Um eine gute Note in der Klausur zu erzielen, genügt es nicht, das Buch zu lesen.

Sie müssen auch die “Show” sehen!
The causes why our English tongue hath not yet been thoroughly perceived are the hope and despair of such as have either thought upon it, and not dealt in it, or that have dealt in it, but not rightly thought upon it.

Richard Mulcaster (1582)
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Part I: Languages and Language Learning

1 Language learning
In any discussion of the problems of language learning we have to distinguish between “first language learning” and “second language” learning.

1.1 First language – child in appropriate situation
First language learning refers to child language learning in an appropriate social setting (one which involves using the language for communication) and may include learning two or more “first” languages at the same time, as, for instance, when the child speaks two languages at home – German with Daddy and French with Mommy – or perhaps Turkish at home with the family and German in school and on the street with playmates. This sort of language learning is effortless, involves no intellectual activity and leads to a perfect command of the language beyond what is attainable as a second language learner (see below).

1.2 What children learn
This raises the following question: Just what is it that children learn when they acquire a first language? Do children simply learn more and more words and phrases until they “know the entire language”?

This at first glance an appealing hypothesis, but one that cannot be maintained on the basis of evidence. Instead, it appears that first language learning consists of acquiring “rules” about how the language works.

1.2.1 Evidence from errors
Perhaps the most convincing piece of evidence for this hypothesis comes from the errors children make. So-called irregular verbs like go - went - gone are high frequency vocabulary items and belong to the first words that children learn and, in general, children use them correctly in the first stage of language learning. Later, however, errors like *goed for went appear. Since these “incorrect” forms cannot be learned from experience - the question arises as to where they come from. The answer is fortunately quite simple - at some point the child learns not just forms but rules. Most English verbs form their past tenses by adding {-ed} and once the child learns this rule, it is easy to “overgeneralize,” to apply it to the exceptions like go that have “irregular” past tenses.

1.2.2 Impoverished corpus
Another suggestive argument points out that the “corpus” or body of utterances the child is exposed to is replete with errors, false starts and half-finished statements. This corpus is hardly adequate to support the learning by experience hypothesis. On the other hand, if what the child
is “looking for” is evidence for rules, even very imperfect exposure will suffice. For example, if Papa asks: “Wo ist meine Brille?” (‘Where are my glasses’) and Mama answers: “Auf dem Tisch,” (‘On the table’), Mama’s fragmentary answer is enough to establish two important rules of German: (1) Location on a flat surface is indicated by the preposition auf, (2) Where there is a choice between dative and accusative, location is indicated by the dative and goal by the accusative (cf., Stelle die Brille auf den (acc.) Tisch ‘Put the glasses on the table’).

1.2.3 Different corpuses – same grammar
By the same token, we may note that no two children are exposed to exactly the same experience. That is, beyond the trivial, children are not exposed to identical “corpuses,” yet they come up with identical grammars insofar as they grow up in identical speech communities. (That is, the kid that grew up next door to you did not hear exactly the same utterances from his parents as you did from yours, but you both speak the same way.) If you extracted rules from what you heard rather than simply memorizing phrases, this is easily explicable.

1.3 Critical age hypothesis
Why then do adults have such difficulties in learning foreign languages - even when they are residents in a foreign country and have plenty of exposure? This explained by the critical age hypothesis, which simply says that “first language” learning is not possible beyond a certain age - usually the age of puberty. What evidence is there for this hypothesis?

1.3.1 Brain damage
When adults suffer brain damage affecting the speech center through injury or a stroke (Schlaganfall), the ability to understand and produce speech is impaired and total recovery is often impossible. Children, on the other hand, can redevelop the speech areas in the other hemisphere of the brain.

1.3.2 Genie
Occasionally, cases of “speech deprivation” come to light. In 1970, social workers found a young woman called Genie in the scientific literature, whose father - a mentally-ill religious fanatic - had kept her isolated in a room for thirteen years. She had passed the “critical age” without social exposure to speech. Although she was of normal intelligence, psychologists were unable to teach her “normal” English. After many years of training, her command of language remained at the level of a two-and-a-half-year old.

1.3.3 Experience
The critical age hypothesis is also supported by more than two-thousand years of experience. In ancient Rome, wealthy citizens bought their children educated Greek slaves so that they could learn Greek the “natural way” simply by conversing. Even today, this can be observed in
immigrant families, where the children quickly learn the language of their host country and serve as “interpreters” for their parents.

1.4 Second language learning

1.4.1 Children – classroom experience ineffective
So, if children can learn languages easily and effortlessly, why didn’t you learn flawless English in school? Because you were not exposed to real English in a real social situation as might have been the case if you had been sent to England for six months. Even worse, you started at a time when you were not able to learn effectively with “adult learning methods” (see below). Most of the time you spent on foreign languages in school was simply wasted.

1.4.2 Adults – No longer able to extract the rules from simple exposure.
For adults, language learning is no longer a matter of exposure, but intellectual experience. Without special explanation and considerable practice, it is unlikely that any American could master the German adjective endings or that any German could deal adequately with the English tense and aspect system, which we will examine in detail below.

1.4.3 First and Second Language Learning - extracting the rules
The problem for first and second language learners is the same - extracting the rules from a “corpus” (body of language material) they are exposed to. It is clear that they must solve this problem in different ways. The second language learner does not have the same resources available as the first language learner. Nevertheless, second language learners are able to absorb considerable passive knowledge of the target language (the one they are trying to learn) through exposure to understandable material. That is, listening to Voice of America webcasts with your morning coffee will expand your ability to understand English considerably. It will not, however, do anything much for your ability to express yourself aside from increasing your vocabulary.

How then do first and second language learners differ in their acquisition of the active rules of the language. The answer, unfortunately, is that no one knows precisely. We can, however, present a plausible theory of language learning - the principles and parameters approach.

According to this theory (first put forward by Noam Chomsky ca. 1959), children come into the world “preprogrammed” to learn language. That is, by virtue of their membership in the species homo sapiens sapiens, they are destined to develop a language acquisition device (LAD) much as they are destined to develop a four-chambered heart or to learn to walk upright – it is a basic part of being human. Human language is species specific. No other animal has a communications system like it and humans (and only humans) can learn any human language under proper conditions (see below).
The LAD does not, however, start from the assumption that anything goes in human language. Rather, it is hard wired with certain principles (which determine what is possible in a human language) and certain parameters (which specify one of two choices).

Let us take an example from German to illustrate how principles work. Question formation. One of the most important tasks for the child language learner is figuring out how to form questions. In their everyday experience, children encounter numerous four word sentences like:

(1) Papa geht zur Arbeit ‘Papa is going to work’.
(2) Mama beibt zu Hause ‘Mama is staying home’ (parental leave).

The question forms are:

(3) Geht Papa zur Arbeit ‘Is Papa going to work’?
(4) Beibt Mama zu Hause ‘Is Mama staying home’?

Comparing (1) - (3) and (2) - (4) the child might come up with a question forming rule like:

**Question-Formation: 1, 2 → 2, 1**

That is, to make a question from a statement, reverse the order of the first two words. Try it. You will see this works for the data we have considered thus far, but consider:

(5) a. Der Mann bringt die Post ‘The man brings the mail’.
     b. * Mann der bringt die Post.

Obviously our proposed rule fails miserably. Simply reversing the order of the first two words produces word salad rather than a question. (The ‘*’ means ungrammatical sentence, we will see it many times over before we are finished.)

The reason our proposed rule fails is that rules like Question-Formation do not simply make reference to the order of words in a sentence, but involve complete phrases:

(6) a. [Der Mann] bringt die Post ‘[The man] brings the mail’.
     b. Bringt [der Mann] die Post ‘Does [the man] bring the mail’?
It is not just the first two words that are interchanged to make the question, but the verb *bringt* and the subject noun phrase [\(\text{NP der Mann}\)] . A noun phrase consists of a noun and its modifiers. This can be confirmed by adding an adjective to the noun phrase:

(7) a. [Der dicke Mann] bringt die Post ‘[The fat man] brings the mail’.
    b. Bringt [der dicke Mann] die Post ‘Does [the fat man] bring the mail?"

This principle is called **Structural Dependency**. It simply states that grammatical rules of this kind make reference to entire structural units (phrases, clauses) and not individual words. This is confirmed by experience. German children wrestling with the task of question formation never make mistakes like (5b) although reversing the normal order of the first two words in the sentence could “theoretically” signal question formation. It is just not the way humans do it.

This possibility is ruled out by the universal principles of human language – sometimes called Universal Grammar. Knowing what is a possible rule of grammar and what is not saves an enormous amount of time for learners since they can narrow down the search considerably by only trying to extract the “possible” rules from the corpus of utterances to which they are exposed.

Parameters are more subtle since they decide between possible rules. To see how this works, let us consider the **Overt Subject Parameter**.

The Overt Subject Parameter states that a finite verb (one that agrees with its subject) must have an overt (explicitly expressed) subject. In English and German, the parameter is (+), but most of the Romance languages it is (–). Compare the following:

(8) a. I do not want to serve any longer (English).
    b. Ich will nicht länger dienen (German).
    c. Non voglio più servire (Italian).
    d. No quiero servir más (Spanish).
    e. Je ne veux plus servir (French).

Notice that the Romance languages (with the notable exception of French) routinely leave out the subject pronoun unless it is specially emphasized: *Yo no quiero servir más* ‘I do not want to serve any longer’ in contrast to someone else.
This does not seem particularly remarkable since verbs in Italian and Spanish have distinct personal endings, e.g., Spanish *hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hableis, hablan* ‘speak’, where French has the same spoken form for the entire present and the third person plural *parl* and, arguably, the pronoun is necessary to distinguish the subject. But, consider the following:

(9) a. *It* is raining (English).
    b. *Es* regnet (German).
    c. *Piave* (Italian).
    d. *Llueve* (Spanish).
    e. *Il* pleut (French).

Here, there can be no uncertainty about who/what is raining, but English, German and French demand an overt subject, a pronoun that does not refer to anything, but is simply there to fill the requirement placed by the parameter.

Perhaps the clearest evidence for the parameter is provided by extraposition, where a clause subject is moved to the end of the sentence:

(10) a. [That they will not get through] is clear →
    b. *It* is clear [that they will not get through].

Once again, languages marked positive for the parameter leave behind a dummy subject to fulfill the requirement that an independent clause must have an overt subject. The languages marked negative do not:

(11) a. *It* is clear that they will not get through (English).
    b. *Es* ist klar, dass sie nicht durchkommen (German).
    c. *E chiaro che no passeranno ‘is clear that . . . ’* (Italian)
    d. *Es claro que no passerán* (Spanish).
    e. *Il* est clair que ils ne passeront pas (French).

Although English and German are both marked (+) for the Overt Subject Parameter, we shall see that they do not behave identically (cf. the discussion of Passive and Unaccusative).
2  Contrastive Linguistics

Contrastive Linguistics is a relatively new discipline (ca. 1970). It tries to solve the problems of second language learners.

2.1  Basic thesis

The basic premise of contrastive linguistics is as simple as it is profound: Second language learners will encounter difficulty where the Target Language (TL) (the language they are attempting to learn) differs from their Native Language (NL). Language teaching will be most effective if it concentrates on these differences.

Consider, for example, the use of the definite article. If you meet a friend on the street and say: “How did you like the film last night.” The definite article the indicates that the film in question is part of “mutual knowledge.” That is, that both you and your friend know which film is being referred to. This is one use of the definite article in English – to place objects in mutual knowledge. Speakers of German do not need to learn this because German also uses the definite article in this way: Wie hast du den Film gestern Abend gefunden? On the other hand, speakers of languages that have no definite article (e.g., Persian or Russian) will tend to make mistakes and say: *How did you like film last night? (Remember, the star means that the sentence is wrong!)

In other points, however, the use of the definite article in English and German differ. With street names, for example, German uses the article: Er wohnt in der neunten Straße and English does not: He lives on Ninth Street. Here, German speakers do tend to make mistakes like: *He lives on the Ninth Street.

2.2  English as a Second Language (ESL) in the USA and in Germany

Teachers of ESL in America or Great Britain find themselves confronted with students from a bewildering variety of language backgrounds. It is quite impossible to deal with all the problems that confront German, French, Japanese, Korean and Arabic speaking students in a single class. ESL teachers in Germany have the advantage of a homogenous population of students who either have German as a native language or (mostly) know German well. This allows the teacher to use German as a “reference language” and concentrate on the differences between English and German.

As for those international students who do not know German well – the contrastive approach will help them learn German while improving their English at no extra charge! To get full benefits from the course: Just ask yourself: How does it work in my language?
2.3 The mapping problem

The process of second language learning consists of mapping the structures of the native language (NL) onto those of the target language (TL). It is not surprising that learning difficulties are encountered where there is one form in the NL that corresponds to many forms in the TL. Where several forms in the NL are reduced to a single form in the TL, the learning process is easy.

For example, there are six words for the in German (the ~ der, die, das, dem, des, den). This is difficult for English speakers. On the other hand, the English tense-aspect system is far richer than the corresponding German system. A simple present as in Ich wohne in München may have four equivalents in the English present system – I live/am living/have lived/have been living in Munich. This is a major difficulty for German speakers.

2.4 Interference

Bilingual first language learners develop separate grammars for each language. Interference (using the structures of one language incorrectly in the other) is relatively rare and usually disappears provided that the language learner continues to actively use both languages.

You can think of this as a novice computer programmer trying to learn two different programming languages (say BASIC and PASCAL) at once and trying to write the same programs in each one. Sometimes a BASIC construction will sneak into the PASCAL code and vice versa. In this case, the computer program will simply not run. In human communication, the consequences of mixing languages is less severe as long as it does not cause serious misunderstandings.

The second language learner, on the other hand, can no longer learn from simple exposure and constructs a grammar on the basis of the first language. In this case, we can use the analogy to the computer programmer who is fluent in BASIC and learning PASCAL. Since anything you can “say” in BASIC can be expressed in PASCAL as well, what is necessary is to develop a second language converter module that takes BASIC code as its input and produces PASCAL code as its output. As any geek will testify, this is a tricky proposition with computer languages. Not surprisingly, it is with human languages as well. In both cases, the task is far simpler in closely related languages or dialects, e.g., from PASCAL to MODULA-2, or GW-BASIC to QBASIC for computers or Spanish to Italian or Danish to Norwegian for natural languages.

For languages that have little in common on the surface, e.g., BASIC and LISP for computers or English and Chinese for natural languages, the task is far more difficult. Here, the second language learner has little to go on beyond the basic principles of how human languages are constructed, which we discussed above under the heading “Universal Grammar.”
3 Difficulties of English
While it is clear that English will be difficult for German speakers where the two languages differ in structure, it is not so clear just in what ways they may differ. Where do we have to look for the differences?

3.1 Tense and aspect system
A major difficulty of English for German speakers is the tense-aspect system of the English verb (see 2.3 above for an example). Problems of English Grammar I covers this in detail.

3.2 Complementation system
The second area of major difficulty is the English complementation system. This forms the subject matter of Problems of English Grammar II. Consider the following:

An object complement is an entire clause that serves as an object. In German, with minor exceptions object clauses take the infinitive if the subject of the main clause and the complement clause are identical. Consider:

(1) Ich freue mich auf \[_{NP} \text{ein kaltes Bier}\] (object of preposition is an noun phrase).

(2) Ich freue mich darauf \[_{S} \text{ein kaltes Bier zu trinken}\] (subject of main and object clause are the same).

(3) Ich freue mich darauf \[_{S} \text{dass er ein kaltes Bier trinkt}\] (subject of main and object clause are different).

