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# Adab Al-Rafidayn Journal

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#### **Editor-in-chief**

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# SUBJECT COMPLEMENT AND ITS GRAMMATICAL REALIZATIONS Zahraa Ahmed Othman \*

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#### Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to explore that in certain situations ,the adjectives functioning as subject complement can not semantically be satisfied unless syntactic complementation can be added ,this is called as subject complementation .This can be realized by; prepositional phrase, wh clause ,that clause ,to infinitive clause as stated by Quirk et al (1985:1220)In this paper other structures namely , ing non finite clauses can be added .It is concluded that syntactically some structures can not satisfy their meanings ,unless it is fulfilled by complementations , ,although it is optionally added .The test in this paper is conducted on [20]students ,from fourth year ,English Department .The test consists of [10]sentences with different structures .The results show that the students are weak to some extent to recognize the subject complement .

**Keywords:** complementation, prepositional phrase ,non finite clause, predicative.

#### **Hypothesis Of The Study**

It is hypothesized that fourth-year-students might face some difficulties in recognizing subject complementation, due to their lack of competence, and they are unfamiliar and exotic structures to the students.

#### The aim of the paper

The aim of the paper is to explore the various types of complementation for adjectives as subject complement. It is worth mentioning that adjectives cannot make their meaning satisfied, unless syntactic complementation can be added ,therefore a test will be conducted on (20)students \fourth year from College of Arts\ English Department. No gender distinction .The test consists of

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(10)sentences with different structures ,then these sentences will be analyzed to know the recognition of adjective complementation.

#### Introduction:

This research is an attempt to classify the various types of adjective complementation. In some situations the adjectives functioning as subject complement cannot satisfy their meanings semantically unless syntactic complementations can be added . This can be realized by [six types].

1.complementation of prepositional phrase ,as in the following sentence;

1.Ali was good at Botany.

2.complementation of that -clause as in the following sentence;

2.I am sure that he will come early.

3.complementation of wh –clause as in the following sentence;

3.It was unclear what they should do.

4.complementation of than –clause as in the following sentence;

4.He drives more faster than I do.

5.complementation of to -infinitive clause as in the following sentence

5.He is anxious to see his sister.

6.complementation of ing-participle clause as in the following sentence

6.He is busy writing the homework.

Consider the following example;

7.It is clear

8.It is obvious

9.It is nice

10.The dog was hungry[Eckersley and Eckersley,1960;65]

examples ,although the words The above [clear .obvious.nice.hungry]can function subject as complement., syntactically are correct, but semantically can not give the adequate meaning. An adjective may be predicative when it is used as asubjective or as an objective complement. The predicative adjective functioning as subjective complement Cs follows linking verbs , while the predicative adjective functioning as objective complement Co may be used to complete the meaning of the

transitive verb and it limits or describes the [od];e.g11..Our hoard is little,but our hearts are great.,

So ,the completion of such sentences can be clarified by certain structures as in the following;

12.It is clear that the exam was difficult

13.It is obvious that he was the real criminal

14.It is nice to meet you again

In addition there is agap of adjectives beginning with [a-]used predicatively only, though they have their attributive counterparts, as in;

15.That child is afraid

16.Its'afrightened child

Whether, current adjectives or resulting adjectives normally they are determined by the use of intensive verbs, and can be used as smell ,taste, keep as [current verbs ],or come ,get, go, grow as [resulting verbs](Quirk et al:1990),consider the following example ;

17.The food tastes spoil.[current]

The boy goes mad. [resulting]

The structures are called complementation which can be subdivided into six types;

**1Complementation of a prepositional Phrase** 

**2.**Complementation of That – clause

**3.**Complementation of Wh - clause

**4.**Complementation of Than – clause

**5.**Complementation of To – infinitive clause

**6.**Complementation of An – ing participle clause

[Quirk et al,1985:1220]

1.Complementation by a prepositional Phrase;

The prepositions followed by the adjectives can be of different types, e.g.

