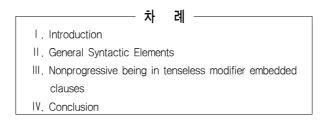# Conjoining Main Clauses and Embedded Clauses: The Link Approach*

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I. Introduction

There are two types of *being* in English. One is the progressive *being*, and the other is the nonprogressive *being*. The progressive *being* syntactically signifies the aspectual state of the sentence, while the nonprogressive *being* is not syntactically defined yet.[1] Consider the following sentences.

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1) The position of aspect as a proper syntactic position will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

(1) a. John is being kind to his friends.
   b. He has been being bullied by his friends.
   c. Children will not sit still when (being) bothered.
   d. Children will not sit still being bothered.
   e. (Being) bothered, children will not sit still.
   f. Though (being) cooperative, he is not popular with his coworkers.
   g. Being cooperative, he is popular with his coworkers.

In sentence (1a) *being* has a progressive meaning, and so does *being* in sentence (1b). The progressive *being* is syntactically an aspect that signifies the aspectual state of sentences.

In sentence (1c), *being* does not signify a progressive aspectual state, and it is an optional element in the sense that the sentence is acceptable and has the same meaning without it. The optional *being* changes to an obligatory sentence element when the embedded clause is without a complementizer, as in (1d). The obligatory *being* becomes an optional element when a comma intervenes between the embedded clause and the main clause, as in (1e).

The embedded clause of (1f) has a complementizer, as does the embedded clause of (1c), and *being* is optional. The optional *being* becomes an obligatory sentence element when the embedded clause is without a complementizer, as in (1d). Sentences (1e) and (1g) have the same structures in that the embedded clause is without the complementizer and is followed by the main clause with a comma intervening between them. However, *being* is optional in (1e) yet obligatory in (1g).

The purpose of this article is to discuss the empirical distribution of *being* in English and to suggest the following:

(1) Progressive *being* is syntactically an aspect.

(2) a. Nonprogressive *being* is syntactically a link.

　　　 b. Nonprogressive *being* in the tenseless embedded modifier clause conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause.

(3) Nonprogressive *being* is optional if

　　　 a. the sentence has a complementizer that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause; or

　　　 b. the sentence has a comma that conjoins the main clause and embedded clause.

(4) A comma conjoins the main clause and the tenseless embedded modifier clause only when they both have verbal elements.

Ⅱ. General Syntactic Elements

Since Chomsky (1995), (1999), (2000), (2001), and (2008) generative grammar has been characterized by syntactic structure such as that shown in (5).

(5) [$_{CP}$ Comp [$_{TP}$ Tense [$_{NegP}$ Neg [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ V]]]

The syntactic structure in (5) is comprised of four functional categories and one lexical category. The functional categories are Comp, Tense, Neg, and the light verb *v*. The lexical category is the lexical verb V. The light verb *v* and the lexical verb V constitute double verb phrase structure. Depending on whether we adopt the predicate-internal 01 hypothesis (PISH) or not, the subject is base-generated either a0t SPEC-vP or at SPEC-TP, as shown in (6a) and (6b).

(6)　a. [$_{CP}$ Comp [$_{TP}$ Tense [$_{NegP}$ Neg [$_{vP}$ v Subject [$_{VP}$ V]]]
　　　b. [$_{CP}$ Comp [$_{TP}$ Subject Tense [$_{NegP}$ Neg [$_{vP}$ v [$_{VP}$ V]]]

The syntactic structure in (6) is comprised of four functional categories and one lexical category. The functional categories are Comp, Tense, Neg, and the light verb v. The lexical category is the lexical verb V. The light verb v and the lexical verb V constitute double verb phrase structure. Depending on whether or not we adopt the predicate-internal subject hypothesis (PISH) in the sense of Radford (2004), the subject is base-generated either at SPEC-vP or at SPEC-TP.

While Chomsky (2001) postulates double verb phrase structure, Cho (2006) offers a competing analysis that splits double verb phrase structure into a link phrase, an aspect phrase, and a predicate phrase, as shown in (7).

(7)　[$_{CP}$ Comp [$_{TP}$ Tense [$_{NegP}$ Neg [$_{LP}$ Link [$_{ASPP}$ Asp [$_{PREDP}$ Pred]]]]]]

The syntactic structure shown in (7) is comprised of six heads. The first five are functional categories, and the last one is a lexical category. Comp specifies the sentence type and conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. The following sentences show how the complementizer functions syntactically.

(8)　a. Does he smoke?
　　b. Who does he like?
　　c. Don't (you) smoke in the office.
　　d. Should John leave his wife, he would be blamed.
　　e. May God bless you.
　　f. How well the computer works again!
　　g. Sue thinks that she is a genius.

h. He does not know if she is a genius.

In sentence (8a), the comp position is occupied by the tensed verb *does*, which specifies the type of sentence as a yes-no question. In sentence (8b), the comp position is occupied by wh-element and the tensed verb *does*, which specifies the type of sentence as a wh-question. In sentence (8d), the tensed verb *should* undergoes T-C movement to specify the sentence type as subjunctive. In sentence (8e), the modal auxiliary verb *may* occupies the comp position and specifies the sentence type as optative.