Evidently, the subject of the object clause is deleted when it is identical to the subject of the main clause. The verb without subject becomes an infinitive. The preposition is appended to \(da(r)\) Eng. there. With different subjects, \(da(r) + a\) dass-clause is used.

In English the structure with an NP object is identical to German:

(4) I am looking forward to \[_{NP} \text{a cold beer}\].

The structure with identical subjects in main and object clause is similar, but not identical. In English too, the subject of the object clause is left out when it is the same as the subject of the main clause and the subjectless verb becomes an infinitive, but the English verb appears in the -ing-form:
(5) I am looking forward to \[s \text{ drinking a cold beer}].

With different subjects, we still have the -\textit{ing}-form, the subject being expressed with \textit{him}, \textit{her}, etc.:

(6) I am looking forward to \[s \text{ him drinking a cold beer}].

This is all very mysterious. German and English seem to agree only in one point – the subject of the second clause disappears if it is the same as that of the first clause. The rest must seem weird to the speaker of one language learning the other.

In addition, we have verbs in English that take two or three different complement forms: \textit{I forgot to mail the letter}, \textit{I forgot mailing the letter}, \textit{I forgot that I mailed the letter}. How is the English language learner to choose the correct form in a given situation?

These are mysteries that we will clear up in due time. Here, we just wish to state the problems.
Part II: The Theoretical Framework

1 Why a theoretical framework?
Yes, why a theoretical framework? After all, you didn’t need theory to acquire your first language(s). Mother nature gave you all you required. But, unfortunately, as we have discussed above, she leaves you in the lurch once you have passed the critical age. She also neglected to provide you with any idea of how you acquired that knowledge of your first language(s). In confronting a new language, you will encounter an overwhelming mass of data and without a theory about how languages work, there is no way to sort it out. This is very much like the problem facing a linguistic field worker, who is attempting to construct a grammar of an endangered language by interviewing the last surviving native speakers. Derek Bickerton describes this very well in his book *The Roots of Language* (2016:42):

[S]ince the facts one can gather about any language are infinite in number, and by no means all of equal value .What is needed is not dogged fact-gathering . . . but the capacity to distinguish between the trivial and the nontrivial. The task of the theorist is to tell the field worker where to look and what to look for, and if the latter chooses to reject such aid, he has about as much brain as the man who throws away his metal detector and proceeds to dig by hand the three-acre field where he thinks treasure lies buried.

This is good advice to both the second language learner and the second language teacher. So let us take a look at “where to look and what to look for” to unravel the problems of English grammar.

2 What can be a rule of English grammar?
What can be a rule of English grammar? This seems to be strange or, at least, unusual question to ask. Put another way, we can ask what can influence the choice of grammatical forms in an English sentence? In some cases, the answer is straightforward. A sentence like (1) is never acceptable in standard English:

(1) *I goes to school.

The reason here is clear enough. In standard English, the inflectional ending -s is only appended to the third person singular, *he, she, it*, and is simply “wrong” after *I*. On the other hand, (2a-b) are both grammatically acceptable, but by no means interchangeable:

(2) a. I go to school.
    b. I am going to school.
Here the choice depends crucially on **verb aspect**, which we will discuss at length below. But first, we would do well to consider just what kinds of criteria can influence such decisions about grammatical form.

### 2.1 Syntactic rules: - *ing*-form after a preposition

As demonstrated in the short discussion of complementization above, after a preposition, a verbal object always takes the *-ing*-form in English. There are no exceptions to this rule and neither semantics (meaning) nor pragmatics (situation) is involved. The application of the rule depends purely on sentence structure. If a verb becomes the object of a preposition, it will take the ending *-ing*. This is an example of a **syntactic** rule.

### 2.2 Semantically based rules

Some rules are semantically based (dependent on meaning). For example, the *-ing*-form is also used as a complement to verbs expressing like and dislike (such as *love, hate*, etc.):

1. I love drinking beer.
2. I hate him always complaining about the weather.

If you learn a new “verb of liking and disliking” like *abhorr* (‘verabscheuen’), you will automatically choose the proper complement on semantic grounds. Note that the same verb may have different meanings requiring different complements. Verbs of liking, for example, may also imply a choice. If this is the case, they take infinitive complements like the other verbs of choice (*choose, want*, etc.). Thus, *like* can be used with the infinitive or the *ing*-form depending on meaning:

3. I like taking the bus.
4. I like to take the bus (rather than the subway).

On the other hand, a verb like *enjoy*, which only expresses liking, not choice, can only be used with the *ing*-form:

5. I enjoy drinking red wine.
6. *I enjoy to drink red wine.*

Compare (7) and (8) - The waiter in the French restaurant asks you:

7. Would you like red wine or white with your *tête de chien roti*? (choice)
8. *Would you enjoy red wine or white with your *tête de chien roti*? (no choice).
Later we will present a “deeper” explanation of this phenomenon based on verb aspect.

2.3 Pragmatically based rules
Some rules are based on the situation or the speaker’s intentions or expectations. For example, the use of some/any in questions depends on whether the questioner expects a yes answer or not. Some indicates that a positive answer is expected, any does not. Thus, in offering something to a guest we use some (a good host must at least pretend that (s)he is looking for a positive answer):

(1) Would you like some more tea, Reverend?

But, the customs official has to remain neutral (cannot indicate that he believes you are smuggling). Hence:

(2) Do you have anything to declare?

2.4 Conversational implicatures
There is a special kind of pragmatic rule called a “conversational implicature.” Conversational implicatures are derived from the “cooperative principle,” which underlies normal conversational exchange. That is, when we engage in conversation, we assume that our conversation partner is following (among others) the following rules:

   1. Be relevant (make your remarks relevant to what your conversation partner has said).
   2. Be as informative as is required for the purposes of the conversation (do not give too much or too little detail).
   3. Be orderly (relate events in the order in which they occurred).
   4. Be truthful (do not assert that for which you lack adequate evidence).

The point here is that we assume that our conversation partner is following these rules and try to interpret what is said in accordance with the rules. Thus, if I say: I’d love to go on a picnic tomorrow and you say: The newspaper predicts rain, I will assume your remark is relevant to mine, that you are advising me not to plan a picnic, rather than making idle talk about the weather.

Since we are interested here in problems of English grammar, we cannot go into this fascinating theory in detail. We will confine our attention to the second and fourth points, which often play an important role in the selection of grammatical forms.
In the previous section, we saw how pragmatics determined the choice between *some* and *any*. Let us now consider the choice between *some* and *all*.

In formal logic, the expression:

\[(\exists x \text{ (Bavarian x)} \land \text{ (has-blue-eyes x)})\]

tells us only that there is at least one Bavarian with blue eyes. It says nothing about Bavarians with other eye colors.

In natural language, however, the statement: *Some Bavarians have blue eyes* seems to imply that there are other Bavarians who *do not have blue eyes*. Why the discrepancy between formal logic and the logic of natural language?

The answer is that the quantifier *all* is “more informative” than *some*. The quantifier *all* leaves no question as to the color of Bavarians’ eyes. *Some* leaves the question open. Now, from the maxims 2 and 4 above, it follows that the speaker would have said *All Bavarians have blue eyes* if, in fact, he knew that to be the case. If, instead, the speaker chooses *some*, then because he does not think that all Bavarians have blue eyes and does not wish to say something for which he does not have adequate evidence. We conclude by *implicature* that some Bavarians have eyes that are not blue.


### 2.5 Perceptual rules

Perceptual rules do not depend on the rules of grammar, but rather on the way sentences are processed by the hearer. Consider the following sentences with relative clauses:

1. I saw the man \{who, that, 0\} you reported to the police.
2. The man \{who, that, *0\} reported you to the police is waiting to see you.

In sentence (1), the relative clause may be introduced by a relative pronoun, *who*, by the particle *that*, or by 0 (i.e., nothing at all — the so-called contact clause).

In (2) however, the contact clause is impossible. The reason for this is that sentences like (2), where the subject of the relative clause is deleted, require some marking at the border of the
relative clause to prevent misinterpretation. Reading from left to right with no indication of where the relative clause begins we get: *the man reported you to the police*, which is interpreted as a clause. The rest of the sentence, *is waiting to see you*, is left dangling. In sentences like (1) with object relativization, this problem does not arise since the string of words *I saw the man you* cannot be interpreted as a complete clause. No marker is necessary to signal the beginning of the relative clause.

### 2.6 Discourse rules

Some rules go beyond the borders of individual sentences. Consider the following:

1. I saw Harry, yesterday.
2. Yesterday, I saw Harry.

As the familiar school-book rule indicates, both are grammatically correct since an adverbial of time may be placed at either the beginning or the end of the sentence.

But, as an answer to the question *When did you last see Harry?* only (1) is possible. The reason for this is that, when answering a question, we either provide the new information (the answer to the question) *yesterday* without repeating the question or we place the new information at the end.

Notice that, if the question is *Where did you see Harry?* the time adverb can occur in either position:

1. Sunday, (I saw Harry) at the station.
2. (I saw Harry) {at the station yesterday/yesterday at the station}.
3. * At the station, I saw Harry (yesterday).

Here *at the station* is the new information and the position of *yesterday* makes no difference.

This is not the case in German, where the equivalents of either (1) or (2) would be an acceptable answer. Thus, the discourse rule chooses between two grammatically correct forms on the basis of context.

### 2.7 Historical relics

Some rules of language make no sense at all unless one is familiar with the history of the language. Consider the following:

1. A man who is *six-feet* tall and *25-years* old is a *six-foot-tall, 25-year-old* man.
After plural numerals, we expect that nouns will be in the plural as in the first pair of italicized words. If, however, the numeral + noun is part of a prenominal modifier as in the second part of the sentence the noun is apparently in the singular!

This makes no sense at all unless you know that numerals took the genitive plural in Old English and that the genitive plural had the ending -a, but no s-ending or vowel mutation (oo → ee). When the final vowel (-a) marking the genitive plural was lost, only a two-way contrast remained between singular and plural. The old genitive plural (fōta, geara) fell together in form with the singular (foot, year) in the modern spelling. So the prenominal form only appears to be in the singular. Actually, it is a historical relict of the genitive plural. Of course, modern speakers are not aware of the origin of the rule or (consciously) of the rule itself. For second language learners, it is a frequent source of errors and knowing where the problem comes from never hurt anyone.

In German, there is a similar historical relict, represented by forms like: drei Stück Brot; Vier Bier, Herr Ober ‘three pieces of bread’, Four beers, Waiter’. These forms are relics of an earlier stage of the language in which one-syllable neutrals had no ending in the plural (unlike modern Stücke, Biere).

The problem is compounded by forms like: 40 Kilometer, drei Liter. Like other masculine and neuter words in -er, these have no additional plural ending. The impression is that measures have no plural after a numeral. This is not the case. Consider, drei Scheiben Brot, where the feminine has the plural -n. Since none of these forms fit the description of the English relict, we have: three slices of bread, four beers, 40 kilometers, three liters.

In addition, there is the problem of the different treatment of count and mass nouns: three beers ~ drei Bier (count noun), but three glasses of water ~ drei Glas Wasser (mass noun).

3 Transformational rules

Transformational rules are at the heart of understanding how syntax (‘Satzbau’) works and how it is possible to understand and produce the bewildering variety of sentences we hear and use every day.

There are basically four kinds of transformational rules: (1) phrase order rules (sometimes called “word order rules”), (2) function changing rules (changing subjects to objects and objects to subjects), (3) deletion rules (which delete a part of the sentence mostly under identity to another part ) and (4) extraction rules (which move parts of the sentence outside their clauses – see below). In contrast to German, English is rather poor in its ability to reorder phrases in the
sentence. On the other hand, English is far richer than German in function changing rules and deletion rules and far more flexible in extraction.

Before we begin our survey of the different kinds of transformations, it would be well to consider the question: Why do we need transformations at all?

At the beginning of the 1960s American linguists, demonstrated that we cannot make sense of syntax by simply by attempting to classify the kinds of sentences that occur in nature. Rather, we have to see the sentences we encounter in nature as the results of a process leading from hidden underlying structures to observable surface structures.

The classic demonstration was provided by Noam Chomsky (Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 1964). Consider the following sentences:

(1) John is easy [to please].
(2) John is eager [to please].

Notice that in both (1) and (2) we have a naked infinitive to please. No subject or object appears on the surface. Yet, any competent speaker of English knows that John is the logical (understood) object of the infinitive in (1) and the logical (understood) subject in (2).

The first question we have to confront is How can we know this when there is no visible evidence for it in either case?

The second question is How do we know that John is the understood subject of the infinitive in (2) and the understood object in (1) when the sentence structure of (1) and (2) is clearly identical except for the choice of adjectives: easy vs. eager?

Evidently, there is more to this than meets the eye! There is no way to answer either of these questions if we assume that (1) and (2) – the structures we encounter in nature – are all there is to it. Instead, we have to assume that there are underlying, abstract structures in which grammatical relations are clear and that these underlying relations are obscured by a series of transformational operations that yield superficially similar structures like (1) and (2). Because we know which operations are possible, we can usually reconstruct the underlying structures from the surface evidence (but see below on ambiguity).

As we have seen, superficial appearances can be deceiving. The analysis of (1) is rather difficult and would lead us too far afield here. (Those who are interested can consult Chap. 2 of my
Revolution und Revision in der generativen Theoriebildung. The analysis of (2) is, however, quite straightforward. Let us assume the following underlying structure:

(3) John is eager for [NP it [S John please (someone)]]

(expanded view)

(NP = Noun Phrase, a noun and all of its modifiers; S = Clause)

As you can see, in the underlying structure, John is the subject of please. A transformation called Same-Subject-Deletion deletes John in the lower clause under identity to John of the upper clause. The verb please, deprived of its subject, no longer has a subject to agree with and becomes an infinitive, to please. (Note: Verbs that lose their subjects by deletion or function changing become infinitives.) Because we know (subconsciously) that this rule can apply, it is easy to restore John to his rightful place in the lower clause when analyzing the sentence (2).

Nevertheless, the result is not completely satisfying. Two problems remain: for and it. Since they do not appear in (2), how do we know they are there? Let us begin with for.

(4) John is eager for to please.

Although (4) is quite acceptable in older English and in some dialects, for most of us, for does not surface. So how do we know that it is there?

Consider the underlying structure (5), where we have different subjects for the two clauses:

(5) John is eager for [NP it [S Sheila please]]

Here John is still eager, but it’s up to Sheila to do the pleasing. Through the application of a second transformation (Raising to Object), which applies just in case the two clauses have different subjects, Sheila is raised to the object position of for replacing it. Once again, please – deprived of its subject – appears as an infinitive and we get the fully acceptable:

(6) John is eager for Sheila [S to please].

Thus, it in the underlying structure provides the landing place for Sheila.
In any case, the preposition for must have a noun phrase object as in:

(7) John is eager for \([_{NP} \text{praise}].\)

Thus, the generation (5) to (6) nicely confirms (3) to (4). And, we have explained the assumed it and for in the underlying structure. When constituents like it and for are no longer needed as in (4) above, they are removed by a general process called Garbage-Collection.

To be sure, it is not always possible to confirm abstract derivations in this way. In general, we will adopt the rule that derivations should be as concrete as possible – that is, wherever possible we will look for observable surface structures that confirm the steps in the abstract process.

Notice too, that a deletion transformation (Same Subject Deletion) in (3)-(4) operates in tandem with a function changing transformation (Raising to Object of for) in (5)-(6). If the subjects are the same, the subject of the lower clause is deleted. If not, it is raised.

Now to our overview of the basic types of transformational operation.

3.1 Phrase order rules
Consider the following German sentence:

(1) Ich habe meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen ‘I saw my friend at the station’.

This is not the only possible order of the constituent parts of the sentence. We can have:

(2) Meinen Freund habe ich gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen, or
(3) Gestern habe ich meinen Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen, etc.