19. About e.g. He was very worried about her reaction.

20.At e.g. She was bad <u>at</u> mathematics

21.From e.g. The village is remote from the bustle of city life

22.of e.g. She was aware of his difficulties

23.On\Upon e.g. Their plan was based <u>on</u> cooperation

24.To e.g. All capital gains are subject to taxation

25. With e.g. This plan is not compatible with our principles

[Quirk et al ,1985;1221,1222]

The PP following an adjective has the two syntactic properties or characteristics of complementation:

a.It depends for its occurrence on the presence in head function of an adjective of the appropriate subclass [fond] in Layla is fond of Ali, can be replaced by [afraid ],but not by [keen],[tall],....etc, where the complementation is pp,the choice of preposition is determined by the adjective ;[fond of],[keen of],[keen on ],[sorry for],[similar to].....etc....

b.It is obligatory ;however some adjectives take obligatory complements

#### 2.complementation by that clause ;

That clauses as complementation of adjectives can be of three types ,according to the verb ;

#### 1.Indicative verb ;

e.g.26.Iam sure that he will pass the exam

27.I was quite confident <u>that it would stay in very well</u>[Biber et al ,1999;661]

28.It is sometimes difficult for ateacher to persuade astudent to work hard enough to pass

[Praninskas(1975:66)

#### 2.Subjunctive verb;

e.g29. They were insistant <u>that we be ready</u> [formal]

#### **3.Putative should;**

30.Iam sorry that he should have left [formal]

[Quirk etal,1985;1222]

That –clauses with indicatve verbs following adjectives refer to an established fact ;they are concerned with the truth –value of the complementation. Adjectives followed by prepositions can be followed by that –clauses, but then the preposition is deleted .These adjectives refer to personal feelings or states of the mind. However ,Quirk et al.[1985:719] consider that asimple sentence may have aclause functioning within aphrase They identify the complexity in

that case at the level of the phrase ,not at the level of the sentence or clause .That –clauses following adjectives refer to an established fact ,have indicative verbs .They are factual and are concerned with the truth-value of the complementation.

31.I am sure that they will come immediately.

#### 3. Complementation by wh-clause;

The wh-clause is considered as extraposed subject [Quirk et al ,1985;1225]

Consider the following ;

32.Iwas unsure [of\about]what I should say whether the problem was solved.

33.It was unclear what they would do.

Sentence [No.32.]consists of adjectives which are constructed with prepositions ,which is equal about say some thing.

In sentence [No.33.]no preposition is used .In some cases the adjective takes awh-clause in assertive contexts ;e.g. careful[about],doubtful[as to];e.g.

34.John is careful [about ]what he does with his money.

Quirk et al (1985:1225) characterize adjectives with wh-clauses as adjectives ,which are constructed with apreposition which is omitted before the wh-clause as in the following sentence ;

35.I was puzzled [of ]what I should do.

[about]whether the mistake is corrected

The adjectives with wh-clauses often have introductory [it] as S according to Broughton [1990:82]. No preposition appears with adjectives after [it] so it does not make sense to say:36.\*It became clear about who the murderer was.

#### 4. Complementation by a than -clause;

There is an unusual construction in which anon comparative adjective is followed by a comparative than –clause as complementation.

37.She is quite adifferent girl than she was five years ago.

[Quirk et al,1985:1226]

In general ,the comparative clauses are clauses introduced by than,as....as ,the same .....as .Close [1975:62] mentions that agradble adjective or a verb in the comparative degree is often

followed by a clause beginning with the conjunction[than], as in the following sentences;

38.He writes more neatly than I do

39.Jack is not [so, as]quick as John is

There is also a comparison of manner as in the following sentence;

40.Ali wrote [in the same way]as his father did

There is also a comparison of quantity as in ;

41.John has[as much money, so \as many books]as I have

East wood [1994:278] mentions that adjectives can have comparative and superlative forms .These forms are used to compare the same quality of different things; consider the following example;

42.Gold is softer than Copper.

