

PARALLEL GRAMMAR SERIES

AN
ADVANCED ENGLISH
SYNTAX

*BASED ON THE PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS
OF THE GRAMMATICAL SOCIETY*

BY

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PREFACE

THE object of this short treatise is to present the main facts of current English syntax in a systematic form in accordance with the principles of the Parallel Grammar Series. The introduction (pp. 1-27) is designed to provide a full scheme of sentence analysis. The rest of the book—the syntax proper—is arranged, as in the other grammars of this series, in two parts. Part I (pp. 28-86) contains a treatment of syntactical phenomena based on the analysis of sentences. Part II (pp. 87-153) classifies the uses of forms. Cross references indicate how the two parts of syntax supplement one another. In pp. 153-158 some elementary principles of hypotaxis and parataxis are enunciated.

While dealing mainly with the language of the present day, I have endeavoured to make the book of use to the student of early modern English by giving an account of some notable archaic and obsolete constructions. Historical matter has been introduced wherever it was considered necessary for the understanding of important points in syntax-development or seemed to add interest to the treatment of particular constructions.

Of the existing grammars which I have consulted, Dr. Sweet's has proved the most enlightening and suggestive.

My connexion with the *Oxford English Dictionary* has given

me facilities for research which I should otherwise not have had, and I wish to thank the editors of that work for the assistance which they have, directly or indirectly, afforded me in my task.

To Dr. Henry Bradley I am especially indebted for valuable suggestions and emendations, in both the manuscript and the proof stages of the book.

To Dr. Sonnenschein, the editor of the series and my former professor, I am grateful for his constant help and stimulating criticism throughout my work

C. T. ONIONS.

OXFORD,

10th September, 1903.

NOTE TO SECOND EDITION.—In the new edition a few misprints have been corrected and a table of contents added. But otherwise there are no changes.

C. T. O.

NOTE TO THIRD EDITION.—A few corrections and additions have been made for this edition, but otherwise the book remains unchanged.

It having come to my knowledge that the title of this grammar has been misunderstood by some foreign students, I take this opportunity of stating that "Advanced" refers only to the place of the book in the Parallel Grammar Series and is not intended to describe the method adopted in it.

C. T. O.

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THE THREE PERIODS OF ENGLISH.

Old English (abbreviated O.E.) down to about A.D. 1150. Period of full vowels in the endings; *e.g.*, *faraen*, *sunu*, *wulfas*.

Middle English (abbreviated M.E.), from about A.D. 1150 to about A.D. 1500. The full vowels in the endings are represented by one uniform unaccented *e*; *e.g.*, *faren*, *sune*, *wolves*.

Modern English (abbreviated Mod. E.), from about A.D. 1500 to the present day. The unaccented *e* in the endings has become silent, and has in many cases disappeared from the written word.



INTRODUCTION TO SYNTAX.*

ANALYSIS OF SENTENCES.

Speech is made up of Sentences.

A **Sentence** [Latin *sententia* 'meaning'] is a group of words, or in some cases a single word, which makes—

- either (i.) a **Statement** : *e.g.* I am an Englishman.
- or (ii.) a **Command** or an **Expression of Wish** :
e.g. Speak.
- or (iii.) a **Question** : *e.g.* How do you do?
- or (iv.) an **Exclamation** : *e.g.* How it thunders!

Compare §§ 38-45.

Comparatively few single words can make a sentence in English: 'house,' 'runs,' 'virtue,' 'he,' 'speaking,' are not sentences. Even a group of words does not always form a sentence: *e.g.* 'mountains of gold,' 'written upon stone,' 'to be or not to be.'

'Yes' and 'No' may be called Sentence-words; they are words *equivalent* to sentences; *e.g.* 'Will you come?'—'Yes.' (= I will come.) Other words which may be equivalent to sentences will be mentioned below.

Analysis means *breaking up* [Greek *ana* 'up' and *lysis* 'breaking'], and is the name given to the process of breaking up a sentence into its parts. On pp. 4 to 27 it will be shown how to *analyse* sentences.