In all, there are some 22 possible variants of this sentence (see list in the Appendix). Not all are as likely to occur in actual speech, but they are recognized as possible sentences of German, whereas (4) and (5) are not:

(4) *Meinen Freund ich habe gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen?
(5) *Ich habe gestern gesehen meinen Freund auf dem Bahnhof?
Now, the *Bahnhof*-sentence consists of six constituent parts (NP+AUX+NP+ADV+PP+V). This is illustrated in the labeled bracketing:

\[
(6) \quad [_{S \ [_{NP \ ich \ [_{AUX \ habe} \ [_{VP \ [_{NP \ meinen \ Freund} \ [_{ADV \ gestern} \ [_{PP \ auf \ dem \ Bahnhof} \ [_{V \ gesehen} \ ]_{VP}} \ ]_{S}}]]_{S}}]
\]

The symbol S stands for “Satz” (clause), AUX is the auxiliary (helping) verb, NP is the noun phrase consisting of the noun and its modifiers, ADV is adverb, PP is prepositional phrase consisting of a preposition and a noun phrase. The verb, its objects and modifiers (adverbs, prepositional phrases) are grouped together into VP (verb phrase).

Simple mathematics tells us that there are 6! = 6 x 5 x 4 x 3 x 2 x 1 = 720 possible orderings of these constituents. How do speakers of German know that just 22 are “legal” and the other 698 are word salad?

It is unlikely that every speaker of German has heard and memorized all 22 patterns and, even if that were the case, learners would have no way of knowing that there were no additional variants that they simply had not experienced yet. That is, speakers might be able to identify the legal patterns on the basis of experience, but they could not identify the illegal ones like (4) and (5). They would simply think that these were patterns that they had not heard before.

On the whole, the most plausible way of explaining how German speakers produce legal patterns (like (1), (2) and (3)) and avoid word salad ((4), (5)) is to assume that some pattern like (1), is basic and that transformational rules move the constituent phrases around to produce the other variants. Here are the movement rules:

**Topicalization**: Optionally moves some VP-constituent to the front.
\[
Gestern \ ich \ habe \ [_{VP \ meinen \ Freund \ auf \ dem \ Bahnhof \ gesehen}]
\]

**Verb-Subject Inversion**: Obligatorily inverts the finite verb and subject-NP if a VP-constituent has been fronted.
\[
Gestern \ habe \ ich \ [_{VP \ meinen \ Freund \ auf \ dem \ Bahnhof \ gesehen}]
\]

**VP-Inversion**: A local transformation which inverts two neighboring VP constituents subject to the restriction in Principle C (see below).
\[
Gestern \ habe \ ich \ [_{VP \ auf \ dem \ Bahnhof \ meinen \ Freund \ gesehen}]
\]
**Right Dislocation:** Moves an optional element outside of the VP.

Gestern habe ich [vp meinen Freund gesehen] *auf dem Bahnhof*.

These rules produce all the legal “Bahnhof” sentences and no others. In addition, we can derive a number of “acceptance” principles from them that allow us to immediately judge whether a proposed string is a sentence of German or not:

(A) The inflected verb (here AUX) must be in second position in main clauses.
(B) Either the subject or some constituent of the VP must be in first position. If a VP constituent comes first, the subject must be in third position.
(C) The verb (past participle), unless it stands first, must follow the direct object.

The principles are the consequences of the rule system. Principle (A) follows from the base structure which places the finite verb in second position and Verb-Subject Inversion, which maintains second position in event of Topicalization. Principle (B) follows from Topicalization and Verb-Subject Inversion. Principle (C) is, however, puzzling. Why should there be this peculiar restriction on the movement of Verb Phrase constituents? I haven’t lied to you, but I haven’t told you the complete truth either. To clear up the mystery, see the “Note on Condition (C)” in the Appendix.

These principles are easily learned on the basis of simple sentences encountered in every day experience and, once learned, apply to sentences of any length and complexity. Sentences like (4) and (5) above, which violate the principles are immediately rejected as ungrammatical.

### 3.2 Function changing transformations - the cycle

In the previous section we considered transformations that simply reorder the constituents (phrases) in a sentence. We will now turn our attention to transformations that change functions such as subject and object. Consider the relationship between (1) and (2):

(1) The knave stole the tarts.
(2) The tarts were stolen by the knave.

In (1) the NP *the tarts* is the object of the verb, in (2) it is the subject. This transformation is called Passive and is found in both German and English (although it does not operate in exactly the same way in both languages – see below).
In addition, English has a transformation called Raising-to-Object, which raises the subject of a lower clause to the object of the verb in the next higher clause:

(3) The Queen thought [that the tarts were stolen by the knave] (Passive).
(4) The Queen thought the tarts [to have been stolen by the knave] (Raising).

In (4) the subject of the embedded clause has been raised to the object of the verb thought in the main clause. As a result, the verb of the embedded clause appears as an infinitive. Recall that infinitives arise when verbs “lose their subjects” and have nothing to agree with.

Since the NP the tarts is now the object of thought in (4), Passive can apply again, yielding:

(5) The tarts were thought by the Queen [to have been stolen by the knave].

In principle, there is no limit to the number of clauses and the number of times Passive and Raising can be applied working from the most deeply embedded clause up to the main clause. Thus, starting from (6) we can ultimately derive (7):

(6) Alice believed [that the Queen thought [that the knave stole the tarts]].
(7) The tarts were believed by Alice to have been thought by the Queen to have been stolen by the knave.

In (7), the tarts have been marched from the object position of the last clause to the subject position of the main clause by successive applications of Passive and Raising. This is called cyclical rule application because the same rules have been applied over and over again starting with the most deeply embedded clause [that the knave stole the tarts] and working up to the highest (main clause).

It is important to note that sentences like (7) almost never occur in actual practice. If competent speakers of English can nonetheless identify them as possible sentences of English, then they cannot be relying on patterns learned by experience. Rather, they must be relying on rules that can easily be learned on the basis of simple every day experience and then applied to more complicated and unlikely cases. For example:

(8) They thought [that Einstein was a genius].
(9) They thought Einstein [to be a genius] (Raising).
(10) Einstein was thought [ to be a genius] (Passive).
German allows Raising with verbs of perception (sehen, hören, etc., and with lassen):

(11) Die Polizei ließ ihn laufen.

But, subject NPs once moved to object cannot be moved again:

(12) *Er wurde von der Polizei laufen lassen.

This is due to the “freezing parameter” (explained in detail in the Appendix). Simply put, if the freezing parameter is set to positive as in German, freezing prevents a subject that has been made into an object as in (8) - (9) above from being made into a subject again as in (10). Freezing applies in German, but not English.

Many (or perhaps most) German speakers do, however, accept sentences like:

(13) Er wurde von der Polizei laufen gelassen.

Since “little verbs that have lost their subjects” (as through Raising) become infinitives and here we have a past participle, it is clear that a one-clause construction without Raising is involved. That is, (13) is passive transform of:

(14) Die Polizei hat ihn laufen gelassen

with a single verb laufenlassen, with the past participle laufengelassen not unlike schwimmenengegangen to schwimmenengehen. Thus, raising is not involved in (13) and the freezing parameter is not violated.

3.3 Verb Raising

We have now explained infinitive constructions like to please with Same Subject Deletion and Raising to Object as demonstrated in the previous section. These transformations remove the subject of the second clause and little verbs that lose their subjects in this way have no subject to agree with and become infinitives.

But, what about the strange -ing-forms we illustrated above? Same Subject Deletion clearly plays a role here. From (1) we derive (2):

(1) [I am looking forward to [NP it [s I drink a cold beer]]]
(2) [I am looking forward to [NP 0 drinking a cold beer]]
The verb of the second clause in (1) has lost its subject, but why is it in the -ing-form drinking rather than to drink? The answer is that the verb itself has been raised to the object of the preposition. This is quite clear in Old English. Here, the infinitive had an ending as in modern German OE drinkan = Germ. trinken. Where Raising has taken place, the infinitive form is the object of the preposition to in the dative: to drinkanne. This form later falls together with the present participle drinkende and the abstract noun drinking. All three forms have merged into the ing-form in modern English. This is a matter that we will consider at some length below.

In the earliest English, Verb Raising was only possible with the preposition to when there was no intervening subject as in:

(3) Sorh is me to seccanne ‘Sorry is me to say’ Beowulf, 473.

Now, the inflected infinitive is used as the object of any preposition. For example,

(4) Harry hurt Sheila’s feelings without knowing it.

In fact, we can say that a verb that is the object of a preposition is always in the -ing-form.

The second restriction has also been lifted so the inflected infinitive is also used with an intervening subject in the second clause:

(5) [I am looking forward to [NP it [S he drink a Bavarian beer]]]

Here Same Subject Deletion cannot apply because the subjects are different. Verb Raising gives us:

(6) [I am looking forward to [NP him drinking a Bavarian beer]]

We will postpone the discussion of the form him until we have investigated the problems of surface case assignment below.

3.4 The strange case of for
Our discussion of for with Raising to Object leaves an interesting question open. Didn’t we flatly assert (in the previous section) that verbs which are the object of a preposition take -ing?

(1) Harry is looking forward to being reelected.
(2) Harry is looking forward to Nixon being reelected.

But the preposition *for* seems to present difficulties here. Consider:

(3) Harry is eager for Sheila to please his boss.

Doesn’t *for* defy the principle?

The answer (as you might have expected) is no. In (3), the *Sheila* is the object of *for*, not the verb. The structures (1)-(2) and (3) are quite different:

(4) Harry is looking forward to being reelected.
(5) Harry is eager for Sheila to please his boss.

In (4), it is clear that the verb is in fact the object of the preposition. In (5), however, *Sheila*, the former subject of the second clause, is the object of *for*. The verb in the second clause, *to please*, is in the infinitive, following the basic syntactic principle mentioned repeatedly above: Little verbs that lose their subjects due to Raising or Subject Deletion are in the infinitive form because they no longer have a subject to agree with.

But, this is only a partial solution to the problem since we also have sentences in which *for* triggers Verb-Raising:

(6) This stuff is good for removing blood stains from the carpet.

But, notice that we are dealing with a different *for* in (6). This *for* introduces a purpose clause (i.e., *good for (the purpose of) removing blood stains*) and the and the *ing*-form (or *gerund* as it is usually called) might actually be the object of an underlying *of*! (But, see below.)

Where Raising to Object applies, we have *for* with a benefactive object. The benefactive indicates the person or thing concerned (the German grammarians call this the “dative of pertinence”):

(7) a. Whisky is good for you (benefactive).
    b. Whisky is good for you [to drink when you have a cold].
(8) Whisky is good [for curing a cold] (purpose).
(9) For curing a cold (purpose), whisky is good for you to drink (benefactive).

In (7a), we have a simple benefactive object, in (7b) a clause object with Raising. In (8), we have a purpose clause with a gerund and in (9) both constructions in the same sentence.

In sentences like (3)-(5), for does not indicate benefactive, but rather goal as the following examples should illustrate:

(10) a. Harry is eager for success.
     b. Harry is eager [to succeed] (Same Subject Deletion).
     c. Harry is eager [for Sheila]_{pp} [to succeed] (Raising to Object).

These remarks do not settle the matter to our total satisfaction, but the general lines of the solution are clear: for triggers Raising to Object/Same Subject Deletion or Verb Raising depending on the kind of clause it introduces (e.g., benefactive, goal, purpose). In the case of Verb Raising, as in the purpose clause, it may be possible to find an underlying preposition (for the purpose of) that accounts for the gerund. But, as we shall demonstrate below, all raised verbs – whether objects of a preposition or not – take the -ing-form. Where the to-infinitive occurs, the raised subject of the second clause is the object of for not the verb. The strange case of for neatly demonstrates the interaction between semantics and syntactic rules.

### 3.5 Deletion transformations

Both English and German allow deletion transformations:

(1) I am looking forward to [drinking a cold beer].
(2) Ich freue mich darauf [ein kaltes Bier zu trinken].

In both (1) and (2), the “understood” subject is clearly I/ich. Both English and German delete it in the subordinate clause in accordance with the rule that says: the subject of a subordinate clause can be deleted if it is identical to the subject of the main clause (Same-Subject-Deletion).

There are a number of other deletion transformations that are worth mentioning:

**Imperative-Deletion:**

(3) (You) drop dead! (See below.)
**Dative-Deletion** is considerably less common:

(4) Sheila told [Harry] the truth. (*Harry* is the indirect object.)
(5) Sheila told Harry, [0, to wash the dishes] — (that he should wash the dishes).

Here, the subject of the second clause is deleted under identity to the indirect object of the first clause, not the subject.

**Relative-Deletion**

English also allows object deletion in relative clauses:

(6) There’s the man [I saw 0].
(7) Da ist der Mann, [den ich gesehen habe].

In German *den*, the object of *sehen* must be expressed. In English the object of *saw* is simply left out. We will discuss this in detail when we take a closer look at relative clauses below.

Most, but not all, deletion transformations involve deletion under identity as in Same-Subject-Deletion or Dative-Deletion. But, there are others which do not. We have seen one example above: Imperative-Deletion (3). Now, if there is no identity element involved, how can we be sure that deletion occurs?

A rather elegant argument involves Reflexive. Reflexive pronouns occur, roughly speaking, where the subject and the object refer to the same individual in the same clause:

(9) *Harry* shaves *himself* every Thursday evening.

Here, *Harry* is clearly both the shaver and the person shaved. In the imperative form, we have a reflexive form with *-self* even though no subject is present:

(10) Shave *yourself* every Thursday evening!

Reflexive would not be possible without the underlying subject *you*.

**3.6 Indefinite subject deletion**

Another kind of deletion transformation is quite common. It deletes an indefinite subject in a subordinate clause. (PRO is an indefinite subject not referring to anything;) Compare:
(1) It is time for us to go ← [It is time for [it [we go]]] Raising.
(2) It is time to go ← [It is time for [it [PRO go]]] Indefinite-Subject-Deletion.

Note that the main clause in (1)-(2) must have the dummy subject it because of the overt-subject parameter. In (1) Raising takes place. In (2), the indefinite subject is deleted although no identity is involved.

3.7 Extraction – WH-Movement

Extraction transformations move constituents out of their clause without changing their grammatical function. (Extracted subjects, for example, do not cause their verbs to become infinitives.) We have already seen one such transformation – Right-Dislocation – in our discussion of the “Bahnhof” sentences. Here we will consider WH-Movement and the parameter long-distance movement.

In both English and German, interrogatives and relative pronouns are moved to the head of the clause in which they originate:

(1) a. You saw who at the party?! (echo question)
    b. Who did you see e at the party? (normal question)

The echo question indicates that the hearer has not understood or can’t believe his ears. The symbol e for “empty” marks the hole left behind by moving the interrogative pronoun to the front.

German works the same way:

(2) a. Du hast wen auf der Fete gesehen?! (echo question)
    b. Wen hast du e auf der Fete gesehen? (normal question)

In German, however, relative and interrogative pronouns can only be moved within a single clause while in English, this movement is potentially unlimited. Consider:

(3) [s, Lady Farnsworth told the cook [s to remind the butler [s to ask the gardener [s to have the chauffeur [s drive the guest to the station]]]]].

The echo question is:
The regular content question moves \textit{who} over three intervening clauses to the front of the sentence:

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textit{s}] Lady Farnsworth told the cook [\textit{s} to remind the butler [\textit{s} to ask the gardener [\textit{s} to have the chauffeur [\textit{s} drive \textit{who} to the station]]]]].
\end{itemize}

or in the case of a relative clause:

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textit{s}] The guest [\textit{s} (\textit{who}) Lady Farnsworth told the cook [\textit{s} to remind the butler [\textit{s} to ask the gardener [\textit{s} to have the chauffeur [\textit{s} drive \textit{e} to the station]]]]] missed his train.
\end{itemize}

This kind of long distance movement is quite impossible in German, where the parameter is set to off.

