

GRAMÀTICA DESCRIPTIVA DE L'ANGLÈS III

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UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA



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INTRODUCTION

This *text-guia* is designed for the course *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III*, the final course of a three-part series of courses within the framework of the new plan of studies at the University of Barcelona. *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès I* offers an analysis of English phrases and their components as well as a brief introduction to the simple sentence. *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès II* studies in detail the simple sentence in all its possible forms in English. In contrast, the subject matter of *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III* is the notion of the sentence beyond that of the simple clause. The subject matter of *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III* includes therefore the compound sentence and the complex sentence as well as the notion of the clause as message.

Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III is an obligatory course for completion of the degree of English Philology. It consists of 6 credits. The course, like the two courses which precede it, is of crucial importance in the preparation of the students of the English department; after the three courses of the series of descriptive grammar, students will have acquired a descriptive knowledge of the great majority of possible syntactic structures in English.

The course focuses on the descriptive nature of English syntax from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The point of departure for the study of a particular syntactic structure begins with a description of the structure provided in class. From that moment on various techniques are employed to put the description into practice. Students must in the first place recognize the structure in isolation and then within the context of a text. They must be able to reproduce the given structure and finally identify it in both descriptive and theoretical terms. The exercises in this *text-guia* provide the basis for all of these steps for the majority of structures studied in class. Participation in the practical and theoretical exercises completed both as in-class work and outside-of-class-work are taken into consideration for student evaluation, but a final exam which covers the material given in class and in this *text-guia* is the primary instrument for evaluation of student performance. The exam contains both theoretical and practical questions: descriptions of structures, examples of structures, analysis of structures are all possible areas for evaluation.

The *text-guia* we have designed for the course *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III* contains three chapters. The first focuses on coordination, the second on subordination and the third on the clause as message. The material of the first two chapters is seen from a syntactic viewpoint, whereas the material of the third chapter includes, necessarily, pragmatic aspects as well as the syntactic perspective.

The focus of this *text-guia* is more practical than theoretical. Having both taught the course *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III*, we recognized the necessity for exercises which put into practice the theoretical lessons offered in class. Nevertheless, we have also included charts and exercises on the basic theoretical points in order to facilitate student assimilation of the theoretical as well as of the practical material.

We thank the teachers of the course *Gramàtica Descriptiva de l'Anglès III* of the last three years, Ester Astudillo, Maria-Luz Celaya, Marta Espelta, Mike Pritchard, Carme Muñoz and Enric Vidal for their helpful suggestions and collaboration. We also thank the students of the course who have collaborated with suggestions and critical views of earlier versions of this *text-guia*. Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the support of the Gabinet d'Avaluació i Innovació Universitària for this project.

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UNIT 1

1. COORDINATION

When we speak or write we need to make connections between different elements of the discourse to give cohesion to our productions. Compare the two versions of the following dialogue:

Version A

Paul: Robin didn't like the film. I think it is the best production of this Australian director.

Den: Is this his third film? Is this his fourth film?

Paul: I think it is his fourth one.

Den: I read an article about him in the newspaper. I was surprised at finding out that he is only twenty-nine.

Paul: Yes, he is very young. He is quite experienced.

Version B

*Paul: Robin didn't like the film **but** I think it is the best production of this Australian director.*

*Den: Is this his third **or** fourth film?*

Paul: I think it is his fourth one.

*Den: I read an article about him in the newspaper **and** was surprised at finding out he is only twenty-nine.*

*Paul: Yes, he is very young **but** quite experienced.*

You must have found version B more cohesive and less repetitive. In B connections have been made by using **coordination**. Crystal (1989) defines coordination in the following terms:

Co-ordination (co-ordinat-(iv)e, -ing, -or) (1) A term in GRAMMATICAL analysis to refer to the process or result of linking LINGUISTICS UNITS of equivalent SYNTACTIC status, e.g. a series of CLAUSES, or PHRASES, or WORDS (1989: 76).

As the definition points out, coordinated elements must have the **same** syntactic status. Coordination is thus a type of **paratactic** relation. Parataxis involves linking units of equal grammatical rank. This feature is illustrated by the following sentences from the dialogue above:

(i) Coordination of two Clauses.

[_{Clause}I read an article about him in the newspaper] **and** [_{Clause}(I) was surprised at finding out he is only twenty-nine]

(ii) Coordination of two Adjective Phrases functioning as Subject Complements.

Yes, he is [AdjP very young] **but** [AdjP quite experienced]

(iii) Coordination of two Numerals functioning as Post-determiners.

Is this his [Numeral_{third}] **or** [Numeral_{fourth}] film?

1.1. Coordinators

1.1.1. Asyndetic and syndetic coordination

Coordinated elements are called conjoins. When conjoins are in a coordinated relation without a lexical marker it is called **asyndetic** coordination. Usually, **asyndetic** coordination involves punctuation, such as a semi-colon or a comma. In contrast, conjoins are said to be in syndetic coordination when they are joined by means of some lexical marker of coordination, most usually, the coordinators *and*, *or* and *but*.

Determine which type of coordination is involved below by putting an A for asyndetic and an S for syndetic in the space to the left of each sentence.

(1)

- _____ a. Edgar and Dave laughed.
- _____ b. The cat is at John's house; the dog is at Ellen's house.
- _____ c. Jerry said that he likes Italian food and that he'll attend the party at Gianni's.
- _____ d. The president mailed Howard a message and sent Edgar a fax.
- _____ e. Millie is a good but tough teacher.
- _____ f. The short, hefty truck driver shouted at the taxi driver.
- _____ g. Ellen strode purposefully, aggressively into the room.
- _____ h. Across the garden and over the threshold of the house he came.

Now determine which kind of grammatical components, that is, clauses or phrases, and of which category, are coordinated.