In sentence (8f), the wh-phrase occupies the comp position and specifies the sentence type as exclamative. In (8g), the embedded clause complementizer *that* conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause, and specifies the embedded clause as declarative. In (8h), the embedded clause complementizer *if* conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause, and specifies the embedded clause as interrogative. All these show that the Comp specifies the type of sentence and conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause.

(9) a. Jina is talking.
    b. She is not introverted.
    c. The window was broken.
    d. It was not repaired yet.
    e. The chatty ladies have just arrived.
    f. They do not quarrel.
    g. They did reconcile.
    h. They will reconcile.
    i. They reconciled.

Sentences (9a-9f) show that the subject is followed by Tense. Tense

specifies the tense of a sentence as past, present or future. The tense verbs are *be*-verbs in (9a-9d), *have*-verbs in (9e), *do*-verbs in (9f-9g), and modal auxiliary verbs in (9h). The tense represented by *do*-verbs as in (9g) can be alternatively specified on the following lexical predicate verbs as well in positive constructions, as in (9i).

> (10) a. Mike is open-handed.
>   b. He will not be parsimonious.
>   c. Jenny has been working on the project for two years.
>   d. She will have finished the project by next year.
>   e. Jim wants success.
>   f. He wants to succeed in the asset management business.

In (10a), the present tense is specified by the verb *is*. In (10b), the future tense is specified by the modal auxiliary verb *will*, which cannot be directly followed by the adjective *parsimonious*. Therefore, we need the place holder *be* to intervene between *will* and *parsimonious*. In (10c), the present tense is specified by *has*. In (10d), the future tense is specified by the modal auxiliary verb *will*, which cannot be directly followed by the perfective verb *finished*. Therefore, we need the place holder *have* to intervene between *will* and *finished*. The place holders are syntactically links that conjoin two sentence elements. In (10e), the main verb *wants* is followed by its nominal object *success*. In contrast, in (10f), the main verb *wants* cannot be immediately followed by its verbal object *succeed*. This is a kind of hiatus effect. Therefore, we need the infinitive marker *to* as a place holder to serve as a link conjoining the main verb *wants* and the verbal object *succeed*.

(11) a. Monica is not kind to her nephew.
   b. She is not being kind to him.
   c. She has not worked on the project for a long time.
   d She has not been working on the project for more
      than three years.

In sentence (11a), the subject is followed by the tense verb *is*, which is in turn followed by the negative element. In sentence (11b), the negative element is in turn followed by the progressive verb *being*. Sentence (11c) has the same structure as sentence (11a) in that the subject is followed by a tense verb, which is in turn followed by the negative element. In sentence (11d), the negative element is in turn followed by the perfective verb *been*. The progressive verb *being* in (11b) and the perfective verb *been* in (11d) are syntactically aspects that specify the aspectual state of the sentences.

(12) a. Kerry is sick.
   b. His wife is worried.
   c. A doctor was called.
   d. He has arrived.
   e. The liquid medicine works wonders.
   f. His fever has broken.
   g. His wife is happy.
   h. They are smiling.

Sentences (12a-12h) are each comprised of a subject, tense, and a one-place predicate. The predicate is the most essential element in the formation of these sentences. The predicate differs from the tense, link, and aspect in that it assigns semantic roles. The valence of the predicates determines the number and types of the sentence elements. One-place predicates require one sentence element, while two-place predicates and

three-place predicates require two and three sentence elements, respectively. Consider the following two-place predicate sentences.

> (13) a. Jina has a boyfriend.
>   b. His name is Tony Wilson.
>   c. He will make a good husband.
>   d. He acts like a gentleman.
>   e. She asked for her parents' permission.
>   f. Her parents consented to their marriage.
>   g. He is delighted at the news.
>   h. Their new home is located downtown.

Sentences (13a-13h) are each comprised of a subject, tense, and a two-place predicate. The second sentence element that the two-place predicates require is an object in (13a), (13e), and (13f), a subject complement in (13b) and (13c), a manner in (13d), a cause in (13g), and a location in (13h).

The maximum valence of the predicates is three-places. The three-place predicates require three sentence elements. Consider the following sentences.

> (14) a. The boss informed his foreign employees of new regulations.
>   b. The new regulations keep them from smoking in the office.
>   c. They asked the boss to explain the new regulations in English.
>   d. He cannot make himself understood in English.
>   e. He did not post an English version of the regulations on the board.
>   f. They filled the company homepage with complaints.

g. The boss finally announced to his employees that
   the new regulations had been revoked.
h. They treat him like a prince.

Sentences (14a-14h) are each comprised of a subject, tense, and a three-place predicate. The first sentence element is the subject. The second and third sentence elements that the three-place predicates require are an indirect object and a direct object in (14a-14c), an object and an object complement in (14d), an object and a location in (14e), an object and a substance in (14f), an indirect object and a direct object in (14g), and an object and a manner in (14h).