Here is a simpler example. Consider:

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textit{6}] Why do you think [that O.J. did it]?
\end{itemize}

In English, this sentence is ambiguous. One of the readings corresponds to German:

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textit{7}] Warum glaubst du, [dass O.J. es getan hat]?
\end{itemize}

In other words, \textit{What is your reason for thinking that O.J. did it?}

In English, but not in German, there is a second reading: \textit{What do you think was O.J.'s reason for doing it.}

Clearly, the question word \textit{why} in English can question the verb of the main clause (\textit{think}) or the embedded object clause (\textit{did}). But, in German, \textit{warum} can only question the verb of the main clause (\textit{glaubst}).

This can be explained by the parameter long-distance movement. This parameter states that most languages (the default) do not allow a question word to be moved out of its own clause, while
others do. German is a “default” language. Hence, *warum* can only question the verb of its own clause *glaubst*. The sentence is unambiguous.

English, on the other hand, is a “minority” language that resets the default and allows long-distance movement. Hence, the question word *why* can originate in the main clause as in German or in the object clause, where it modifies *did*. Since two origins are possible, the sentence is ambiguous in English.

A further confirmation of this is the German equivalent of the second reading:

(8) Was denkst du, [warum O.J. es getan hat]?

Here the questioning *warum* remains in its own clause following the default parameter.

A first language learner of English would then reset the default for long-distance movement when hearing sentences like (6) in a communicative context where it is clear that O.J.’s motives are under discussion. The German learner only encounters the unambiguous (7) and (8). The default remains and becomes “rusted” shut with adulthood. The second language teacher has to “repair the switch” with explanation and exercises.

Of course, German has another clever strategy for expressing (8):

(9) Warum (denkst du) hat O.J. es getan?

Here, *denkst du* is simply inserted into the sentence *Warum hat O.J. es getan*.

3.8 Syntactic ambiguity

The last section presented an example of syntactic ambiguity. This kind of ambiguity arises when two different underlying structures yield the same surface structure. (This is quite different from semantic ambiguity based on different meanings for the same word. For example, in German the sentence *Heute morgen sah ich eine Ente* could mean that I saw (1) a water fowl, (2) a French automobile, (3) Any report in the *Bild-Zeitung* depending on what I mean by *Ente*.)

English is particularly rich in syntactic ambiguity. Consider:

(1) Flying planes can be dangerous.
This sentence is ambiguous because the phrase *flying planes* can be interpreted as meaning *planes which are flying* or *to fly planes*. That is, underlying (1), there are two different structures, approximately:

1. (2) Planes [which are flying] can be dangerous.
2. (3) [To fly planes] can be dangerous.

In the underlying structures (2) and (3), the grammatical relations are clear. In English the underlying structures can undergo a process of transformation that reduces both (2) and (3) to (1). Since hearers know that (1) could have come from (2) or (3), the result is an ambiguous sentence. In German, this kind of syntactic ambiguity is not common.

If you must know, the underlying structure and derivation from (3) is:

(i) \[ [ [\text{it} [\text{PRO} \text{fly planes}]]] \text{can be dangerous} \]
(ii) \[ [\text{To fly planes}] \text{can be dangerous} \text{(Indefinite-Subject-Deletion, It-Deletion).} \]
(iii) \[ \text{It can be dangerous [to fly planes]} \text{(Extraposition).} \]
(iv) \[ \text{Flying planes can be dangerous} \text{(Indefinite-Subject-Deletion, Verb-Raising).} \]

The derivation of (2) will be treated later under Relative Clause Reduction.

Similarly in,

(4) The lamb is ready [to eat]

neither the subject nor the object of the complement verb *to eat* is expressed! The subject of the main clause, *the lamb*, may be interpreted either as the understood subject or the understood object of the verb *to eat*. This indicates that there are two structures underlying (4) (one with *the lamb* as subject, the other with *the lamb* as object) and they are both reduced to (4). What you see is not what you get. Clearly, there is more to English syntax than meets the eye.

3.8.1 The line between syntax and pragmatics

Native speakers can distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable sentences, but, in many cases, have no idea as to what makes an unacceptable sentence wrong. The same problem arises with the interpretation of acceptable sentences. It is often an open question as to whether native-speaker judgments are based on pragmatics or syntax. Consider the following:

(1) Harry promised Ralph to fix the car.
(2) Harry promised Ralph that he would fix the car.

Now, ask yourself Who is supposed to fix the car? At first glance, hardly anyone would disagree with the judgment that Harry is supposed to fix the car in both (1) and (2).

Nevertheless, this is only correct in (1), where the syntax of the sentence does not allow any other interpretation. Underlying (1), is the structure (3):

\[
(3) \quad [_{s} \text{Harry}, \text{promised Ralph} [_{sp} \text{it} [_{s} \text{Harry}, \text{fix car}]]]
\]

Sentence (1) is derived by Same-Subject-Deletion from (3). There can be no doubt that Harry is to fix the car.

In (2), however, he in the embedded clause can refer to either Harry or Ralph. The interpretation is based on the semantics/pragmatics of the concept “promise,” not on syntax. It lies in the nature of a promise that A enters into a commitment to B to undertake something on B’s behalf. Hence, the default assumption in (2) is that Harry is the referent of he. Harry has promised to fix the car. This can, however, be easily changed by changing the situation in which the sentence is used.

Let us suppose that Ralph regularly repairs Harry’s car. Now, Tom opens up a garage across the street and is trying to get Harry’s business. Ralph is distressed about the competition, but Harry assures him that he (Ralph) will repair the car. In this situation, he refers to Ralph, not Harry. This interpretation is possible because the syntax of the sentence allows both interpretations. Which one is chosen depends on the situation (pragmatics).

But, returning to (3) above we may ask why can’t we substitute Ralph for Harry in the second clause. Then Dative Deletion could apply and Ralph would get to fix the car? The answer lies in the semantics of verbs of promising as explained above. The subject (A) promises the indirect object (B) that he (A) will do something for (B). Hence verbs of promising (e.g., promise, offer, threaten) trigger Same-Subject-Deletion, i.e., both the promisor and the agent carrying out the promise must be the same person. By the same token, verbs of ordering (e.g., Harry ordered Ralph to fix the car) always take Dative-Deletion since the person receiving the order (here Ralph) is expected to carry out the order.

3.9 Close correspondencies

English and German have a number of constructions that are used in very similar, but not identical ways.
3.10 Articles
Consider the use of the article in German before abstract nouns, but not in English:

(1) Albrecht verzichtete auf die Liebe.
(2) Albrecht renounced love.

There are a number of other small differences in the use of the article. English does not use articles with street names (unless the article is part of the street name as in “The Avenue of the Americas”). Hence,

(3) She lives on Sixth Avenue (‘in der sechsten Avenue’).

Bridges and buildings generally take the article in English (e.g., the George Washington Bridge, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Empire State Building, the World Trade Center), but there are exceptions (Tower Bridge) and castles, palaces, manors and mansions do not take the article (Buckingham Palace, Windsor Castle, Pelham Manor, Gracie Mansion)! In other cases, German and English follow the same rules:

(4) I’m going to sit on the grass.
(5) Ich setzte mich auf den Rasen.

In this case, the article indicates that both speaker and hearer know what grass is meant. Since German and English agree in this point, there is no learning problem involved. Speakers of languages that do not have a definite article (e.g., Russian or Persian) have to learn this rule. From these examples, it should be clear that the behavior of the is partially explained by very general rules and partially idiosyncratic. Can you explain why seas, rivers and oceans take the article: the Red Sea, the Atlantic (Ocean), the Mississippi (River), but not lakes, creeks or ponds: Lake George, Walden Pond, Owl Creek?

3.11 Problems of determiners - set theory
Determiners are words which, like adjectives, modify nouns. Unlike adjectives, which indicate an attribute of the noun, e.g., big in that big barn, they indicate which one or how many.

Let us begin with the distinction between which and who. Every English grammar book tells us that who is used to refer to persons and which to nonpersons, but consider the following:

(1) Who broke the window? (open set – could be anybody)
    (Wer hat das Fenster zerbrochen?)
(2) Which of the boys broke the window? (closed set – limited to the set of boys)  
(Wer von den Jungs hat das Fenster zerbrochen?)

The grammar book rule seems to apply better to German than to English! German has *wer* for persons in both cases. The traditional rule for English is not exactly false, just incomplete. In open sets, (could be anyone) the distinction between *who* and *which* is observed, but in closed sets (limited to the usual suspects) only *which* is used regardless of “personality.”

Set theory can also be used to solve a number of other problems of English-German contrastive grammar. Consider the problem of the universal quantifier (*Allquantor*). In formal logic, there is only one universal quantifier (∀), which indicates all the members of a set. In German, however, there are two: *alle* und *jeder* and in English four: *all, every, any* and *each*. Here we will limit our discussion to count nouns, i.e., *all the boys are* rather than *all I know is.*

Fortunately, *all* and *alle* present no particular problems since they are used identically in German and English, but how are we to deal with the following:

(3) Everyone should vote.  
_Jeder sollte wählen._

(4) Anyone can do it.  
_Jeder kann es machen._

(5) Each student was rewarded.  
_Jeder Schüler wurde belohnt._

Here we are confronted with one form in German (*jeder*) which must be projected onto three forms in English (*everyone, anyone, each*). Set theory can be used to make the differences clear:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{every(one)} & : \forall x, x = \{a \land b \land c \ldots \} \\
\text{any(one)} & : \forall x, x = \{a \lor b \lor c \ldots \} \\
\text{each(one)} & : \forall x, x = \{a \land b \land c \ldots n\}
\end{align*}
\]

In other words, *every* indicates that the members of the set are conjoined: John and Mary and Tom and George and Susy . . . . should vote (*every* member of the community should vote). There are as many votes as there are people in the set.

In contrast, *any* indicates disjunction: John or Mary or Tom or George or Susy . . . . can do it (*any* member of the community can do it). It is only done once, but anyone in the group could do it.
Each is more illusive. It is conjoined like every, but indicates a closed set delimited with of (expressed or implied) as in each of the boys. This, however, does not quite pin it down. Consider:

(6) Every boy (in the class) was warned about smoking on the school grounds.
(7) Each boy (in the class) was warned about smoking on the school grounds.

In both (6) and (7), every boy was duly warned, but in (7) each boy seems to have been warned individually. It is this individualizing function of each which is hard to capture. Fortunately, we can borrow a concept from computer science to make this clear. Each calls an iterative function. Here is an example of an iterative function in computer code:

\begin{verbatim}
For x =5 to 10
  Do Print x + 5
  Next x
\end{verbatim}

Before reading further, see if you can figure out what this code would do . . . .

Yes, that’s right. It would print out the numbers 10 to 15. Starting with x = 5, it would add 5 and print out 10. Then it would proceed to the next whole number, add 5 and print the result and so on until the limit 10 was reached.

For our problem, we can reformulate:

\begin{verbatim}
For x = 1 to (number of boys in the class)
  Do (Warn x about smoking on the school grounds)
  Next x
\end{verbatim}

This fulfills the requirement that there be as many individual warnings as there are boys. It also fulfills the requirement that each define a closed set. Otherwise, your computer would run on and on forever. Think of what it would do to your head!

3.12 Negative polarity

Negative polarity means quite simply that negations (or questions) use different words than assertions. Consider:

(1) Ich gehe hin. Ich auch.

\textit{I'm going. Me too.}
In both cases (positive and negative) German uses auch. English distinguishes between too and neither.

In this connection, we can mention the old school-book rule about some and any. In declarative statements some is used, in negations any. Like most school-book rules, this one too is not quite correct.

Compare (3) and (4):

(3) Mrs. Friedman doesn’t approve of some of her daughter’s friends.  
_Frau Friedman hält nicht viel von einigen Freunden ihrer Tochter._ 
\( \exists x \) (friend of daughter x) \( \land (\neg \text{approve Mrs. Friedman x}) \)

(4) Mrs. Friedman doesn’t approve of any of her daughter’s friends.  
_Frau Friedman hält nicht viel von allen/den Freunden ihrer Tochter._ 
\( \exists x \) (friend of daughter x) \( \land (\text{approve Mrs. Friedman x}) \)

Sentences (3) and (4) make quite different assertions. In (3) Mrs. Friedman approves of some of her daughter’s friends, but not of others. In (4) she approves of none of them. The logical notation should make the difference clear (\( \exists = \text{exist} \), \( \not \exists = \text{not exist} \), \( \land = \text{and} \), \( \neg = \text{not} \)).

More serious is the problem that arises with German irgend. In German nicht irgendwo, nicht irgendwas, etc., nicht negates irgend, the randomness of the statement. In contrast, English not anywhere, not anything means nowhere, nothing. Not negates anywhere, anything.

Compare:

(5) Die Fachhochschule München ist nicht irgendwo!  
The University of Applied Sciences, Munich is _not just_ anywhere! (‘It’s special, not just some random University’).

(6) The University of Applied Sciences, Munich is _not_ anywhere (‘It’s _nowhere_ = nirgendwo’).

As indicated in (5), the little word just makes all the difference.
The scope of negation can also be changed by transformations such as Raising-to-Subject. This transformation operates on an embedded subject clause just as Raising-to-Object operates on an object noun clause. The subject of the embedded clauses (S2) is raised to replace *it* in S1.

Consider the underlying structure:

(7) \[ S_1 \ [NP \ [it \ [S_2 \ [\text{that no student will pass the examination}] \text{is certain}]]) \]

The differences with and without Raising-to-Subject are striking:

(8) a. \[ S_1 \ [NP \ [S_2 \ [\text{That no student will pass the examination}] \text{is certain}]]) \text{(no Raising).} \]
    b. \[ S_1 \ [NP \ [No student] \text{is certain}[S_2 \text{to pass the examination}]) \text{(after Raising).} \]

The scope of negation is different in the two sentences. In (8a.) *no* negates *pass* in the second clause (S2), after Raising-to-Subject, it negates *is certain* in the upper clause (S1).

### 3.13 Negative attraction

This is a convenient place to explain an old misunderstanding about “double negatives.” In older grammar books children were told that you could not use a double negative (i.e., negative verb plus negative pronoun, adverb or quantifier in the same clause because two negatives make a positive. This is clearly not true. Consider,

(1) I can’t get no satisfaction.

No competent speaker of English would assert that this line from the famous Rolling Stones’ song means *I can get some satisfaction*.

In fact, as indicated above, the correct form in standard English does require a “double negation”:

(2) I can’t get *any* satisfaction.

The positive would substitute *some* for *any*:

(3) I can get *some* satisfaction.

So *any* is really a negative quantifier. Why object to *no* in (1), but not *any* in (2)? That’s just the way standard English does it. This has nothing to do with mathematical logic. Some languages
like Spanish or Russian require negative pronouns and adverbs if the verb is negated. This is called negative attraction. The rules for negation are often complicated. Here are a few examples:

(4) No dio nunca nada a nadie ‘He never didn’t give nothing to no one’ (Spanish).
(5) On nikogdá nichevó ne d’élæt ‘He never doesn’t do nothing’ (Russian).
(6) I hob no nia nix gsogd ‘I have never said anything’ (Bavarian).
(7) Ich habe noch nie nichts gesagt ‘I have never said nothing’, i.e., ‘I have always said something’ (Standard German).

Notice that in (6), two negatives do not make a positive, but in (7) they do. No problem as long as you know whether you are speaking Bavarian or Standard German. The important point here is to make it clear to speakers that have negative attraction in their native speech that it is unacceptable to carry it over into a standard variety that does not.