There are sentences in English and other languages which it is very difficult, or impossible, to analyse grammatically. But analysis may be applied to the majority of sentences; and without it we should be unable to recognise the peculiarities even of those sentences which cannot be analysed.

* The marginal numeration of sections, corresponding to that of other grammars in this series, begins on p. 6. The marginal numbers 1, 2, 3, etc., of this book correspond to numbers 301, 302, 303, etc., of the Latin, Greek, French and German Grammars; the corresponding place in the latter may always be found (in Part I.) by adding 300 to the number given in this book.

The first stage in the analysis of a sentence is into:—

1. The Subject. 2. The Predicate.

The **Subject** denotes the person or thing about which something is said by means of the Predicate.

The **Predicate** is what is said about the person or thing denoted by the Subject.

In the following examples of sentences the part printed in ordinary type is the Subject; the part printed in italics is the Predicate.

Ducks *swim*. Who *knows*? *Be it so*.

Who *goes there*? *Consent*.thou *not*.

A terrible accident *has happened*.

The few *are happy*. *Long live* the King!

Can honour's voice *provoke* the silent dust?

Listen. } (The Subject 'thou' or 'you' is not

Do not go. } expressed.)

Sing we merrily *unto God* our strength.

How beautiful she *looks*!

Fools *step in* where angels fear to tread.

Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.

He *laughs best* who laughs last.

Whatever is, *is right*.

Some sentences omit some part or parts which are necessary to the full form of a sentence. These are called *elliptical* sentences, and an *ellipsis* is said to occur. Ellipsis plays a great part in English. In poetical and rhetorical language it often lends dignity and impressiveness, with something of an archaic flavour; to colloquial speech it gives precision and brevity, and saves time and trouble.

EXAMPLES.

The prayer is said, the service read. (Supply 'is.')

To err is human, to forgive divine. (Supply 'is.')

This house to be let or sold.

Hence, loathed melancholy! (*i.e.* Depart hence.)

Shame on the false Etruscan! (Supply some verb like 'alight.')

Sweet to the morning traveller

The song amid the sky. (Supply 'is.')

Well done! (= It is well done.)

Well roared, Lion: well run, Thisbe.—SHAKSPERE.

My beauty is as boundless as the sea,
 My love as deep. (*i.e.* is as deep as the sea.)
 O, that such deceit should steal such gentle shapes!
 (= O, to think that . . .)
 To arms! to arms! (= Betake yourselves to arms.)
 Thank you. (= I thank you: *cf.* German *danke.*)
 Your name and address, please. (= Give me your name.)
 So much for the sun. What about the stars?
 (= So much is sufficient for our treatment of the sun.
 What shall we say about the stars?)
 What if he dies? (= What will happen or what
 will you say, if he dies?)
 I could, but I won't. (*i.e.* do it.)
 (At the railway booking-office.) Oxford, third single.

Ellipsis is very common in answers where the complete form of the answer reflects that of the question and is therefore sufficiently well known not to require full expression.

EXAMPLES.

Who did it?—I. (*i.e.* did it.)
 How many were killed?—Twenty. (*i.e.* were killed.)
 Have you ever been abroad?—Never. (*i.e.* have I been
 abroad.)
 We will send somebody.—Whom? When? Where to?
 (*i.e.* will you send?)

Similarly with all interrogative words.

Numerals are used in many kinds of elliptical constructions, *e.g.* a child of *five* [years of age], at half-past *four* [o'clock], the *first* [day] of April, a *tenth* [part] of a pound, a carriage and *six* [horses]: (*cf.* a carriage and *pair* = a pair of horses.)

Single words like 'Good!' 'Right!' 'Nonsense!' 'Really?' 'Certainly,' 'Granted,' 'True,' 'Quick!' 'Peace!' 'Enough!' are often equivalent to sentences. *Cf.* *Good-bye* = God be with you.

