**Clausal Complementation**

**Tutorial, SPE. 9/16/2015**

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**Non-canonical clausal complements and embedding predicates**

**Section 1 The CP hypothesis and variants**

**Section 2 Non canonical clausal complements: The case of quoted and main clauses**

**Section 3 Non canonical clausal complements: The case of the “missing” complementizer**

**Section 1**

**1.1 The CP hypothesis and variants**

1. The president asked whose plan had succeeded

**TP**

DP T′

The president T VP

V′

**V** **CP**

**asked**

DP C′

whose C TP

plan had

DP T′

T VP

V′

|

V

succeeded

**Issues:** TP as the root node.

Subordinated clause (Tense)

Subordinated clause is a CP

Other FPs (Functional Projections)

**The Potential Structure of CP proposed by Cinque (1999) based on the distribution of adverbials and matching functional heads**

1. **Order of Clausal Functional Heads (**= G.C.(96))

MoodSpeech act > Moodevaluative > Moodevidential > Modepistemic > T (Past) > T (Future) > Moodirrealis >

Asphabitual  > T (Anterior) > Aspperfect  > Aspretrospective > Aspdurative  > Aspprogressive  > Aspprospective /Modroot > Voice > Aspcelerative > Aspcompletive > Asp(?r)epetitive > Aspiterative

1. **Matched Hierarchies and the Syntactic Structure Responsible**

(= G.C.(92)) The Universal hierarchy of clausal functional projections (a second approximation)

[*frankly* Moodspeech act  [*fortunately* Moodevaluative  [*allegedly* Moodevidential

[ *probably* Modepistemic  [*once* T (Past) [*then* T (Fut) [*perhaps* Moodirrealis

[ *necessarily* Modnecessity [*possibly* Modpossibility [*usually* Asphabitual

[ *again* Asprepetitive(1) [*often* Aspfrequentative(1)  [*intentionally* Modvolitional

[*quickly* Aspcelerative(1) [*already* T (Anterior) [*no longer* Aspterminative

[*still* Aspcontinuative [*always*  Aspperfect (?) [*just* Aspretrospective

[*soon* Aspproximative [*briefly*  Aspdurative)  [*characteristically*(?) Aspgeneric/progressive

[*almost* Aspprogressive [*completely* AspSgCompletive(1)  [*tutto* AspPlcompletive

[*well* Voice [*fast/early* Aspcelerative(II) [*again* Asprepetitive(II)

[*often* Aspfrequentative(II) [*completely* AspSgCompletive(II)

**Section 1.2**

Focus of typological research often on comparing classifications as opposed to structure. However classifications often reflect properties that are or might be structural.

1. **Noonan (2007) predicate classification: Typological patterns of clausal complementation**

1. Utterance predicates ITR except for promise indic that CP

2. Propositional attitude predicates ITR indic that CP

3. Pretence predicates ITR indic that CP

4. Commentative predicates (factives) ITR indic that CP

5. Predicates of knowledge and acquisition of knowledge ITR indic that CP

6. Predicates of fearing ITR indic that CP

7. Desiderative predicates Hope ITR indic that CP

Wish ITR indic that CP

Want DTR

8. Manipulative predicates DTR

9. Modal predicates DTR

10. Achievement predicates DTR

11. Phasal predicates DTR

12. Immediate perception predicates DTR (take *that* CP even when ip?)

13. Negative predicates DTR

14. Conjunctive predicates DTR/ITR (depending on predicate)

**Section 1.3 Embedding predicates and their complements**

**i.** What aspects of predicate-argument combination are predictable? From what principles?

**ii.** The first 8 predicate types in Noonan’s classification are all realized as *that*-CPs in English.

Apparently the morpho-syntactic form of a complement clause is only coarsely correlated with its meaning.

Morpho-syntactic form may be impoverished relative to semantic distinctions

**iii.** If syntactic complement patterns look the same for all, it may not be the case that the semantic patterns are the same for all.