In other words, if you reply to the job interviewer who asks: “What are your salary expectations” - “I ain’t got none.” You ain’ gunna get the job no way, so conform your speech to the social situation and practice negative attraction only where appropriate.

It is worth noting that Noah Webster (of Webster’s Dictionary fame) pointed this out as early as 1839 in his Improved Grammar of the English Language: “The learned, with a view to philosophical correctness, have rejected the use of two negatives for one negation. The consequence is, we have two modes of speaking directly opposite to each other, but expressing the same thing. “He did not owe nothing,” in the vulgar language, and “he owed nothing,” in the style of the learned, mean precisely the same thing.”

Finally, it may be worth adding that “double negation” with the interpretation that two negatives make a positive is possible with predicate adjectives:

(8) He is not uninterested in your proposal. ‘He is (somewhat) interested in your proposal’.

The previous paragraph promised to be the last word on the subject, but no discussion of negation in English would be complete without mentioning the English teachers’ bugbear ain’t. The origin of the form is clear. Consider the contractions: Is he not= Isn’t he, Are you not = Aren’t you, Are we not = Aren’t we, Are they not = Aren’t they. What is the proper form of Am I not? You guessed it: Am I not regularly contracts to Ain’t I. This form appears in print at the end of the seventeenth century and was quite respectable for more than a century thereafter until it came under attack by grammarians. The spread of the form in non-standard English to He ain’t, We ain’t, You ain’t, They ain’t, made matters worse. Ain’t (even where historically correct in Ain’t I) is now considered to be a mark of illiteracy. The awkward “work around” Aren’t I = Are I not is equally to be avoided. Notice reordering: Are you not ⇒ Are not you ⇒ Aren’t you.
3.14 Surface case assignment

In the assignment of surface case (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative), German follows the rule of ellipsis. That is, a noun phrase receives the same case in isolation as it would in a complete expression. Compare:


In English, however, we apparently have the “objective” case in both instances:

(3) Who is there? Me.
(4) Who did you see? Him.

Even worse, we find the “objective” case in conjoined structures like the following:

(5) Me and him went to the movies.
(6) John and me saw it ourselves.

On the other hand, sentences like (7) are quite impossible:

(7) *Me went to the movies.

Generations of English teachers have attempted to stamp out this aberrant use of the “objective” case to little avail. Walsh and Walsh Plain English Handbook (1951) provided an ‘objective’ assessment: “Note: Some good authorities feel that ‘It is me’ is more natural in colloquial language than ‘It is I,’ but most textbook writers insist on ‘It is I.’”

The supposed problem (the use of the “objective” for the nominative) and its solution (the rule of ellipsis) are unfortunately based on a misunderstanding of the English case system. Traditionally, English is said to have three surface cases (nominative, possessive, objective). “Possessive” is a misleading name for the genitive. (Certainly, the genitive in John’s hat indicates possession, but that is hardly the case in John’s driving.) The objective arose historically from the merger of the dative and accusative (the surviving forms are those of the dative, cf. him ~ ihm, her ~ ihr). What is overlooked is the existence of a fourth case – the disjunctive.

The disjunctive case is used when a noun or pronoun is not closely attached to a verb as its subject or object, that is, when it stands alone or is part of a conjoined construction.
The relevant rule in this case is not difficult to find: A single noun directly before a verb must be in the nominative case (as illustrated by (7)). Otherwise the disjunctive case can be used in colloquial English (cf. (3) - (6)). (To be sure, the nominative is also allowed in (5) - (6): *He and I, John and I, and this is the preferred form for written English. But, I in (3) would be quite ridiculous.)

This is very much like the rule in French. Consider:

(8) Qui est là? Moi. (Who is there? Me.)
(9) Jean et moi, (nous) sommes allés au cinéma. (John and me, (we) went to the movies.)

The French grammarians find this quite normal and call forms like moi “disjunctive pronouns,” but English grammarians have tried for centuries to impose the unnatural German rule. Perhaps because, unlike French (me ~ moi), English does not have separate forms for the objective and the disjunctive.

The “free choice” between nominative and disjunctive in noun phrases connected by and is also extended to cases which properly take the objective as long as the pronoun is the second element as in:

(10) a. The same goes for John and I/me.
    b. *The same goes for I and John.

Apparently, the choice of case in the second part of conjoined object is free (objective or nominative). Only the noun phrase directly following the verb or preposition that assigns case is bound to take the objective. In modern colloquial speech, even this restriction is breaking down, allowing free choice of the objective or nominative in conjoined objects! But, you can never go wrong by putting objects in the objective case.

There is a mysterious restriction that forbids putting I first in a conjunction: (11) is unacceptable. It would be nice to think that this is a matter of politeness (not putting myself first), but, as (12) shows, the disjunctive me is quite unobjectionable:

(11) *I and Sally went to the movies.
(12) Me and Sally went to the movies.
The operant principle here seems to be that I must directly precede the verb even when conjoined. Hence (13) is acceptable, but (14) is not – regardless of case.

(13)   {Sally and I/Him and I/She and I} went to the movies.
(14)   *{I and he/I and him/I and Sally} went to the movies.

And finally, we have the last piece of our Verb-Raising puzzle. The form of the subject pronoun him in sentences like (15) below is the disjunctive:

(15)   They don’t like him driving.

Since Verb-Raising has made the underlying verb drive into a noun driving, the pronoun no longer has a verb to agree with and stands in the disjunctive case.

3.15 Shadow pronouns
In an old radio series that ran for decades, the crime-fighting hero, Lamont Cranston, has the power “to cloud men’s minds” and make himself invisible to evil doers. So sometimes you can see him (as a “wealthy young man about town”) and sometimes you can’t (as the “Shadow”). Shadow pronouns are similar. In some languages you can see them (German) and some you can’t (English), but all the same, they are there – “the Shadow knows.”

Consider the alternative to the construction with the disjunctive pronoun:

(1)   a. Who’s there? It’s me (disjunctive).
     b. Who’s there? I am.
(2)   a. Wer ist da? Ich bin es.

The shadow pronoun es is visible in German and (cannot be left out), but not in English.

Well, you may ask, if it is invisible in English, how do we know it is there?! The answer is because we can see its effects – its shadow. Usually, a form of the verb be contracts with the preceding word as in (1a.) above. Notice, that this is not possible with I am/*I’m in (1b.-c.). The reason for this is that the shadow pronoun has been eliticized (that is moved to the front, where it leans
on the first word of the clause. In Old English, the shadow is visible, in Modern English it only makes itself known by its effect in blocking contraction:

(4) I s am [with the invisible shadow pronoun s].

The same phenomenon is noted in several other constructions. In general, where German leaves out a repeated constituent (this is called “gapping”), it marks the spot with es. Here English uses the shadow pronoun, which prevents contraction:

(5) a. Susi ist doof und ich bin es auch. [= Susi ist doof und ich bin auch doof]
   b. Susi is dumb and I am/*I’m too. [= Susi is dumb and I am dumb too.]
(6) a. Harry ist größer als ich es bin. [= Harry ist größer, als ich groß bin.]
   b. Harry is taller than I am/*I’m. [= Harry is taller than I am tall.]

In the absence of gapping, contraction is not a problem:

(7) Susi is dumb and I’m dumb too (cf. 5(b.)).

So you see, my highschool English teacher was right. Sentence (6b.) really does come from Harry is taller than I am tall. But, this is not a justification for the ridiculous Harry is taller than I. Rather, it explains the failure of contraction in (6b.). Harry is taller than me is the more common form with the disjunctive pronoun discussed in the last section.

It is worth noting that the shadow pronoun does not block contraction in negative constructions:

(8) Harry is taller than I am/*I’m, but Heini’s not/Heini isn’t.
(9) Who is going to the meeting? Frank is/*Frank’s, but I’m not.

We can account for this by assuming that not forms a barrier for moving the shadow pronoun, which then must die in place. Consider (10):

(10) Who is/Who’s going to the meeting? Frank is/*Frank’s going to the meeting, but I am not/I’m not going to the meeting.

In the first sentence in (10), contraction is possible because going to the meeting has not been gapped. In the second sentence, the shadow pronoun prevents contraction if gapping has
occurred: *Frank is/*Frank’s. In the final clause, however, contraction is possible even if gapping has taken place: I am not/I’m. The negation not forms a barrier for fronting the shadow pronoun.

Similarly, the expansion of (8) is:

\[
(11) \quad \text{Harry is taller [than I am (tall)], but Heini is not taller [than I am (tall)].}
\]

In the second clause of (11), gapping tall blocks contraction as expected. In the final clause, we can make the same observation: not taller than I am/*I’m. We can, however, gap the entire bracketed clause. This does not block contraction. Thus, we have:

\[
(12) \quad \text{Harry is taller than I am/*I’m, but Heini is not/Heini’s not/Heini isn’t.}
\]

Compare this to German:

\[
(13) \quad \text{Harry ist größer als ich (es bin), aber Heini ist es nicht (es = größer als ich es bin).}
\]

The shadow pronoun can be left out as in the first clause, but only if the verb is left out as well.

\[\text{3.16 Promotion and demotion – Passive}\]

In the next two sections we will enrich our theoretical framework with some basic ideas from Relational Grammar. The concepts involved are quite elementary – if unusual from the standpoint of school grammar. Relational Grammar recognizes three basic grammatical relations in a clause. These correspond roughly to the familiar concepts of subject (S), direct object (DO) and indirect object (IO). These are illustrated in (1) below.

English and German have similar passive transformations. In English, the rule is that either the direct object (DO) or the indirect object (IO) can be promoted to the subject (S) whichever immediately follows the verb. At the same time, the original subject is demoted to a “chômeur” (chô) (Chômeur is the French word for an unemployed worker). Thus, we have:

\[
(1) \quad \text{Fred (S) gave a frog (DO) to her (IO).}
(2) \quad \text{A frog (S) was given to her (IO) by Fred (chô).}
(3) \quad \text{Fred (S) gave her (IO) a frog (DO).}
(4) \quad \text{She (S) was given a frog (DO) by Fred (chô).}
\]
For a number of transformational changes, it is useful to refer to a hierarchy of relations: \( (S) = 1, (DO) = 2, (IO) = 3 \). The chômeur and so-called oblique relations like “Time,” “Place,” “Instrument,” etc. are not specifically numbered, but are understood to be more than 3. Hence, the change from \((DO) = 2\) to \((S) = 1\) is called “promotion.” The opposite change from \((S) = 1\) to \((DO) = 2\) is called “demotion” as is the change from \((S) = 1\) to chô.

In German only a direct object can be promoted:


The German equivalent of (4) simply reorders the constituents of (6) (Topicalization):


Thus, German speakers are tempted to erroneously use her instead of she in sentences like (4).

In German, demotion of an indefinite subject (PRO) with passive marking of the verb can even be used with intransitive verbs (verbs with no direct object):

(8) Es wurde getanzt und gesoffen. \( \leftarrow \) PRO hat getanzt und gesoffen ‘There was dancing and drinking’.

This is called “the impersonal passive” but the name is misleading since there is clearly nothing passive about sentences like (8) above. The so-called passive form of the verb in German marks demotion of the subject [1] to [chô] – here with deletion of the indefinite chômeur PRO.

In English, demotion of the subject and promotion of one of the objects go hand in hand. Sentences like (8) are not possible.

So we can summarize as follows:

Passive in consists of two separate processes:

(I) Demotion of the subject [1] to [chô].
(II) Promotion of an object ([2] or [3]) to [1].
English allows promotion of either [2] or [3], German only allows a [2] to be promoted.


The so-called passive verb form is not passive at all, it denotes chômage.

Thus, we have been able to analyze Passive as two separate operations with different conditions for their application in English and German and, in the process, precisely pin point the differences between the two languages.

Sentence (8) also demonstrates another syntactic peculiarity of German not shared by English. In German (as in English), it is not possible to start a declarative sentence with the verb, hence the dummy subject es is required. If some other word is available to start the sentence as in (9), the es disappears:

(9) Gestern wurde getanzt und gesoffen ‘Yesterday, there was dancing and drinking.

Apparently, the disappearing es is only required to satisfy the condition that the finite verb stand in second place. (See the discussion of the Bahnhof-sentences above.)

The English dummy subject there can never be deleted:

(10) a. There was drinking and dancing yesterday.
    b. Yesterday, there was drinking and dancing.
    c. * Yesterday was drinking and dancing.

3.17 Unaccusative and German sich

There is another kind of promotion that leaves its tracks in German, but not English. This is involves the “Unaccusative” transformation. Consider the following:

(1) Fred [1] opened the door [2].
(2) The door [1] was opened by Fred [chô].
Sentence (2) involves the familiar promotion and demotion operations involved in passivization. There is, however, a third possibility, which involves the promotion of a direct object [2] to subject [1] without passivization. In this case, the subject position is empty in the underlying structure! The sentence receives its subject through [2] to [1] promotion. The passive verb form does not occur because chômage has not taken place.

Compare the German equivalents:

(4) Fred [1] öffnete die Tür [2].

Obviously, the door does not open itself, either in German or English. The underlying structure for both is:

(7) 0 opened the door [2].

That is the subject position is empty! The underlying object [2] in (7) is promoted to subject [1] Unaccusative in English leaves no trace (3), but in German a pronoun sich is left behind (6). The difference between Passive and Unaccusative is that Passive involves the demotion of an underlying subject and Unaccusative is used where there is no underlying subject. The so-called passive verb form really only marks the demotion of [1] to [chô]. Note that Unaccusative is quite independent of word order. If the promoted object is not moved to the front as in (6), a dummy pronoun es is inserted as a place holder unless, of course, some other constituent is topicalized.

(8) Es öffnete sich gestern die Tür.
(9) Gestern öffnete sich die Tür.

This suggests that the es in (8) above is due to the V-II rule (see the discussion of the Bahnhof-sentences) rather than the Overt-Subject parameter. For more on es, see my German Grammar in English for International Students.

Other Germanic, Slavic and Romance languages behave like German. Here a few examples:

(10) Dörren öppnades (Swedish).
(11) Dver’ otkrilas (Russian).
(12) La porte s’ouvrit (French).
(13) Se abrió la puerta (Spanish).
In each case the $s$ is the equivalent of German *sich*. The syntax varies. In French and Spanish, we have a separate pronoun *se* which positions itself before the verb. In Swedish and Russian, an enclitic $s$ attaches itself to the verb.
Part III: Aspect and the English Verb System

1 The English tense and aspect system

1.1 English verb morphology (the forms of the English verb)
An English verb has maximally five different forms, e.g., *go - went - gone - goes - going*. The third person singular present (*goes*) is regularly derived from the base form (*go*) as is the present participle (*going*). For irregular verbs, three forms have to be memorized - base, past, past participle - as with *go* above. In the case of regular verbs, only the base form must be memorized since all other can be derived from the base. For example, *love - loved - loved - loves - loving*. (The past and past participle are derived by adding *-ed*.) With the exception of ten verbs (with the prefixes *a-, be-, for-*, e.g., *awake, become, forget*) all English verbs of two or more syllables are regular! Thus, if you encounter a new verb like *excoriate* ‘harshly criticize’, you don’t have to reach for your dictionary to form the past, past and present participle, etc.

1.2 Tenses
Tense is solely concerned with a verb’s placement in time. English like German has two tenses - present (nonpast) and past. This will be explained more fully below.

