



THE STRUCTURE OF COORDINATION



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A structure of coordination consists of *two or more conjoins*, either *with* or *without* a *coordinator* or *correlative* conjunctions.




The most common coordinators are: *and*, *but*, *or*, *with*, *not*, *as well as*, *whereas*, *as much as*, *rather than*, *together with*, *except*, and *along with*.






The correlative conjunctions which are normally found are: *either...or...*, *neither...nor...*, *not only...but (also)...*, and *both...and...*



The structure of coordination is the only structure in English that can have *more than two immediate constituents or conjoins*. See the examples below. Notice that all coordinators are circled.



Structures of coordination

with two immediate
constituents

red and blue

with more than two
constituents

butter, eggs, and milk



Each conjoin may be *single words, phrases, or clauses*.

See different types of conjoins below. All the coordinators are *circled*. Conjoin 1 in each example is *underlined*; whereas conjoin 2, is *double underlined*.

Types of Conjoins

Examples

Single Words

- nouns

tennis not golf

- verbs

neither walk nor talk

- adjectives

both lazy and dishonest

- adverbs

politely but firmly



Types of Conjoins



Examples

Phrases

- noun phrases

not only the technician in the

studio but also the viewers

- verb phrases

went to the garage and fetches

me a screwdriver





Types of Conjoins



Examples

Phrases (cont.)

- present participle phrases

shutting doors and opening windows

- past participle phrases

hidden inside that cabin and kept alive





Types of Conjoins

Examples

Phrases (cont.)

- infinitival phrases

to live happily or to die peacefully.

- adjective phrases

extremely comfortable but hard to find



Types of Conjoins



Examples

Phrases (cont.)

- adverb phrases

pretty easily **and** very clearly.

- prepositional phrases

either in our garden **or** outside
the field






Types of Conjoins

Examples

Clauses

Did someone knock or am I
imagining things?





Furthermore, each conjoin of a structure of coordination *can be any of the syntactic structures*, namely a structure of modification, a structure of predication, a structure of complementation and even the structure of coordination itself.

However, within a structure of coordination, *each conjoin must be syntactically equivalent*. Examples of different types of conjoins are illustrated below:



Syntactic Structure as Conjoins

Examples

Structure of Modification

- noun phrase as head



- verb as head



Syntactic Structure as Conjoins

Examples

Structure of Modification (cont.)

- adjective as head

M H
physically / handicapped (but)



M H
extremely / intelligent



- adverb as head

M H H M
rather / slowly (but) happily / enough

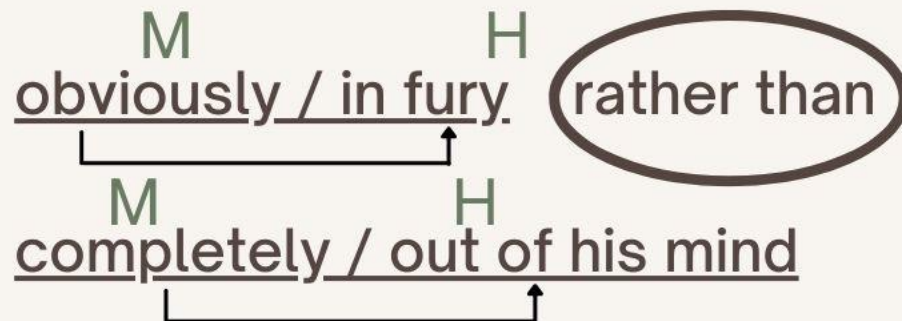


Syntactic Structure as Conjoins

Examples

Structure of Modification (cont.)

- prepositional phrase as head



Ellipsis in Structures of Coordination

1. Ellipsis of Subjects (and Auxiliaries)

- Identical subjects are omitted:

- Mary ate a ham sandwich, and Mary drank a glass of orange juice.
- Mary ate a ham sandwich, and drank a glass of orange juice.

- Identical subjects and auxiliaries can be omitted:

- The maid has washed the dishes, the maid has dried them, and the maid has put them on the shelf.
- The maid has washed the dishes, dried them, and put them on the shelf.

*As is usual for ellipsis in coordination, the realized items are in the first clause and the ellipsis is in the subsequent clauses (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973: 261).

2. Ellipsis of Modals (and Auxiliaries)

- If the subjects of coordinated clauses are different, only the identical modals and/or auxiliaries may be omitted:
 - Pam should wash the clothes, and Nancy should cook for the whole family.
 - Pam should wash the clothes, and Nancy cook for the whole family.

3. Ellipsis of Verbs (and Verb Phrases)

- Identical verbs or verb phrases in coordinated clauses are omitted:
 - Peter works in a factory, and his brother works on a farm.
 - Peter works in a factory, and his brother on a farm.

4. Ellipsis of Direct Object or Subjective Complement

- If the direct object is omitted, the realized items must be in the last clause (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973: 264). Notice that the identical subject is also left out:

- George opened the door, and George closed the door.
- George opened, and closed the door.

4. Ellipsis of Direct Object or Subjective Complement (cont.)

- Similarly, if the subjective complement is omitted, and the verb in the last clause is other than *be*, the realized item must be in the last clause (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973: 264):

- Mike was happy, and Jim certainly seemed happy.
- Mike was, and Jim certainly seemed happy.

4. Ellipsis of Direct Object or Subjective Complement (cont.)

- But if the verb in the last clause is *be*, the realized items can be either in the first or the last clause:

- Mike seemed happy, and Jim certainly was happy.

- Mike seemed happy, and Jim certainly was.

or - Mike seemed, and Jim certainly was happy.

5. Ellipsis of Head of Noun Phrase in the Structure of Modification

- If the head of a noun phrase is omitted, the realized items must be in the first clause:

- We wanted fried rice, but they gave us boiled rice.
- We wanted fried rice, but they gave us boiled.

REFERENCE

Jotikasthira, P. (2014). Introduction to the English Language : System and Structure. Bangkok: Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University.