1. From Dayal 2015: 148. Based on Lahiri 2002, with “Assertive” added:



“Rogative” = takes only wh complements:

1. They asked whose plan had succeeded. \*They asked that his plan had succeeded.

“Responsive” / “Resolutive” = takes wh and that complements:

1. They announced whose plan had succeeded. They announced that his plan had succeeded.

“Assertive” = takes only that complements.

1. \*They claimed whose plan had succeeded. They claimed that his plan had succeeded.

Note that the semantic classification of the predicates does not correspond one-to-one with the morpho-syntactic structure of their complements.

**iv.** This case suggests that interesting patterns emerge when we look **at the combinations of complements** which combine with individual predicates.

**v.** In fact the collection of predicates in (5) is extremely heterogeneous when studied in other structures.

**vi.** Many morphemes appear in multiple positions in a classification system, because they are ambiguous.

E.g. the verb *observe* is both an utterance predicate and a perception predicate. So is *note*.

Many other cases.

**vi.** The most frequent morphemes are typically the most complex, not the simplest. E.g *intimate* that... Versus *say* that…

Two possible reasons: they have multiple “related” meanings, where the notion of related requires explication.

Or they are “light verbs”, i.e. have very little meaning, and hence are compatible with more contexts than a predicate with a highly specified meaning. Cf *get* versus *buy* or *steal*.

**Section 2 Current Research Issues: Non-canonical clausal complements: the case of quoted and main clauses (Grimshaw 2014, in prep)**

**2.1 DP complements in discourse:**

These say-schema verbs (Grimshaw 2015) report speech events, their content and their Force. i.e. the Force of the corresponding main clause. Cf “indirect discourse”.

1. X says: **his plan has succeeded.** **My flight leaves at 6.**

Y asks: What just happened?

Z replies: X asserted something.

**#X asked something**.

X announced something.

1. X says: **has his plan has succeeded? When does my flight leave?**

Y asks: What just happened?

Z replies: **#X asserted something**.

X asked something.

**#X announced something**.

**Two points:**

**i.** In these discourses, announce behaves exactly like assert. It cannot report a question-event.

**ii. Learning:** The critical aspects of meaning that control complementation possibilities may be observable in simple discourses which do not even involve clausal complementation. The fact that *assert* can be used as in (9) and *ask* as in (10), and the verb *say* in either, tells the learner what linguistic events the verb reports and therefore whether it combines with questions or assertions. (Its Force reporting capacity).

**2.2 Evidence that *announce* patterns with *assert* and not with *ask* with respect to complement type:**

The verb ***ask* (***wonder, inquire* **…)** (a Q-Force verb in JG in prep) combines with all four wh clausal structures: a subordinated wh complement (a), a quoted wh clause in complement position (b), a wh main clause (c), a quoted wh main clause (d).

1. a. The president **asked** [whose plan had succeeded]

b. The president **asked** [ “Whose plan has succeeded?”]

c. [“Whose plan has succeeded?”], (the president **asked**)

d. [Whose plan had succeeded], (the president **asked**)

The verb *ask* cannot combine with a *that*-complement, or a main clause declarative.

1. a. \*The president **asked** [that the plan had succeeded.]

b. \*[The plan had succeeded], (the president **asked**)

It cannot combine with a quoted declarative, whether in complement position or as a main clause.

1. a. \*The president **asked [**“My plan has succeeded”]

b. \*[“My plan has succeeded”], (the president **asked)**

The verb *assert* (cf *claim, propose*) shows exactly the opposite pattern. It is ungrammatical in all of the examples in (11) and grammatical in the examples in (13) and (14).

And *announce*?

The verb *announce* combines with wh subordinate clauses:

1. The president **announcedA-force  [**whose plan had succeeded**]**

Yet it cannot combine with a main clause question, an interrogative quote in post-verbal position or with a quoted main clause question. These wh-structures encode Q-Force which is incompatible with the A-Force of *announce*.