1.3 Aspects
English has four verb aspect forms: simple, continuous, perfect and perfect continuous. German has simple and perfect forms, but these do not correspond exactly to the English forms in the way they are used. See the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>simple</th>
<th>continuous</th>
<th>perfect</th>
<th>perfect continuous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>present</strong></td>
<td>he goes</td>
<td>he is going</td>
<td>he has gone</td>
<td>he has been going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>er geht</em></td>
<td>---------</td>
<td><em>er ist gegangen</em></td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>past</strong></td>
<td>he went</td>
<td>he was going</td>
<td>he had gone</td>
<td>he had been going</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>er ging</em></td>
<td>---------</td>
<td><em>er war gegangen</em></td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aspect has to do with “the nature of the action of a verb as to its beginning, duration, completion, or repetition and without reference to its position in time” (*Webster’s Collegiate*). All languages recognize the same set of aspects. The difficulties arise because of differences in the means of expressing them. For example, the simple form in German can correspond to all four English forms:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Form</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>German</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>simple</td>
<td>I live in Munich</td>
<td>Ich wohne in München.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuous</td>
<td>I am living in Munich (temporarily).</td>
<td>Ich wohne (vorübergehend) in München.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect</td>
<td>I have lived in Munich (for ten years)</td>
<td>Ich wohne in München (seit 10 Jahren).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect continuous</td>
<td>I have been living in Munich (for ten years).</td>
<td>Ich wohne in München (seit 10 Jahren).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The problem for the German speaker is how to project a single German form onto four different English forms. In addition, the traditional names in the chart above are not particularly informative and may even be misleading. The following chart clarifies the actual function of the aspect forms. (The terminology is explained below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>simple</th>
<th>continuous</th>
<th>perfect</th>
<th>perfect continuous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aorist</td>
<td>delimited:</td>
<td>resultative/anterior</td>
<td>delimited anterior:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>durative/iterative</td>
<td></td>
<td>durative/iterative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to grammatical aspect expressed in their form, verbs have inherent aspect which depends on their meaning, e.g., live, wait are inherently durative while kick, slam are inherently punctual. The aspect of a verb in context depends on both grammatical and inherent aspect.

Here is a short presentation of the aspect forms.

1.3.1 Simple form (Aorist)
The aorist aspect takes its name from a Greek word meaning ‘unlimited’. It concentrates on the action of the verb as a whole with no limitations as to duration, completion, repetition, etc. The action may be inherently punctual, iterative or durative or the verb may simply present a fact:

(1) The Thirty Years War changed the face of Europe (factual).
(2) I saw her yesterday (punctual).
(3) We vacation in Albania every year (iterative).
(4) I lived in New York City for five years (durative).
(5) I live in New York City (factual).
In (1), The Thirty Years War (which lasted for thirty years) is seen as a whole, as a single event. Similarly, in (4) my five-year residence in New York is seen as a whole, as a five-year period that is now over (past tense). Sentence (2) presents a single instance, (3) repeated instances. Sentence (5) states a fact without reference to a time frame, cf. *I am living in New York City* (now). The aorist is expressed by the simple verb form.

### 1.3.2 Continuous form (Delimited)

Delimited – places the verb in a **limited time frame**. Both durative and iterative verbs may be delimited. The delimited aspect is expressed by the continuous verb form:

**Durative:**

1. Look out the window. It’s raining again (now – point in time).
2. I’m reading *Moby Dick* now (at the present time, not at the present moment).
3. Children in the former GDR are learning English in school now rather than Russian as their parents did (present generation).
4. Harry is looking for a new girlfriend (for a limited time only, act now).
5. Harry stopped talking to Sheila to answer his cell phone (durative).

**Iterative:**

6. I’ve been hearing ugly rumors about you and Mrs. Pitt.
7. We are only hearing bad news from America these days.
8. Harry stopped talking to Sheila after she asked for a divorce (cf. (5) above).
9. Scientists are always discovering new subatomic particles.

### 1.3.3 Perfect form (Resultative, Anterior)

The perfect form really isn’t perfect! That is, it is *not* a verb form that indicates that the action or the state expressed by the verb is completed. If I say, *I have taught English for three years,* this in no way indicates that I have stopped. The perfect form covers two aspects: **resultative** and **anterior**.

#### 1.3.3.1 Resultative

Resultative – the state resulting from the action of a verb:

1. I have taught English for three years.
2. We have collected $3,000 for Harry’s election campaign.
The emphasis here is on the present state resulting form past activity, i.e., I now have three years experience as an English teacher. We now have $3,000 in the campaign treasury.

1.3.3.2 Anterior
Anterior – in the past and future, shows that one state or action precedes another or takes place before a particular point in time:

(1) When we arrived, he had already left (past anterior).
(2) When the clock strikes 12:15 a.m., Cinderella’s coach will have already turned into a pumpkin (future anterior).

1.3.4 Present perfect continuous (Delimited-Anterior)
The present perfect continuous form combines the virtues of continuous (delimited – durative or iterative) and perfect (anterior).

(1) What have you been doing for the last five years (durative – until now).
(2) By then, I had been teaching English in Ulan Bator for five years (durative – until then in the past).
(3) I have been hearing ugly rumors about you and Mrs. Pitt (iterative – until now).
(4) Next year, he will have been running in the Boston marathon for fifty years (iterative – until point in the future).

These verb forms will be discussed individually in detail below.

1.4 Additional ways to express aspect
In addition to verb forms, there are other means that English exploits to express aspect:

With helping verbs:

(1) Harry began to drink (after Sheila left him) - inchoative (beginning of action).
(2) Harry stopped drinking (after he met Sally) - terminative (end of action).
(3) Keep calling (until you reach Abulafia) - iterative (repeated).
(4) Take a look at these figures - (punctual).
The inchoative aspect focuses on the beginning of a state or action. What better way to do this than with a helping verb like begin or start? If the perfect verb form isn’t perfect, there are other ways to express that it’s finished. We can use a verb for the terminative aspect (stopped in (2)). The verb keep is particularly interesting. It usually means something like “not to let go of something.” Obviously, this is not the meaning in (3), where it simply means the repetition of an action. Similarly, take indicating punctual, momentary action is far removed from its literal meaning.

With adverbs:

(1) Sheila was about to scream (inchoative).
(2) Harry wrote down his thoughts (perfective).
(3) They had always settled their differences before (iterative).
(4) Darling, I will always love you (durative).

About, originally meaning ‘around the outside border’, is an ingenious way of expressing entry into a new state. How should we paraphrase it – ‘on the edge of screaming’. And finally a way to indicate perfective – to write down. It’s the adverb down that makes the difference. When it’s written down, the writing is over. German is similar here: Er schrieb es auf. The adverb always can be both iterative and durative as in (3) and (4).

Let us now consider the individual verb forms in detail.

2 Simple present vs. present continuous

The Germanic languages (including German and English) only recognize two tense forms: past and non-past (usually called present). The past is clearly a past tense, but the so-called present has three different functions: present, future and timeless.

The three uses of the “present” form are clearest in German, but English has striking parallels:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Timeless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ich wohne in München.</td>
<td>Ich fahre nächste Woche nach Salzburg.</td>
<td>Gold ist schwerer als Blei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I live in Munich.</td>
<td>I go to Salzburg next week (for a concert).</td>
<td>Gold is heavier than lead.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is no particularly good reason why all three functions should be united in a single form and, in fact, other languages have other distributions. French, for example, has a single form for present and timeless but a separate future.

English introduces a further complication in that the three time functions can also appear in the continuous:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Function</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>I am living in Munich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future</td>
<td>I am going to Salzburg next week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeless</td>
<td>I only speak French when I am traveling abroad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since there is no equivalent of the continuous in German, German speakers are confronted with a choice between two aspect forms for three familiar functions.

The fundamental difference between the two forms, as indicated above, is that the continuous relates the verb to a time frame (here in the nonpast) while the simple form does not:

1. It rains constantly in Munich (a fact about Munich).
2. It is raining now (what is happening at the present moment).

Sentence (1) does not relate raining to any specific time frame while sentence (2) relates raining to a time frame – namely, now. To be sure, (1) can be interpreted as iterative, but this is not the reason for the simple aspect. The continuous can be used iteratively as well.

The distinction between the two iterative forms is rather subtle. Compare the following:

1. I only cut my toe nails when I take a shower.
2. I only cut my toe nails when I am taking a shower.

In (3) the shower is the occasion for cutting my toe nails (got to take my socks off anyway, so why not cut my toe nails too), whereas in (4) taking a shower is a time frame or background for cutting my toe nails. Only (4) actually puts me in the shower while I am cutting my toe nails.

Note that (5) is actually ambiguous as to its time reference:

1. I am spending the weekend in Hamburg.
As an answer to the question *What are you doing next weekend?* the frame of reference is in the future. As a reply to *Where are you phoning from?* the frame of reference is now. We will discuss the difference between the simple and continuous future forms under the general discussion of the future below.

### 2.1.1 Restrictions on the continuous

The present continuous *cannot* be used with verbs that are *static* (do not express a change of state), *non-iterative* (do not indicate a repeated action) and *nonvoluntative* (not under the control of the subject).

Typically, this applies to verbs of perception (like *see, hear, feel*), thinking (like *think, understand, believe*) or existence (*be*). Hence, (1) is a worse insult than (2):

1. John is a bastard.
2. John is being a bastard.

In (1) “bastardliness” is John’s nature. It is unchangeable and not under his control. In (2), however, it is not an unchangeable quality of his character, but simply the way he is acting at the moment (i.e., it is voluntative when used in the continuous, he could stop being a bastard if he wanted to). Notice too, that only voluntative adjectives are possible in imperatives: *Be brave!* but not *Be tall!* Courage is presumably a matter of self-control, but height is definitely not.

Other static, nonvoluntative, non-iteratives that do not have present continuous forms are: *own, know, think, want, love, see, hear*. Note that some nonvoluntatives have voluntative counterparts: *see ~ look at, hear ~ listen to*. Distinguish between:

1. I *hear* the neighbors’ radio because it is playing too loud.
2. I’m *listening to* the neighbors’ radio because mine is broken and they lent me theirs.

With the verb *feel* (nonvoluntative), the simple form is static, while the continuous form is dynamic:

1. I feel better now (I have recovered).
2. I’m feeling better now (I am recovering).

There is also a voluntative form of *feel*, which can, of course, be used in the continuous form:
The doctor is feeling the patient’s arm to see whether it is broken.

The iterative/non-iterative distinction is more subtle and flatly contradicts the school book rule that repeated actions must be in the simple form:

(8) Problems of English Grammar meets every Monday.
(9) Problems of English Grammar is meeting every Monday.

are equally acceptable, but mean something quite different as we will see in the next section.

2.1.2 Continuous form and inherent aspect
As noted above, in addition to the grammatical aspect forms that (theoretically) any verb can take, verbs have an inherent (built-in) aspect by virtue of their meaning. For example, the continuous form can also be used with durative or iterative verbs like live, meet or teach, which describe states or activities that are normally repeated or stretched out over an extended period of time. Here the basic function of the continuous form - relating the verb to a time frame - combines with inherent aspect to produce limited time.

Hence, (1) expresses an unlimited arrangement while (2) expresses a limited or temporary one:

(1) Problems of English Grammar meets in Room G 230.
(2) Problems of English Grammar is meeting in Room G 230 (until G 231 is available).

Similarly, if someone asks me what I do for a living, there is quite a difference between (3) and (4):

(3) I teach English at the HM
(4) I am teaching English at the HM (this semester).

Sentence (3) indicates that I consider my position to be timeless (i.e., permanent), whereas (4) indicates that I see it as temporary and suggests that I am looking for another job. This interpretation of (4) is a pragmatic consequence of the choice of grammatical form. It would not be correct to say that the continuous limits time. The continuous aspect simply places the verb in a time frame. How that time frame is interpreted depends on the inherent aspect of the verb and the attendant circumstances.
Verbs like *fall, break, discover* are inherently punctual. Their action is concentrated at a point in time. Nevertheless, we can use them in the continuous form to express a process or repeated action. Thus,

(5) London Bridge is falling down

might mean that the bridge is in poor condition and slowly crumbling away (broad time frame) or actually collapsing at this moment - a process that takes several seconds at least (narrow time frame).

Where a process is not possible, repeated action is suggested:

(6) Little Johnny is always falling down and bruising his knee.
(7) Scientists are discovering new subatomic particles all the time.

But, the alert reader will object, repeated actions are also expressed by the simple form. There must be some difference! And there is, although it is subtle. The examples (6) and (7) indicate that the events reported are repeated and not the least unusual, implying that they are not all that significant. Little Johnny fell down and bruised his knee. So what, he is *always* falling down and bruising his knee. Similarly, I can say that the discovery of a new subatomic particle is not so significant after all because scientists are discovering new subatomic particles *all the time*. Pragmatically, the use of the continuous form with repeated events serves to show that the speaker considers these events to be far from unique and unimportant. Grammatically the continuous form is simply iterative here.

On the other hand, if have just run into you on the corner of First Avenue and Ninth Street for the third time this week and say:

(8) I’m always meeting you on this corner.

I am not belittling the event, but implying that there is something curious or remarkable about it. This is a different situation with a different pragmatic interpretation, but grammatically – it’s just iterative. Compare (9) with the aorist expressing a simple fact:

(9) I always meet you on this corner. (So, let’s meet here again next week.)

2.1.3 Timelessness of the present

There are a number of different kinds of *timelessness* expressed by the simple present:
Eternal truths:

*Gold is heavier than lead. Money is the root of all evil.*

Repeated or habitual actions (that are not delimited):

*We meet every Thursday.*

Narratives:

*A man walks into a bar with a kangaroo . . . .*

Directions and demonstrations:

*I put my hand in the hat and pull out a rabbit.*

Descriptions of events in progress:

*The Duke swings and hits a high fly ball to center field.*

What all these have in common is that the action of the verb is seen as a whole and not as something in progress within a given time frame.

Eternal truths are simply timeless. They were, are and presumably always will be true. In some languages (ancient Greek, for example) there is a separate tense form that can be used for this function, but the Germanic languages merge timelessness with the “present.”

Repeated actions can be unlimited (aorist or timeless) as in *We meet every Thursday*, but, as we have seen, they can just as well be delimited – placed in a time frame as in *We are meeting every Thursday until we find a solution to the problem* or *I am only hearing bad news from America these days.*

The narrative present is also common to English and German and goes back as far as there is narrative literature in the Germanic languages. In the Old Icelandic sagas of the tenth and eleventh centuries, we find the same narrative techniques as are presently employed in telling jokes and stories. The point here would seem to be that we are not interested in placing events in a particular time frame: *A man walks into a bar with a kangaroo . . . .* Only the fact of the matter is important. Contrast this with the FBI agent observing the bar with binoculars who reports to his partner: *There’s a man walking into the bar with a kangaroo!* Of course, we use the continuous within the narrative to set the time frame for events: *So, there was this guy sitting at a table in the corner just starring into his drink and the kangaroo hops over . . . .*

Descriptions and demonstrations as well as descriptions of events in progress fall in here. Descriptions of events in progress are particularly interesting. Here we can say that the general narrative is in the simple present. The continuous is used to emphasize an ongoing process and a stative perfect (be + past participle) to indicate the result of a completed action. For example, the radio sports reporter might narrate hitting a home run like this:
Whitey winds and fires. The Duke swings and hits a fly ball to deep center field [narrative present]. It’s going, going [continuous for ongoing process]. It’s gone! [resultative].

The salient point to remember is that the continuous form does not indicate that an action or state is going on now; it indicates that the speaker wishes to place the state or action in a time frame. Events in the real world can be viewed in many ways. The aspects indicate the speaker’s point of view not just some speaker-independent reality.

2.1.4 Historical holdovers
There are also historical uses of the present left over from the days when the present was simply the nonpast tense as in all the Germanic languages:

After temporal conjunctions in adverbial constructions (those that say when like when, after, before):

(1) I’ll tell him when I see him. (Compare: You never know when a tornado will strike, where the clause introduced by when is an object clause – you never know what?).