Instances like the following, where a verb of motion is omitted, belong to older stages of the language:

I must to Coventry.—SHAKSPERE, *Richard II.*

He to England shall along with you.—*Hamlet.*

I shall no more to sea.—*Tempest.*

I wyllle to morowe to the cowrte of Kyng Arthur.—MALORY.

This idiom is found in Old English: *Ic to see wille* = 'I to sea will [go]'
 Compare the modern: 'Are you for London?'

1 **Forms of the Predicate.**

The kernel of the Predicate is the Verb.

The Predicate may consist of—

1. The verb alone.
2. The verb together with some other part, or parts, of the Sentence.

Sentences are classified for purpose of Analysis according to the form of the Predicate, which may assume *five* principal forms.

FIRST FORM OF THE PREDICATE.

| <i>SUBJECT</i> | <i>PREDICATE</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Day | dawns |
| He | died |
| My hour | is come |
| The shades of night | were falling |

In such sentences the Predicate consists of the **Verb alone.**

2 **SECOND FORM OF THE PREDICATE.**

| <i>SUBJECT</i> | <i>PREDICATE</i> | |
|----------------|------------------|---|
| | <i>Verb</i> | <i>Predicate Adjective or Predicate Noun or Predicate Pronoun</i> |
| Croesus | was | rich or a king |
| Many | lay | dead |
| I | am | he |
| He | became | mad |
| Seeing | is | believing |
| To err | is | human |

In such sentences the Predicate consists of (1) a **Verb** and (2) a **Predicate Adjective, Predicate Noun, or Predicate Pronoun, i.e. an Adjective, Noun or Pronoun predicated of the Subject.**

☞ For the kinds of verbs which may be used in a Predicate of the Second Form, see § 24.

OBS. 1. In a sentence like 'It is hard to do right,' the Pronoun *it* is called the **Formal Subject**, because, although it is a Subject in *form*, it only anticipates or provisionally represents the real Subject, which follows. Thus we have a Predicate of the Second Form:

To do right | is | hard.
(It)

For the relation between this *it* and the *it* which forms the Subject of Impersonal Verbs, see § 194.

OBS. 2. In sentences like 'There was peace,' 'there was' = 'existed,' and we have a Predicate of the First Form containing an Adjunct (§ 7):

Peace | was (*Verb*) there (*Adjunct*, § 7).

3

THIRD FORM OF THE PREDICATE.

| SUBJECT | PREDICATE | |
|------------|------------|------------|
| | Verb | Object |
| Cats | catch | mice |
| The sea | hath | its pearls |
| Many hands | make | light work |
| Nobody | wishes | to know |
| He | can (§ 30) | tell |

In such sentences the Predicate consists of (1) a **Verb**, and (2) an **Object**, which denotes the person or thing to which the action of the Verb 'passes over.'

Verbs which take an Object are called **transitive** [= 'passing over,' Latin *transire* 'to pass over']. Verbs which do not take an Object are called **intransitive** [= 'not passing over'].

Cognate Object: see § 26.

When a sentence with a Predicate of the 3rd Form is thrown into the Passive construction, we get a sentence with a Predicate of the 1st Form containing an Adjunct (§ 7); e.g. 'Cain killed Abel' becomes:—

| <i>SUBJECT</i> | <i>PREDICATE</i> |
|----------------|---|
| Abel | was killed (<i>Verb</i>) by Cain (<i>Adjunct</i>) |

FOURTH FORM OF THE PREDICATE.

| <i>SUBJECT</i> | <i>PREDICATE</i> | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | <i>Verb</i> | <i>Two Objects</i> | |
| We | taught | the dog | tricks |
| I | ask | you | this question |
| Conscience | bids | me | speak |

In such sentences the Predicate consists of (1) a Verb, and (2) Two Objects.

For the kinds of Verbs which may be used in a Predicate of the Fourth Form, see § 31.