So far we have discussed the syntactic functions of Comp, Tense, Neg, Link, Aspect, and Predicate and have shown that the valence of the predicate determines the number and types of the sentence elements. In the next chapter we will discuss the empirical distribution of nonprogressive *being* in tenseless modifier embedded clauses.

Ⅲ. Nonprogressive *being* in tenseless modifier embedded clauses

As mentioned in Chapter 1, English has two types of *being*. One is the progressive *being*, and the other is the nonprogressive *being*. Consider the following sentences that show the distribution of these two types of *being*.

(15) a. John is being kind to his friends.
     b. He has been being bullied by his friends.
     c. Children will not sit still when (being) bothered.
     d. Children will not sit still being bothered.
     e. (Being) bothered, children will not sit still.

f. Though (being) cooperative, he is not popular with
    his coworkers.
g. Being cooperative, he is popular with his coworkers.

In sentence (15a), *being* has a progressive meaning, as does being in sentence (15b). The progressive being syntactically signifies the aspectual state of a sentence and rightfully occupies the aspect position of a sentence.

Sentences (15c−15g) are complex sentences each comprised of a tensed main clause and a tenseless embedded clause. The tenseless embedded clauses are present participle constructions. In sentence (15c), the embedded clause is a present participle counterpart construction for the tensed embedded clause *when they are bothered*, and *being* does not signify a progressive aspectual state.

The nonprogressive *being* is optional in (15c), which has a complementizer that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause, yet obligatory in (15d), which is without a complementizer. The obligatory *being* becomes optional when a comma intervenes between the main clause and the embedded clause, as shown in (15e). The nonprogressive *being* must be a link that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. It is optional in (15c), which has a complementizer that has the same function of conjoining the main clause and the embedded clause. It is also optional in (15e), where a comma fulfills the same function as the complementizer.[2]

2) Traditionally a copula is defined as a linking verb. Consider the following sentences.

(i) Bill is a professor.
(ii) The musician is Harry Brown.
(iii) That man is Bill's brother.
(iv) He is happy.

Sentence (15f) has the same structure as (15c) in that the embedded clause is comprised of a complementizer, the nonprogressive *being*, and a predicate. Hence, the nonprogressive *being* is optional in (15f), as it is in (15c).

Sentence (15g) has the same structure as sentence (15e). However, the nonprogressive *being* is not optional but obligatory. This relates to the balance between the main clause and the embedded clause. If the embedded clause is without *being*, there is no balance between the main clause that has a verbal element and the embedded clause that has no verbal element. Hence the appositive comma cannot conjoin the main clause and the embedded clause, and the sentence is bad because of the link failure.[3] All of these examples provide us with empirical evidence indicating that the appositive comma can conjoin the main clause and the embedded clause when they both have verbal elements.

IV. Conclusion

This study has presented a discussion of the progressive *being* and

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Sentences (i), (ii), and (ii) all have copular verbs or linking verbs. However, in terms of current generative grammar, none of the copular verbs (i), (ii), (iii), and (iv) are copular verbs or linking verbs. The copular verbs are predicate main verbs in sentences (i), (ii), and (iii), and tense verbs in sentence (iv). Hence the linking verbs in the sense of Heggie (1988) are not linking verbs at all in terms of generative grammar.

3) (i) I am against John being fired for a small mistake.

In sentence (i) the nonprogressive "being" in the embedded clause is also an obligatory link. It conjoins the main clause predicate "against" and the embedded clause predicate "fired." However, we will not discuss this type of link here since the embedded clause is not a modifier clause but an object clause.

nonprogressive *being*, syntactically classifying the former as an aspect that signifies the aspectual state of a sentence and the latter as a link that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. The nonprogressive *being* is optional when the embedded clause has a complementizer that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. The nonprogressive *being* is also optional when the sentence has an appositive comma that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause in an equal way. The appositive comma conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause only when they both have verbal elements and thus have similar structural weights. The main points of this article are summarized as follows.

(16) a. Progressive *being* is syntactically an aspect.

b. Nonprogressive *being* in the tenseless modifier embedded clause is syntactically a link that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause.

c. Nonprogressive *being* is optional if the sentence has a complementizer or comma that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause.

d. A comma conjoins the main clause and the tenseless embedded modifier clause only when they both have verbal elements.

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Abstract

Conjoining Main Clauses and Embedded Clauses: The Link Approach

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   This study discussed the progressive *being* and nonprogressive *being* and classified the former as an aspect that signifies the aspectual state of a sentence and the latter as a link that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. The nonprogressive *being* is optional when the embedded clause has a complementizer that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause. The nonprogressive *being* is also optional when the sentence has an appositive comma that conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause in an equal way. The appositive comma conjoins the main clause and the embedded clause only when they both have verbal elements and have equal structural status. Syntactic identification of the nonprogressive *being* as a link makes a clear distinction between the obligatory progressive *being* and the nonprogressive *being*, which is optional when the sentence has a complementizer or an appositive comma that performs the same function.

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