(2)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.
- h.

The next question to consider is whether or not asyndetic and syndetic coordination are interchangeable. In other words, if we have an example of asyndetic coordination, is it true that to change it to syndetic coordination, all we have to do is just remove the coordinator and add punctuation? Or, if we have asyndetic coordination, do we just remove the punctuation and add a coordinator? Let's try the hypothesis on example (1a), repeated here as (3a):

- (3)
- a. Edgar and Dave laughed.
 - b. *Edgar, Dave laughed.
 - c. *Edgar; Dave laughed.

So far, it looks like the hypothesis doesn't work. Notice that the two conjoiners are NPs, so let's try with another pair of NPs:

- (4)
- a. The cat and the dog are at Ellen's house.
 - b. *The cat, the dog are at Ellen's house.
 - c. *The cat; the dog are at Ellen's house.

It looks like the hypothesis that syndetic and asyndetic coordination are interchangeable isn't true. In fact, if we want to change the structures in (3) and (4) to asyndetic coordination, we have to use as a point of departure the following interpretation of the sentences and create two clauses:

- (5)
- a. Edgar laughed. Dave laughed.
 - b. The cat is at Ellen's house. The dog is at Ellen's house.

Then we can use asyndetic coordination either with a semi-colon or with a comma, the latter being stylistically somewhat marginal:

- (6)
- a. Edgar laughed; Dave laughed.
 - b. The cat is at Ellen's house; the dog is at Ellen's house.
- (7)
- a. Edgar laughed, Dave laughed.
 - b. The cat is at Ellen's house, the dog is at Ellen's house.

In fact, the same results would obtain if we tested the hypothesis that asyndetic and syndetic coordination are alike on coordinated verb phrases and clauses. The asyndetic variation is stylistically somewhat marginal:

- (8)
- a. Jerry said that he likes Italian food, that he'll attend the party at Gianni's.
 - b. The president mailed Howard a message, sent Edgar a fax.

Now, convert (1e), (1f), (1g) and (1h) to the opposite form of coordination:

(9)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

What conclusion can you draw about the kinds of phrases which allow switching between asyndetic and syndetic coordination?

1.1.2. Coordinators. Syntactic features

A. Connections between phrases

The elements *and*, *or*, and *but* are coordinators which may link phrases of equal grammatical rank, but there are differences among them. Consider the examples below:

(1)

- a. Boris looks tall and handsome in his new coat.
- b. Natalie agreed to carry out the plan slowly and carefully.

In the space provided, rewrite the sentences in (1) inserting *or* and *but*:

(2)

- a.
- b.

(3)

- a.
- b.

Are your examples syntactically correct?

Now consider the examples below:

(4)

- a. His smile was careful but friendly.
- b. Evelyn jumped over the fence and into the pool.

Which categories of phrases are coordinated in the examples in (4)?

Next consider the examples below:

(5)

- a. * Your insults but praise will get you nowhere.
- b. * His cats but dogs aren't friendly.

Based on the examples seen so far, can you draw a conclusion about what kinds of phrases can be coordinated by the coordinating elements discussed in this exercise?

	And	or	but
Used to link Noun phrases			
Used to link Adjective Phrases			
Used to link Adverb Phrases			
Used to link Prepositional Phrases			
Used to link more than two phrases			

B. Connections between clauses

A **compound** sentence is one in which two or more clauses have been linked in a relationship of coordination. Consider the examples below:

- (1)
- Thomas believes nobody will raise to the occasion and I think he is right.
 - I don't know if she came to the party or if she stayed at home.
 - My aunt gave me this sweater, but it does not fit me.

In the three examples above, the three coordinators introduce the second clause. Try and place them in some other syntactic positions. Do you get alternative grammatically correct constructions?

As the following sentence illustrates, subordinators can be preceded by coordinators:

- (2) The police think that the ring was stolen **and that** she lied to them.

Can you now think of any sentence in which a coordinator is preceded by a subordinator?

Consider the compound sentences in (1) and (2) and in the space provided state which type of clauses coordinators link. Do they link main clauses? Do they link dependent clauses?

- (3)
- -
 -

- (4)

In the three compound sentences in (1) only two clauses have been coordinated. In the space provided try to add a third coordinated clause to all of them. Do you get grammatically correct constructions?

- (5)
- -
 -

Based on the examples seen so far complete the following chart, which summarizes the major syntactic properties of pure coordinators.

	and	Or	but
Limited to initial position in the clause			
Preceded by a subordinator			
Used to link main clauses			
Used to link subordinate clauses			
Used to link more than two clauses			

The chart below summarizes the syntactic aspects developed so far in the exercises above. Refer to the index of your textbook under the titles *Clausal Coordination* and *Phrasal Coordination* and then fill in the blanks with the appropriate word or words.

The three _____ are _____, _____ and _____. The clause coordinators are limited to the _____ position in the clause. Another _____ may not precede a clausal coordinator. A clause introduced by a coordinator allows _____ of the subject if that subject shares the same reference with the _____ of the preceding linked clause. The coordinators _____ and _____ may link more than two clauses, while the coordinator _____ may link only two. When more than two clauses are linked, then only the _____ instance of the coordinator must appear. The other instances may be _____.

The three coordinators are also used to link _____. For linking phrases the coordinators _____ and _____ are the most common. The coordinator _____ may be used as a phrasal coordinator as well, but its use is limited to linking _____ and _____ phrases in coordination. When noun phrases are coordinated, _____ of one of the noun heads is possible. This process, ellipsis of a _____, may occur with other modifiers as well. Sometimes an _____ which appears in the first conjoin of a noun phrase is ellipsed in the second _____.

In sum, the coordinators used in phrasal and clausal coordination are the _____ ones, _____, _____ and _____.