OBS. 1.—A sentence like 'I gave **him** the money' may be regarded in two ways:

- (a) In form, it is like 'We ask you this' or 'I asked him a question'; hence *him*, which is historically a Dative, is often called an Object (**Indirect Object**).
- (b) In meaning, the sentence is equivalent to 'I gave the money **to him**, which is most simply parsed as containing an Adjunct (§ 7).

OBS. 2.—When a sentence with a Predicate of the 4th Form is thrown into the Passive construction, we get a sentence with a Predicate of the 3rd Form containing an Adjunct (§ 7): e.g. 'You ask me my opinion, 'I told him to speak,' become—

| SUBJECT | PREDICATE | | |
|---------|-----------|------------|---------|
| | Verb | Object | Adjunct |
| I | am asked | my opinion | by you |
| He | was told | to speak | by me |

Obs. 3.—Sentences like ‘We bade *him speak*’ (Infinitive) may also be analysed as containing a Predicate of the 3rd Form (Subject *We*, Verb *bade*, Object *him speak = that he should speak*).

5

FIFTH FORM OF THE PREDICATE.

| SUBJECT | PREDICATE | | |
|---------|-----------|-------------|--|
| | Verb | Object | Predicate Adjective or Predicate Noun |
| Nothing | makes | a Stoic | angry |
| People | called | Duns Scotus | the Subtle Doctor |
| They | elected | him | Consul |
| He | counted | himself | a happy man |
| It | drove | him | mad |

In such sentences the Predicate consists of (1) a Verb, (2) an Object, and (3) a Predicate Adjective or Predicate Noun, *ie* an Adjective or Noun *predicated of the Object*.

☞ For the kinds of verbs used in a Predicate of the 5th Form, see §§ 34-5.

Obs.—When a sentence with a Predicate of the 5th Form is thrown into the Passive construction, we get a sentence with a Predicate of the 2nd Form containing an Adjunct (§ 7), *e.g.* ‘The Court declared him a traitor’ becomes :—

| SUBJECT | PREDICATE | | |
|---------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| | Verb | Predicate Adj. or Noun | Adjunct |
| He | was declared | a traitor | by the Court |

6

Attributes.

A Noun may be qualified by an Adjective (or Adjective-equivalent: § 10); e.g. *Dear* friends. *A good* man. *My* father. *Ten* men.

Such a qualifying part of a sentence is called an **Attribute**.

7

Adjuncts.

A Verb, an Adjective, or an Adverb may be qualified by an Adverb (or Adverb-equivalent: § 11); e.g. Fight *bravely*. He is *quite* happy. We work *most* diligently. *Well* begun is *half* done.

Such a qualifying part of a sentence is called an **Adjunct**. For instances in the various Forms of the Predicate, see § 15a. 1.

8

Equivalents.

The Noun, the Adjective, and the Adverb may be replaced by other parts of speech doing the same work in the sentence, or by a group of words doing the work of a single part of speech.

A word or group of words which replaces a Noun, an Adjective, or an Adverb is called an **Equivalent** (Noun-equivalent, Adjective-equivalent, or Adverb-equivalent).

A group of words forming an Equivalent and not having a Subject and Predicate of its own is called a **Phrase**. Cf. §§ 10 (5), 11 (1).

A group of words forming an Equivalent and having a Subject and Predicate of its own is called a **Subordinate Clause**. Cf. § 12.

9

NOUN-EQUIVALENTS.

A Noun-equivalent may be:—

(1) A Pronoun:

The boy is here; *he* has not been long.

You are fortunate *I* am wretched.

It is *I*.

(2) A Verb-noun:

To see is *to believe*. *Seeing* is *believing*.

I desire *to learn*. His frequent *comings* and *goings*.

He will teach him hardness and *to slight his mother*.

Note.—A Verb-noun participates in all the constructions of the Verb to which it belongs. Thus it may take a Predicate

Adjective, Predicate Noun, or Predicate Pronoun ; or an Object ; or Two Objects ; or an Object and a Predicate Adjective or Noun ; and it may be qualified by an Adverb—just like a Verb.