#### 5.<u>complementation by to –infinitive clause;</u>

It is important to state the following types of infinitives;

43.Bob is splendid to wait

44.Bob is slow to react

45.Bob is furious to hear it

46.Bob is hesitate to agree with you

47.Bob is hard to convince

[Quirk etal ,1973:356]

These examples show the main types of to-infinitive clauses as complementation of the adjectives.

In types [43-46], the subject of the sentence [Bob] is also the subject of the infinitive clause.

We can therefore always have a direct object in the infinitive clause in these four types if the verb is transitive .For example type [1]if we replace intransitive wait by transitive make ,we can have Bob is splendid to make that for you.

In type[ 47][Bob is hard to convince ]the subject of the sentence is the object of the infinitive clause ,which must therefore have a transitive verb[\*Bob is hard to arrive]

[Quirk et al,1973:357]

Close [1975:75]offers seven types of to-infinitive complementation;

1.Includes the adjective which express a personal attitude to something that has not yet happened

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48.He is eager to see her

2. This type includes adjectives that represent indication of the speakers 'attitude towards the future

49.He is likely to see her

3. The adjectives that express emotions in this type are indications of personal attitude, but in relation to something that has taken place

50.He is happy to see her again

4.It is only action words that can replace adjectives in this type as in

51.He is foolish to meet her again-It is foolish of him to meet her again

5. The adjectives in this type become adverbs as in;

52.Ali is quick to take coffee –Ali quickly takes coffee

6. The subject in this construction could be also inanimate as in;

53.He is easy to teach-He is an easy pupil to teach

7.The adjectives in this type are [better,best,advisable,essential,un[necessary][im] possible ,well formal style or just as well in less formal style as in ;

54.It is better to remember this rule.

Quirk et al .[1985:1226] distinguish seven kinds of constructions in which an adjective is followed by a to-infinitive clauses .consider the following types;

Type [1];the adjectives are evaluative of human behavior as in;

55.It was foolish of him to spend so much

Type [2];the adjectives become adverbs ,while the infinitives become the finite verb as in;

56.He is quick to react –He reacts quickly

Type [3]; the adjectives in this type are emotive as in;

57. They are content to be there .

Type [4]; in this type the head of the adjective expresses avolitional meaning ,or amoral meaning such as ability, possibility, or liability, e.g.

58.He is likely to attend.

Type [5]; this type includes adjectives used to refer to degrees of ease or comfort as in

59.Jack is easy to fool-Jack is easy for anyone to fool.

Type [6]the adjectives in this type of main clause are identified with the object of the infinitive clause as in;

60.The food is ready to eat.

Type [7] the adjectives in this type are often followed by phrases identifying the persons being discussed as in;

61.It was wrong [of him]to tell her.

#### 6.<u>Complementation by -ing non finite</u> clause;

62.Margery is busy washing clothes.

[Quirk et al ,1985:1230]

However ,there is a variant construction in which a preposition occurs between the adjective and the participle clause .In some cases the preposition is optional.

63.Iam busy [with ]getting the house redecorated.

64.We are fortunate [in]having Aunt Mary as a baby sitter.

In other cases ,the preposition is obligatory .

65..Iam hopeless at keeping the garden tidy.

66.She is not capble of looking after herself.

[Quirk et al,1985:1230-1231]

Another example ;

67.We are used to not having acar.

[Quirk et 1,1990:362]

#### THE TEST

The test has been conducted on [20] students \fourth year from English Department ,no female \male distinction . The test consists of [10] sentences with different structures.,see the appendix .The following table clarifies this point.

S	С	InC
1	55%	45%
2	45%	55%
3	35%	65%
4	40%	60%
5	65%	35%
6	60%	40%
7	50%	50%
8	65%	35%
9	45%	55%
10	50%	50%

Sentence [1]

#### -She was bad at mathematics

The table shows that [55%] of the students were able to recognize the complementations of adjective correctly ,while [45%] of them failed ,because such structures are familiar to the students ,and easy for them to be analyzed This type is called complementation of prepositional phrase .

