T-clause is used in systemic function" (236). As the formal characteristics of systemic T-clauses she points out their position and the intonation pattern they display. A systemic T-clause is placed in end position, or initially in an emphatic transform, and it is intonationally prominent. On the other hand, heads of T-clauses in systemic function have reduced intonational prominence and carry secondary information (237—238).

A comparison of main clauses and T-clauses from the semantic point of view has led to the conclusion that not only syntactically but also semantically there is a difference in rank. T-clauses do not normally contain primary information and their constituents (e.g., adverbials of time and place) have a reduced information value.

In connection with the information value an examination of the prosodic features of the T-structures has proved useful, as differences in intonation appear to signal differences in function.

Eva Edgren's inquiry into the different features affecting the communicative function of T-clauses has led to a set of formal criteria of the differentiation of temporal and non-temporal T-structures. Her precise and many-sided description and classification of English temporal clauses fills a gap in the analysis of the English language system and may serve as a theoretical basis for further inquiries into the investigated field, as well as a valuable source of numerical data concerning the frequencies and distribution of various phenomena in English temporal structures.

Helga Breithutová-Chládková

Dieter Götz: Studien zu den verdunkelten Komposita im Englischen, Erlanger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kunstwissenschaft, Band 40, Verlag Hans Carl, Nürnberg 1971, 137 pp.

The author of the reviewed monograph has set himself the task of inquiring into the so-called disguised (or obscured) compounds in English (cf. *lord* < *hlaf-weard*, *lady* < *hlāfdige*, *gospel* < *gōd spel*(l)). He deals with the problem in 12 chapters.

The introductory chapter briefly surveys the earlier work done in the field, comments on the examined material and the terminology used, defines the disguised compound. In chapter 2 a morphological analysis of the disguised compound is carried out. Four types of the phenomenon are established. Synchronically speaking, Type A (*chaffer*) admits only of a monomorphemic interpretation; Type B (*forehead*) is monomorphemic in its spoken form, but its written form is interpretable as bimorphemic, Type C (*gooseberry*) may be looked upon as consisting of two morphemes, one of them ([guz]) being a "unique morpheme"; Type D (*breakfast*) is bimorphemic, its written form possibly suggesting an allomorphic interpretation of both components; such an interpretation, however, is very often subjective.

Chapter 3 deals with the causes of obscuration, such as changes in the stress pattern during the ME and ENE periods, elimination of the morphemic boundary etc. In most cases the loss of the secondary stress must have taken place towards the end of the ME period. Changes in stress are often accompanied by regressive assimilation leading to the elimination of the morphemic boundary.

Chapter 4 treats of the vacillation between unobscured and obscured forms. The two forms usually exist side by side at least for about a century. A certain relation between the two forms develops during that time; it is up to the speaker to choose between them. As pointed out in Chapter 5, the vacillation may give rise to the so-called secondary motivation (e.g., *pentice* yielding *penthouse*).

Chapter 6 is devoted to the question of the disguised compounds in English dialects. The usage in the northern counties is compared with that in the South. Charts accompany the comparison. Upon the whole, the dialects offer a wider range of the obscured compounds than the ME/ENE situation. As is borne out by the publications of the Survey of English Dialects, they also have a greater amount of obscured compounds than the Standard language. In different areas, all forms can be found that represent all the stages of the development towards the obscured form. The tendency towards the monomorphemic word is quite obvious.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 discuss the question of the standard pronunciation of the obscured compound. They respectively concentrate on the views of the earlier orthoepists, and the recommendations of the standard British and American dictionaries. Tendencies to respect the etymologies of the obscured compounds have little affected actual pronunciation.

Chapter 10, the most comprehensive of the entire monograph, traces the historical development of 56 ModE obscured compounds. The items are alphabetically arranged, each presenting a detailed treatment of a compound.

Chapter 11 concerns the semantic changes as a possible cause of obscuration. The point is