(3) An Adjective (with or, less commonly, without *the*) :

Burke's essay on *the sublime* and *the beautiful* (= *that which is beautiful, beauty.*)

There are tears for *the many*

And pleasures for *the few.*

In *the dead* of night.

Rich and *poor*, *old* and *young*, *good* and *bad* were there.

He went from *bad* to *worse.*

(4) A Verb-adjective (generally with *the*) :

The living and *the dead.* *The killed* and *the wounded.*

(5) A Clause (in a Complex Sentence : § 12) :

That you have wronged me doth appear in this.

Who knows *how it happened?* Tell me *what you mean.*

(6) A word or group of words quoted :

'*And*' is a conjunction. '*I think not*' was all he said

But me no *buts.* There is much virtue in '*if*'

Letting '*I dare not*' wait upon '*I would.*'—SHAKSPER!

When I was young—ah ! woeful *when !*

Ere I was old—ah ! woeful *ere !*

Cf. the sentence '*Forget me not,*' which is now, as the name of a flower, a single word.

In sentences like '*Through the wood* is the nearest way,' '*From Tamworth hither* is but one day's march,' a Phrase formed with a Preposition would seem to stand as a Noun-equivalent. But this is not really so ; the sentences are inverted forms of '*The nearest way is through the wood,*' '*It is but one day's march from Tamworth hither.*'

10

ADJECTIVE-EQUIVALENTS.

An Adjective-equivalent may be :

(1) A Verb-adjective :

A *running* stream. A *printed* book.

The wind *raging* fiercely and *buffeting* our faces, the rain *falling* in torrents.

The city lies *sleeping.*

Note.—A Verb-adjective participates in all the constructions of the Verb to which it belongs. Thus it may take a Predicate Adjective, Predicate Noun, or Predicate Pronoun ; or an Object ; or Two Objects ; or an Object and a Predicate Adjective or Predicate Noun ; and it may be qualified by an Adverb—just like a Verb.

- (2) A Noun in Apposition, *i.e.* a Noun serving as another name for the same thing;

We *English*. Victoria, *Empress of India*.

King Alfred. Simon Lee, the old *hunter*.

On yonder cliffs, a grisly *band*,

I see *them* sit. [*Band* is in apposition with 'them.']

- (3) A noun in the Genitive Case:

Milton's works.

Duncan's murderer.

To-day's news. (= German 'die *heutigen* Nachrichten.')

A *summer's* day.

The *King's* palace. (= the *royal* palace.)

Cicero's treatise on friendship. (= the *Ciceronian* treatise.)

Plato's doctrine. (= the *Platonic* doctrine.)

- (4) A Noun in the Accusative Case (Accus. of Description):

A book *the same size* as this.

Water *the colour* of pea-soup.

These equivalents are most often used like Predicate Adjectives:

The earth is *the shape* of an orange (= orange-shaped).

What age is he?

For more examples, see § 80.

- (5) A Phrase formed with a Preposition:

A lump *of lead*. (= a *leaden* lump.)

Men *of honour*. (= *honourable* men.)

Be *of good cheer*. (= be *cheerful*: equivalent of a Predicate Adjective.)

Ten years *of age*. (= ten years *old*.)

Houses *with roofs*. (= *roofed* houses.)

Towns *by the sea*. (= *maritime* towns.)

A wind *from the north*. (= a *northerly* wind.)

The way *through the wood*.

The day *after to-morrow*.

The philosophy *of Kant*. (= the *Kantian* philosophy.)

A bird *in the hand* is worth two *in the bush*.

The day *for pancakes*. (= *pancake* day: Compound Noun, see 6 below.)

Ills to come. (= *future* ill.)

The questions *to be answered* were many.

- (6) A Noun or Verb-noun forming part of a Compound Noun:

Cannon balls. (= balls *for the cannon*: see 5 above.)

Walking sticks. (= sticks *for walking*.)