In the future real condition:

(2) I’ll tell him if I see him. (See under conditional below.)

The scheduled future:

(3) Next week I go to Bloomington for a talk. (See under future below.)

2.2 Simple past and past continuous
Just as the present continuous relates states and events to a time frame in the nonpast, the past continuous relates states and events to a time frame that is in the past. Contrast:

(1) What were you doing when you found the body?
(2) I was looking for my old tennis racket.
(3) What did you do when you found the body?
(4) I called the police.

The first question (1) asks for background information, for a time frame – what was going on when something else happened. The second question (3) asks for a sequence of events – what did you do after something else happened.
Often the same events in the real world can be expressed in four different ways depending on what is chosen as background and what as foreground:

(5) John was washing the dishes while Mary read the paper. (Mary in foreground.)
(6) John washed the dishes while Mary was reading the paper. (John in foreground.)
(7) John washed the dishes while Mary read the paper. (Both in foreground.)
(8) John was washing the dishes while Mary was reading the paper. (Both in background – parallel time frames, but one event not related to the other.)

Two past continuous tenses as in (8) indicate that two events were going on at the same time and were quite unrelated to one another (i.e., neither is seen as the background to the other). Consider:

(9) While we were vacationing in Majorca, the city was building a highway through our living room.

It is important to note that the past continuous does not indicate repeated activity as opposed to single events as is the case, for example, in French where the passé composé (actually present perfect which has completely replaced the simple past in the spoken language) is used for single events and the imparfait (imperfect) is used for repeated activity with no specified time frame:

(10) J’ai déjeuné à huit heures (I ate breakfast at eight o’clock).
(11) Je déjeunais à huit heures (I ate (used to eat/would eat) breakfast at eight o’clock).

To be sure, the past continuous can be used with repeated activity insofar as it expresses the background to repeated events:

(12) Whenever I saw her, she was wearing a blue sweater (iterative + durative).

There is a curious consequence to this. Consider:

(13) [While I was talking to him] he smoked two cigarettes (durative + aorist).
(14) [When I saw him] he was smoking two cigarettes (aorist + durative).

In (13) the background contains a durative verb form, was talking, this gives ‘him’, the subject of the main clause time to smoke two cigarettes, one after the other. The aorist, of course, is quite neutral here. It simply says, two cigarettes were smoked, don’t ask me for the details. In the first
clause of (14), we have the aorist form saw (inherently punctual) with no additional indication of duration or repetition, forcing the interpretation that ‘he’ was smoking two cigarettes at the same time!

(15) (At the moment) that I saw him, he was smoking two cigarettes.

Note that (13) does not exclude the possibility that he was smoking two cigarettes at once. This interpretation would, however, hardly occur to us on pragmatic grounds: this isn’t the usual way of smoking cigarettes. On the other hand, sentence (14) leaves us no other choice but this interpretation.

With the iterative delimited form (was smoking . . . after dinner every evening) as in (16), we can again assume normal smoking habits:

(16) When the patient consulted me, he was smoking two cigarettes after dinner every evening.

Here smoking two cigarettes (presumably one after the other) belongs to an event repeated every evening after dinner. But, how we interpret this might depend on whether the speaker is an internist or a psychiatrist!

The same restrictions on the continuous with verbs that are nonvoluntative, nondynamic and non-iterative that we saw with the present prevail. That is, we cannot say: I was hearing the music when . . . . or I was loving her greatly when . . . . But, iterative use is possible:

(17) I used to think I was hearing voices.

(18) He was hearing what he was hearing and seeing what he was seeing (Gertrude Stein).

Where no time frame is expressed, the indefinite iterative past, is formed with the helping verbs used to or would:

(19) General Sternwood used to drink a glass of brandy after dinner.

(20) He would smoke a Havana cigar on special occasions.
The construction with *used to* can also be durative in English:

(21) The Hudson River used to be clean enough to swim in.

### 2.3 Simple past and present perfect

English and German form these tenses almost identically (English only uses the auxiliary *have*, unlike German, where you must choose between *haben* and *sein*). In addition, most of the uses of the English present perfect are expressed by the present perfect in German.

The present perfect is historically a present tense indicating the present state as a result of things that happened in the past. It might properly be called the *present resultative*. It is used in both German and English to report on present state of experience.

(1) I have taught English before = ‘Ich habe schon Englischunterricht gegeben’.

We can interpret this in both languages as: I have experience as an English teacher at present because I taught English for a time in the past.

In some grammar books, the simple past is called the preterit (Ger. *Praeteritum*) from the Latin *praeter + itum* ‘vorübergegangen’. It describes actions or states that have gone by, belong to the past. There is always a gap between preterit and *now*.

(2) I taught English in Ulan Bator in the seventies. (I am no longer teaching English in Ulan Bator).

In German, we can also use the past here:

(3) Ich gab in den siebziger Jahren in Ulan Bator Englischunterricht.

The aspect here is the aorist – the event seen as a whole without respect to progression.

An important contrastive problem arises because the German simple past (as in (3) above) is dying out (in the High German dialects like Bavarian, it has completely disappeared). The present perfect, in addition to its traditional functions, has now taken over the functions once exclusive performed by the past. In English, on the other hand, present perfect and past aorist are kept completely separate. Thus, German can use the present perfect or the past where English *must* use the simple past:
The English equivalent *I have taught English in Ulan Bator in the seventies* in the sense of (2) above is completely unacceptable and may lead to brain damage (or at least serious confusion) among native speakers who try to interpret it.

The task for German speakers of English is, thus, to limit the use of the present perfect to its resultative functions and to use the past for the preterit functions of the verb.

In English, we often switch back and forth between simple past and present perfect depending on whether we are describing past states and events or their results in the present:

(5) Hans studied for a year at Indiana University (past event).
(6) Hans has studied in the United States (present result).

Notice that the present perfect does not necessarily indicate that the state is continuing in the present. The present perfect is quite neutral as to what is going on in the present. It is only interested in present state of experience as a result of things that went on in the past.

Hence, the statement:

(7) I have worked for three years outside the university

might be made by someone who left the university three years ago and is presently privately employed, or it might be a statement made by a university lecturer affirming that some time in his career, he has accumulated the three years of experience outside the ivory towers necessary to qualify for a professorship at a German university of applied sciences.

German, is quite parallel here:

(8) Ich habe drei Jahre außerhalb der Universität gearbeitet

means I have fulfilled the requirement. It says nothing about where I work now.

Problems, arise with seit. In German, seit is used to indicate both extent of time (seit drei Jahren) and time starting from a point in the past (seit August 2008).
In English, however, the two functions are separate: extent of time is expressed with \textit{for} and time elapsed from a point in the past is indicated with \textit{since}. So we have \textit{for three years}, but \textit{since August 2008}.

Extent of time with \textit{for} (German \textit{für} or accusative of time, e.g., (\textit{für) drei Jahre}, (\textit{für) einen Tag}) can take the present perfect in both English and German as in (7) and (8) above as long as present activity is not considered. (Remember, (7) and (8) make no statement about what the speaker is doing now.)

Note: With extent in time, \textit{für} is used in German for intended or projected duration:

(i) Ich fahre für drei Wochen nach Paris ‘I am traveling to Paris for three weeks’.
(ii) Ich verbrachte letzten Sommer drei Wochen in Paris ‘I spent three weeks in Paris last summer’.

In the preterit, German and English also function identically, indicating an extent of time in the past.

(10) I worked as a dish washer in Paris for three years (from 1976 to 1979).

Naturally, German can also use the present perfect for the preterit (a shooting offense in English!):


When a \textit{past time is mentioned or suggested} in English the preterit must be used.

\textit{Since} and \textit{seit} with a present tense verb (present perfect) indicate that the period of time in question began in the past and continues up to the present. Once again, they make no statement about ongoing activity:

(12) Kasparov has trained since April 1996 and is now ready to confront Deep Blue.
(13) Kasparov hat seit April 1996 trainiert und ist jetzt bereit gegen Deep Blue anzutreten.

Both (12) and (13) make statements about Kasparov’s present state of readiness.

On the other hand, if we wish to indicate that training is continuing, English and German part ways. Here German uses the present while English has no way of expressing this at all! Ongoing activity is expressed by the present continuous – but this form cannot include reference to the past!
(14) Seit April 1996 trainiert Kasparov für den Kampf gegen Deep Blue.
(15) * Kasparov trains/ is training for the confrontation with Deep Blue since April 1996. (The star means it’s wrong!)

We will discuss this problem further under the present perfect continuous below.

The all-important difference between present and past is nicely illustrated by the following examples:

(16) Spoken at 11 a.m.: Have you seen John this morning?
(17) Spoken at 1 p.m.: Did you see John this morning?

In (16), the period of time referred to, this morning, is not past. We are talking about the present and the present perfect must be used. In (17), the morning belongs to the past, hence past tense is required.

A note of caution is in order here. If the speaker knows that I had an appointment with John at 9 a.m., he might well ask at 11 a.m.:

(18) Did you see John this morning (at 9 a.m. as planned).

Whereas (16) means have you “experienced” John at anytime up till now this morning, (18) means did you see John two hours ago and we are talking about the past. The phrase this morning does not tell you which form to use.

The “keywords” offered to pupils in the schools as an Eselsbrücken ‘learning aids’ generally break down because the English tense and aspect forms are not associated with words, but with tense and aspect. Only rarely are words a reliable indicator of these criteria.

Consider the word when. Referring to a point or extent of time in the past, when naturally enough takes the preterit itself and requires a preterit in the main clause:

(19) I studied in Heidelberg when Heidelberg was still old and I was still young.

On the other hand, if when in a question refers to repeated points or extents of time in the past, the present perfect is used because a summary of present experience is called for:
When (on which past occasions) have you seen the defendant (‘der Angeklagte’) acting strangely?

In the answer, specific repeated occasions in the past are treated as events and reported with the preterit:

(21) When(ever) his wife asked him to take the garbage out.

Thus, there can be no hard and fast rule about which tense form to use with the word *when*.

We generally use a present tense, the present perfect, to talk about the current accomplishments of people who are still alive and the past tense for people who are dead:

(22) Philip Roth has written many novels.
(23) Thomas Mann wrote many novels.

Here again a note of caution is in order. Usage is not dependent on the health of the subject, but once again on the contrast between present state and past state or event. If Philip Roth were to decide to give up writing novels, the news might report this as:

(24) Philip Roth wrote many novels in the decades following WWII, but now he has decided to devote himself exclusively to cultivating his garden.

In other words, novel-writing is no longer a current state, but belongs to the past. By the same token, we can say:

(25) Dickens has remained the most popular Victorian novelist.

What is referred to here is Dickens undying fame, which continues to exist even if Dickens himself does not. So we are talking about Dicken’s present state - most popular Victorian novelist.

Sometimes the choice of tenses depends on factors that are quite subtle. Consider the following brilliant, but unfortunately not original, illustration:

Mary comes home from a dinner date and says to her mother, who has been waiting up for her:

(26) Oh, Mom, Bill asked me to marry him.
(27) Oh, Mom, Bill has asked me to marry him.
In which case is it more likely that Mary’s answer was yes? In (26), Bill’s offer is treated as history, while in (27) it reports on current experience (= I am engaged). While either statement would be appropriate in the given situation, (27) is more likely if the answer was yes.

Another good example of “it all depends on how you look at it” is the variance between past and present perfect with the adverb just. If a recent event is felt to be part of the present state of affairs, it will be reported in the present perfect:

(28) The movie has just begun (i.e., you haven’t missed much).

The contrast between past and present perfect with just is clear in:

(29) He just left (i.e., sorry, he’s gone for the day) vs.
(30) He’s just left (i.e., maybe I can still catch him).

Note that the distinction is not, strictly speaking, one of time, but of present relevance, cf.:

(31) Did you see that man who just left the room (past action) a few seconds ago? He has just won the Nobel Prize for Linguistics (present state)!

In the first sentence, the man is gone, no longer part of the present state. How long ago he left is quite irrelevant, hence: just left. On the other hand, in the second sentence, it is relevant that he is the present Nobel Laureate for Linguistics, hence: has just won, even though the event, winning the prize, is further back in time than the event leaving the room. This point is worth emphasizing because there are languages that distinguish between a recent and more distant past. English is not among them.

2.4 Present perfect and present perfect continuous

The present perfect continuous is used for states or actions which started in the past and have continued up till now. It is completely agnostic (unknowing) about the present state of affairs. Consider the following exchange:

A: Hello, Cecil, I haven’t seen you in a long time.
B: No wonder, I’ve been teaching English in Ulan Bator for the past three years.

B’s reply explains his absence, where he has been and what he as been doing up to now. It does not imply that B is still teaching in Ulan Bator nor that he has returned home for good.
In some cases, whether or not the state or action is continuing, is clear from the situation. Suppose I am washing the dishes when the door bell rings. I open the door. And my friend stretches out his hand. I say: *Sorry, my hand is wet. I have been washing the dishes.*

Clearly, I am not still washing the dishes. I have been washing the dishes up till now. On the other hand, the state or event may still be going on as when I turn to my hiking companion and say: *We have been walking for hours. When are we finally going to get there?*

While the present perfect continuous concentrates on ongoing actions, the present perfect concentrates on the results of those actions. Contrast:

(1) You have smoked two cigarettes in the last half hour (result).
(2) You have been smoking two cigarettes for the last half hour (ongoing action).

Sentence (1) means you have finished two cigarettes, while (2) can only mean you have been smoking two different cigarettes simultaneously! For an explanation, see the next section: “Repeated action.”

Both the present perfect and the present perfect continuous can be used for states. The present perfect continuous relates the state to a point in time just before *now*, whereas the present perfect reports on the result – present state of experience. Consider:

(3) I have been living abroad for three years (up till now).
(4) I have lived abroad for three years (I have three years of foreign living experience).

The comparison to German here is a bit tricky since German (as we have noted above) distinguishes between present state of experience (present perfect) and ongoing states that began in the past (present):

(5) Ich habe drei Jahre im Ausland gewohnt (I have three years of foreign living experience, but perhaps no longer live abroad).
(6) Ich wohne seit drei Jahren im Ausland (I have lived abroad for three years and still do).

Note that (5) *does not* indicate that I am no longer living abroad. Nevertheless, in actual usage it often indicates this by way of conversational implicature. (See the section on conversational implicature under types of rules.) The present with *seit* is more informative than the present perfect (which covers both past and present activity). If I choose the present perfect (which leaves
my present whereabouts open) the implicature is that I cannot truthfully use the more informative present and hence am no long living abroad. This is not a matter of grammar, but of implicature. English simply has no grammatical form that indicates that a state or action began at a specific time in the past and is still going on in the present. Neither (3) nor (4) requires an ongoing state, but both allow it. To indicate an ongoing state, English must use the present:

(7) I live/am living abroad.

But, the present does not admit any reference to the past! Hence, to unambiguously express *Ich wohne seit drei Jahren im Ausland*, English needs two sentences: *I live/am living abroad; I have lived abroad for the last three years*, whereby the distinction between permanent (aorist) and temporary (delimited) residence must be made!

Repetitive events (starting in the past and continuing up till now) are reported in the present perfect continuous, while the results of those events are reported in the present perfect:

(8) I have been calling him all day (repeated action).
(9) I have called him three times today (result of repeated action).

German uses the simple present for the present perfect continuous and, as expected, the present perfect for the result:

(10) Ich rufe ihn den ganzen Tag an.
(11) Ich habe ihn schon dreimal heute angerufen.

Hence all four of the English present tense forms (simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous) can be expressed by the German present!