1. a. \*[ **Q-force** Whose plan had succeeded**]**, (the president **announced**)

b. \*The president **announced** [ “Whose plan has succeeded?”].

c. \*[“Whose plan has succeeded?”**]**, (the president **announced**)

Thus, while *announce* behaves like *ask* in the canonical complementation pattern of (14), it behaves like assert and claim in the non-canonical patters in (15).

**2.3 The structure of the four “complements”**

1. **Clause structure for a quoted wh clause as an immediate complement (11)b.**

The subordinated wh complement in (11)a has the same structure: remove the “” and change tense on *have.*

TP

DP T′

The president T VP

V′

**V** **“CP” Q-Force**

**asked**

**Q-Force** “DP” “C′”

whose “C” “TP”

plan has

“DP” “T′”

“T” “VP”

“V′”

|

“V”

succeeded

1. **Main clauses hosting parentheticals, where the parenthetical contains the say-schema verb.**

Same structure for a non-quoted main clause: remove the quotes, and change tense/indexicals.

An instance of *mediated complementation*

Note: Alternatives to CP as trace.

CP

**“CP”i** **Q-Force** FP

“DP” “C′” Spec F′

whose “C” “TP” **Opi** F TP

plan has

DP “T′” DP T′

“T” “VP” the president T VP

“V′” V′

|

“V” **V** **CPi**

failed **asked**

**Q-Force**

**2.4 The status of quotes and main clauses**

1. **wh clauses across 4 kinds of say verbs**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wh Clause type** | **FORCE** | ***ask***  **Q-Force** | ***announce***  **A-Force** |
| **Wh clause as immediate complement** | **X-Force** | **Y** | **Y** |
| **Quoted wh clause as immediate complement** | **Q-Force** | **Y** | **N** |
| **Main wh clause as mediated complement** | **Q-Force** | **Y** | **N** |
| **Quoted (main) wh clause as mediated complement** | **Q-Force** | **Y** | **N** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Can report a Question event**  **See (9) and (10)** | **Q-Force** | **Y** | **N** |

**Hypothesis:**

* **Main wh clauses and quoted wh clauses are all questions. i.e. report speech acts with the Force of questions.**
* *Ask* and similar verbs combine with questions. *Announce* is like *assert* in combining with assertions, even though it takes a wh complement.

The morpho-syntax of subordinated wh complements is not in one to one correspondence with a key semantic property of the clause.

**2.5 The controversial nature of quotes in complementation**

Quoted clauses are copies of the original: indexicals, SOT< prosody, form, lexicalization …..

They are not subordinated

But they can satisfy the argument of a predicate and must be compatible with the predicate in order to do so.

As parenthetical hosts, quoted clauses are just like non-quoted main clauses.

**Section 3 Non canonical clausal complements: The case of the “missing” complementizer**

1. Susan says (that) it’s going to rain today

It is often stated that most English verbs (As?) allow the C to be omitted.

E.g. Pesetsky and Torrego (2007). “In English , CP-initial *that*  is generally optional in a complement clause”.

This is probably false.

What is true is that the most frequent verbs allow it.

Not the majority of embedding predicates.

**3.1 A Hypothesis about what governs omissibility. Pragmatics of Quasi-Subordination (Dayal and Grimshaw 2009):** Omission happens in the grammar of an informal register of English, in which the syntax of certain subordinate clauses, such as the one in (1), is assimilated to that of main clauses:

A sentence like 0 can initiate a conversation about the weather, or **answer a question** about the weather:

Subordinate clauses: literal meaning of (1) is a proposition about what Susan has said.

Invited pragmatics: put “it’s going to rain today” on the table. Depends on the subordinating predicate and the “Source”. e.g. *claim* vs *say;* r*emember* vs *forget*; 1st person vs third. Possible only when discourse conditions for assertion are met. Eg. proposition not already in the common ground.

Relevant studies of complementation: Cattell (1978), Hooper and Thompson (1973), Hooper (1975). Of *that*: Dor (2005), Dayal and Grimshaw (2009).

Omission is possible with a relatively small number of embedding verbs but they are of high frequency.