#### Sentence[2]

#### -He was very worried <u>about her reaction</u>

The table shows that only [45%] of the students were succeeded in recognizing such complementations of adjective ,while[55%]of them were unable to recognize such structure ,because such structures are difficult and exotic for them to be analyzed .This type is called complementation of prepositional phrase.

Sentence [3]

#### -Iam sure that he is here now

The table shows that only [35%] of the students were succeeded in recognizing complementation of adjective ,while [65%]of them

failed ,because the students got confused ,although such structures are easy to be recognized by them. This type is called complementation of that clause.

Sentence [4]

#### -It was unclear <u>what they would do</u>

The table shows that only [40%] of the students were able to recognize such complementations of adjective ,while [60%] of them failed ,because such structures are exotic for them to be recognized. This type is called complementation of wh –clause.

Sentence [5]

#### -Bob is hard <u>to convince</u>

It was shown that high percentage of the students [65%] of them were able to analyze this sentence correctly ,because this structure is easy and familiar for them, while only [35%] of them failed in recognizing the complementation of adjective. This type is called complementation of to –infinitive clause.

Sentence [6]

#### -The food is ready <u>to eat</u>

The table shows that [60%] of the students were able to analyze this sentence correctly ,because such structures are familiar and easy for them, while only [40%] of them failed. This type is called complementation of to-infinitive clause.

Sentence [7]

#### -Bob is sorry <u>to hear</u> it

The table shows that [50%] of the students were able to recognize this sentence adequately due to the easiness for them ,while the same number of them[50%] failed in analyzing this structure. This type is called complementation of to –infinitive clause.

Sentence [8]

#### -Mary is busy <u>writing letters</u>

The table shows that [65%] of the students were able to recognize this sentence correctly ,because such structures are easy and familiar for them ,while only[35%] of them failed in recognizing the adjective complementation. This type is called complementation of ing -participle clause.

Sentence [9]

#### -She is quite adifferent girl than she was five years ago

The table shows that only [45%]of the students were able to recognize this sentence correctly ,because such structures are difficult for them ,while [55%]of them failed. This type is called complementation of than clause.

Sentence [10]

#### -Their plan was based <u>on cooperation</u>

The table shows that half of the students [50%] of them were capable to recognize this sentence correctly, while the other half[50%] not succeeded , because such structures are easy for them , and familiar to be identified This type is called complementation of prepositional phrase.

#### CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes the following:

1.Nearly half of the students failed to recognize the types of subject complementation, due to many reasons , as these structures are Unfamiliar and exotic to the students.

2. The table shows that the students were able to recognize complementation of prepositional phrase ,to-infinitive clauses much better if compared with other complementations such as complementations of that clause and wh clauses.

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#### The Appendix

1.She was bad <u>at mathematics.</u>

2.He was very worried about her reaction.

3.Iam sure that he is here now.

4.It was unclear what they would do.

5.Bob is hard to convince.

6.The food is ready to eat.

7.Bob is sorry to hear it.

8.Mary is busy writing letters.

9.She is quite a different girl than she was five years ago.

# صفة الفاعل وصيغها النحويَّة

### زهراء أَحمد عثمان \*

#### المستخلص

يدرس البحث عمل الصفات في موقع تكملة الفاعل، ويتناول مسألة عدم تحقَّق معنى الجملة إلَّا في حال اكتمال البنية قواعديًا، ويشمل جميع أَشكال الصفات المكمَّلة للفاعل، مثل: صيغ الجمل الوصفيَّة، والجملة غير المحدَّدة للزمن، ويخلص البحث إلى عدم تحقُّق معاني هذه الجمل إلَّا بعد تحقُّق التكملة القواعديَّة، وأُجري الاختبار على ٢٠ طالبًا من قسم اللغة الإنكليزية، إذ يتكوَّن الاختبار من ١٠ جمل بتراكيب مختلفة أَظهرت النتائج أَنَّ الطلاب يواجهون صعوبة إلى حدً معين في فهم تكملة الفاعل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: عبارة الجار والمجرور، الجمل غير المحددة بزمن، مكمل.

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