Omission itself is of relatively high frequency, since the opportunity for omission is of high frequency.

The frequency of a verb, the register it is associated with and the presence of 1st and 2nd person pronouns are all highly correlated.

**3.2 Omission is possible only with predicates** which are used (1) to report assertions made (*say* predicates), and (2) to report mentally formulated propositions: attitudes/opinions/knowledge (*believe* predicates and *conclude* predicates, the semi-factives). These correspond to the “volunteer stance” verbs of Cattell (1978).

(Some tricky cases – omitted here.)

Logic of the argument: Contexts in which a subordinate clause can answer a question should correspond to contexts in which omission is possible.

1. QS complement and optional *that:* (my judgments)

*assume, believe, claim, conclude, decide, declare, expect, fancy, feel, figure, imagine, maintain, reckon, say, suggest, suppose, suspect, tell, think*

1. Q: How many students cheated on the exam?

A: The committee

*assumed, believed, claimed, concluded, decided, declared, felt, figured, imagined, maintained, reckoned, said, suggested, suspected, told us, thought*

**that /** **Ø** about 25% cheated.

**3.3 Apparent counterexamples:**

1. QS complements and obligatory *that:* (my judgments)

*allege, ascertain* (Ross), *assert, conjecture, consider, deem, envisage, estimate, hold, intimate, judge, propose, report, state, surmise*

1. Q: How many students cheated on the exam?

A: The committee ascertained/surmised **that/** \*Ø about 25% cheated.

These have QS complements but do not allow omission.

**Proposal:** They are not in the vocabulary of the informal register (as clausal complement takers).

**Omission is impossible** with predicates which have complements which, for one reason or another, cannot be QS.

These include true factives, “say-plus” verbs, “non-stance” verbs, “response stance” verbs and verbs with subjunctive complements.

**3.4 Emotive and Evaluative** F**active Predicates**. Complement is already in the common ground.

1. Q: How many students did badly on the exam?

A: #The committee *regretted/didn’t mind/rejoiced* that 90% of the students failed

A: #The committee was *sad/sorry* that 90% of the students failed

They do not permit omission of *that*:

1. The committee *regretted/didn’t mind/rejoiced* **that/\*Ø** 90% of the students failed
2. \*The committee was *sad*/*sorry* **that/\*Ø** 90% of the students failed

**3.5 Comment Predicates** (Cf the Non-Stance Verbs of Cattell 1978)

The verbs cited by Cattell are *comment, convey, detail, emphasize mention* *remark* and *stress*. I add *note* and *observe* (when they mean “say”).

Hypothesis: it is *part of their meaning* that the event described is one in which the Source *did not assert the complement proposition.*

Examples are from Cattell:

1. Richard claimed that the road went through Windsor

Richard commented that the road went through Windsor

1. Q: How many students did badly on the exam?

A: #The committee commented that 90% of the students failed

1. The committee commented **that/\*Ø** 90% of the students failed

**3.6 say + goal or + attitude** (or + means in the case of so-called Manner of Speaking verbs)

They include: *apologize, bitch, beef, blurt (out), boast, brag, complain, enthuse, exclaim, fret, fuss, gripe, grouse, grumble, jest ,joke, kvetch, lament, lie, marvel, puzzle, quip, ramble, rant, rave, swear, whine* (when it doesn’t have a manner of speaking reading).

1. Q: How many students did badly on the exam?

A: #The committee *complained/bitched/boasted* that 90% of the students failed

1. \*The committee complained/ bitched/boasted **that/\*Ø 9**0% of the students failed

The canonical complementation structure in which *that* introduces a CP is compatible with a very wide range of embedding predicates. The divergences emerge when we look at *that*-less CPs as a different case of complementation, rather than assuming that it is just a variant of the structure with *that*.

**Section 4 Conclusions**

* **The morpho-syntax of clausal complements frequently obscures the real patterns.**
* **Non-canonical complements, including quoted clauses, main clauses and even DPs such as *someone* can reveal the underlying principles which are obscured in canonical complementation.**

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