On the background of context, all languages express the same things. The choice of which features are “grammaticalized” (expressed by special grammatical forms) is purely accidental.

Note that nonvoluntative verbs like *hear* and *want* can be used iteratively in the present perfect continuous:

(12) I have been hearing persistent rumors about you and Mrs. Pitt.
(13) I have been wanting to meet her since I read her first novel.
These verbs report recurring states or events within the time frame covered by the present perfect continuous. Contrast this with *know*, which cannot be recurring:

(15) *I have been knowing her for a long time.

The exact nature of repeated action in the continuous tenses will be clarified in the next section.

2.5 Repeated action

As we have seen, repeated action is not confined to the simple tenses as school grammar would have us believe. The continuous tenses can report repeated action when they form a background as in:

(1) I only cut my toenails when I am/was taking a shower.

The crucial distinction between the simple and perfect tenses on the one hand and the continuous tenses on the other hand is that continuous tenses can only report an ongoing activity or state. They cannot report the result of an activity or the number of repetitions. Compare:

(2) I have called him six times today, but he doesn’t answer the phone (result).
(3) I called him six times yesterday, but he didn’t answer the phone (repetition).
(4) *I have been calling him six times today, but he doesn’t answer the phone.

In the continuous tenses, an extension to the verb – whether in the form of an object or an adverb – can only be interpreted as part of the verbal action, not as an indication of result or repetition.

This explains the strange, but unavoidable, interpretation of (5):

(5) You have been smoking two cigarettes for the last ten minutes (durative).
(6) You have been smoking two cigarettes after dinner for the last ten years (iterative).

In (5 - 6), the activity is **smoking two cigarettes**. In (5), *for the last ten minutes* simply indicates duration. There is nothing to indicate repeated activity, hence we are forced to conclude that you have been smoking two cigarettes at the same time!

On the other hand, in (6) the time expression *after dinner* is interpreted iteratively, indicating that *smoking two cigarettes* is a repeated activity (most cigarette smokers eat dinner every day). It leaves open the question of whether the two cigarettes were smoked simultaneously or one after
the other. The normal interpretation follows from our pragmatic understanding of the activity. Chain smokers smoke one after another. Not, several at one time.

(Note that the perfect continuous tenses always indicate duration, for the last half hour, for the last ten years, etc., but only sometimes involve iteration, after dinner, every morning, etc.)

The same considerations apply to adverbials. Normally, expressions like twice, three times, indicate a result or a count of repetitions of the activity. Hence, sentences like (4) are ungrammatical. If, however, the repetition is part of the verbal action, the sentence is fully acceptable. Consider the following situation (cf. The X-Files):

Assistant Director Skinner has problems getting up in the morning so he asks Agent Scully to give him a wake-up call when an important meeting is planned. Unfortunately, he tends to fall asleep again after answering the phone. Scully decides to call him twice to make sure that he is awake.

Scully applies for two weeks vacation and the task of waking Skinner falls to her partner Mulder. Scully explains the problem – one phone call is not enough – and Mulder asks her what to do. Scully replies:

(7) Well, I have been calling him twice and that seems to solve the problem.

Here, the activity is calling twice, not calling once two times.

The same phenomenon is encountered in the past continuous:

(8) That boy was blowing up balloons the whole time you were talking to him.

That is, one balloon after another.

(9) That boy was blowing up two balloons the whole time you were talking to him.

That is, he was dividing his attention between two different balloons or blowing up two at the same time.

Once again, the activity described in (8) is blowing up balloons, while the activity in (9) is blowing up two balloons. The quantifier two describes the action. This is certainly odd here, but with a different context two seems quite natural:
When I last spoke to him he was working on two problems, but hadn’t solved either of them.

It is normal to work on two problems at the same time.

2.5.1 Past perfect
The past perfect is used in English where it is used in German. It indicates a resultative state at a given time in the past. Thus, it is parallel to the present perfect, which has present time reference:

(1) He had already left town when I arrived.
(2) They had already picked the winners when I arrived.
(3) He had already been dead for a year when they discovered the letter.

The past perfect is also used with punctual verbs to indicate that one action occurred before another (is anterior to another) as in (1) above. In addition, the past perfect is sometimes used in indirect discourse in English (see below).

The past perfect in German is being replaced by a new form (the double perfect). *He had already left town when I arrived* has two equivalents:

(4) Er hatte die Stadt schon verlassen, als ich ankam (Duden).
(5) Er hat/hatte die Stadt schon verlassen gehabt, als ich ankam (Colloquial).

There is nothing like (5) in English.

2.5.2 Past perfect continuous
The past perfect continuous is just like the present perfect continuous only that the point of reference is in the past:

(1) He had been smoking for years when they finally put a warning on the package.
(2) He had been living in Europe for ten years, when the war broke out.

2.5.3 Future perfect and future perfect continuous
The same perfect and perfect continuous system we have seen in the present and past can be projected into the future:

(1) Next spring, he will have taught English at the HM for five years (result).
(2) Next spring, he will have been teaching English at the HM for five years.
The only difference here is the obvious one – that the point of reference is placed in the future rather than in the present or the past. The future perfect system is interesting because it is the only part of the future system that has time and aspect reference.

3 The future system - pragmatics

There is no future tense in English (or German) that is strictly used to talk about future events. (Compare French with two futures – a near future Je vais téléphoner à ma tante maintenant ‘I’m going to call my aunt now’ and a distant future Je téléphonerai à ma tante quand je serai aux États Unis ‘I’m going to call my aunt when I am in the United States’.)

English does, however, have at least ten “grammaticalized” ways of referring to future events which express the speaker’s attitude toward what he is saying rather than mere futurity.

Grammaticalization is a process that turns content words into grammatical markers. To understand what this means, compare the following:

(1) I want to be rich and famous.
(2) I am going to be rich and famous.

Both (1) and (2) refer to future events, but the meaning of (1) is derived from the meaning of the verbs: want + be, whereas the meaning of (2) does not involve a composite go + be – there is no motion involved. That is, (1) is a sensible answer to the question What do you want? But (2) is hardly a sensible answer to the question Where are you going?! The be + going + Vb is a grammatical form with a meaning that cannot be directly derived from a sum of its parts. Similarly in:

(3) I will be rich and famous.

we cannot speak of a composite meaning will + be because will (originally ‘want’ like German wollen) no longer has a separate meaning. It has become completely grammaticaiized.

3.1 The future indefinite - will vs. the future definite going to + inf.

The future indefinite with will + inf. is used when the speaker is uncertain about future events or wishes to appear so out of politeness. The future definite is used when the speaker is certain or wishes to appear so for various reasons. Contrast the following:

I am offered a reservation on Malaysian Airlines Flight 666 to Singapore and ask my fortune teller if I should take that flight. She answers: That plane will never arrive (a prediction).
I look out the window and see a plane diving into the church across the street. I shout: *Look out, that plane is going to crash!* (a certainty).

The indefinite is typically used for predictions: *Scientists say that the climate will be 2° warmer by the year 2020.* (They really aren’t sure.) *I am sure she will be rich and famous some day.* (This is based on no more than wishful thinking.) *I am confident that you will do just fine on the final exam.* (Well, not really, but I don’t want to make any more nervous than you already are.)

Contrast the following:

(1) I just know it will rain on my birthday. (I’m a pessimist.)
(2) I know now that it is going to rain on my birthday. (I just heard the weather report.)

*Will* is used for politeness in questions:

(3) Will you come to my birthday party?

Compare the future definite:

(4) a. Are you going to come to my birthday party?
   b. Are you going to take the garbage out? This is the third time I’ve asked you.

The future indefinite in (3) does not demand a commitment the way the future definite in (4) does. Using *going to* in an invitation as in (4 a) would be extremely impolite since it demands a definite commitment. On the other hand, it would be quite appropriate in (4 b), where I am demanding a definite answer.

Similarly, the future definite in a prediction indicates intention or determination:

(5) I know she is going to become rich and famous (even if she has to climb over a few dead bodies).

When making an offer to do something, the indefinite form is used. Consider the following situation: I am in my office with my office mate. The phone rings. I say:

(6) I’ll get it! (polite offer) *not*
(7) I’m going to get it! (sign of paranoia – Don’t you touch that telephone, it’s for me!)
On the other hand, the definite future is used to explain one’s intentions (you should know what you are doing). The dentist says:

(8) Don’t worry, I’m just going to pull that rotten tooth (explanation of intentions). You’ll feel much better then (prediction).

In commands both going to and will are impolite although will is more so. Perhaps this is the case because going to is an explanation of my intentions, whereas will is a prediction about what you will do, whether you want to or not:

(9) Children, you are going to stay here until I return.
(10) Children, you will stay here until I return.

3.2 Will and shall
Many people (both abroad and in the English-speaking countries) learned in school that shall is for the first person forms as in I/we shall go, while will is used in all other cases: you/he/she/it/they will go. This is an example of a “school book rule.” That is, this rule, which first appears in a seventeenth-century grammar book, does not – and never did – constitute a real rule of English grammar! It was simply a strange idea of the author of the grammar and some three-hundred years of attempts by English teachers to make students adhere to it have not been successful.

The forms will and shall are certainly not interchangeable in questions, where will asks for a prediction (e.g., Will it rain tomorrow?) and shall makes an offer or asks for a decision on the part of the hearer: Shall I see you to the door (or not)?

Consider the situation in which you are visiting a friend. Your friend is removing a cake from the oven when the phone rings. You say:

(1) Shall I get it? not
(2) Will I get it?

The use of shall here is just like German sollen:

(3) Soll ich dran gehen?

When accented shall in statements is a future imperative, combining must (moral obligation) with will (prediction). It indicates determination or strong personal commitment as in We shall
overcome! This use goes back to Old English. Thus, when Beowulf declares his intention to fight the monster Grendel bare handed, he says:

(4) ic mid grape sceal fon wið feonde ‘I with grip shall wrestle with the fiend’ (438-439).

A few lines later, he makes a prediction with will:

(5) Wen ic þæt he will Geotena leode etan unforht, swa he oft dyde ‘I imagine that [if he wins] he will eat the Goths’ people without fear as he often did’ (442-444).

The imperative carries over into the second and third persons:

(6) Thou shalt not kill. (You must not and you will not.)
(7) They shall not pass. (They must not and they will not.)

German has Du sollst nicht töten for (6), but Sie werden nicht passieren for (7).

3.3 The decided future - be + Vb-ing
The decided future reports a decision by the speaker.

(1) I’m spending the weekend in Hamburg

means that I have decided to do so. In many cases, this form is difficult to distinguish from the future definite with going to. But consider:

(2) I’m having a party next Saturday.
(3) ?I’m having a baby next Saturday.

Sentence (3) sounds peculiar because one cannot normally decide to have a baby on a particular day.

Some grammar books say that this future form is used to express the near future. This is not true. Prof. Aardvark returning from his sabbatical leave (‘Freisemester’) in Iceland could say:

(4) It was wonderful! I’m spending my next sabbatical in Iceland too even though his next leave will not be for seven years!
In practice, most decisions are, of course, made for the near future. You would not normally arrange to spend the weekend in Hamburg seven years in advance. But, this has nothing to do with the basic meaning of the form.

3.4 The speculative future - will + be + -ing
This form combines the indefinite future with the continuous aspect. This adds up to a prediction about something that will be going on in some future time frame:

(1) When we reach Hamburg, it will probably be raining.
(2) I’ll be seeing him on Thursday (less certain than *I am seeing him*).

It is typically used in polite requests and offers, because it places the circumstances in the background (as with the past continuous and the present continuous):

(3) I’ll be going by the library today. Would you like me to take back some books for you?
(4) Will you be going by the library today? If so, you could take back these books for me.

*Will you be going by the library* is far more casual (background) than *Are you going to the library* (decision) or *Are you going to go to the library* (intention). Note that *Will you go to the library today?* makes no sense at all in this situation since it is asking for a prediction about something you should know for sure – not like *Do you think, you will win the lottery this week?*

3.5 The definite scheduled future - simple present
This form seems to be a restricted survival of the general Germanic use of the “present” tense for the future as in modern German. In English it is only used for scheduled events:

(1) The concert takes place next week.
(2) Friday, I fly to New York. Monday, I have an appointment in Boston. Tuesday, I take the train to Toronto and Wednesday, I fly back to Munich.

In addition, the simple present (as noted above) is used for the future in temporal and conditional clauses:

(3) I will tell him if/when I see him.
3.6 **The putative scheduled future - be + to + Vb**
This form is also used for scheduled events, but it indicates that the speaker is not absolutely sure that the event will take place as planned:

(1) He hangs on Thursday. (Hurrah! No way out this time.)
(2) He is to hang on Thursday. (But maybe he’ll manage to get another stay of execution.)

3.7 **The hypothetical future – would + inf.**
The hypothetical future states that an event will **not** take place in the future because of some problem that has arisen:

(1) I would go to the library tomorrow, but it is closed for a staff meeting.

Note that the verb form I would go is usually called the present conditional (**Konditional I**) because it frequently occurs in future unreal conditions (see below):

(2) If I had a million dollars, I would buy a castle on the Rhein.

Like so many other traditional grammatical terms, this one too is misleading since as (1) illustrates, the hypothetical future can be used without a condition.

The same is true for the German **Konditional I** with würde + infinitive:

(3) Ich würde morgen zur Bibliothek gehen, aber sie ist wegen einer Mitarbeiter-versammlung geschlossen.
(4) Wenn ich eine Million Dollar hätte, würde ich ein Schloss am Rhein kaufen.

3.8 **The future perfect**
The future perfect, formed with will have + past perfect participle indicates a result at some point in the future. Thus, it is parallel to both the present and past perfect:

(1) Next year, John and Mary will have been married for 52 years.
(2) When he takes the test again, John will have tried to pass seven times.

There is also a future perfect continuous indicating a state or activity continuing up to a point in the future:

(3) Next year John will have been teaching basket weaving for 25 years.
German has a future perfect with werden + past participle + haben/sein for both:

(4) Nächstes Jahr werden John und Mary schon 52 Jahre verheiratet sein.
(5) Das nächste Mal wird John schon sieben Mal versucht haben, das Examen zu bestehen.

These forms are rarely used in the spoken language. The present is generally substituted, e.g., for (4), Nächstes Jahr sind John und Mary schon 52 Jahre verheiratet.

3.9 English and German future
It should be clear that two or more of the forms of the future considered here may be appropriate in a given situation. Nevertheless, they express different speaker attitudes towards future states and events. German, in contrast, has only two future forms (aside from the future perfect) – an indefinite future in werden + inf. (roughly equivalent to the English will–future) and a general future expressed by the present (but see below under the discussion of go with verbs of motion).

3.10 Summary of English future forms
The following table summarizes the English future forms discussed above:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>indefinite</td>
<td>will + verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The dollar will continue to fall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>definite</td>
<td>going to + verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look out! That plane is going to crash.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decided</td>
<td>pres. cont.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I’m having dinner with Aunt Jane next Wednesday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>shall + verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We shall overcome!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speculative</td>
<td>will be + verb + -ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It will (probably) be raining when we arrive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scheduled definite</td>
<td>pres. simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He hangs on Friday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scheduled putative</td>
<td>be to + verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He is to hang on Friday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hypothetical</td>
<td>would + verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would go to the library tomorrow, but it is closed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect (resultative)</td>
<td>will have + past. part.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Next year, I will have worked here for fifteen years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfect continuous (anterior)</td>
<td>will have been + past. part.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 Indirect Discourse

4.1 What is Indirect Discourse?
Indirect discourse (also called “Reported Speech”) is, as the technical terms indicate, used to indirectly report what others have said. There is, after all, a big difference between things I have witnessed myself and can report first hand and things I have only heard about from others. In American courts of law, for instance, “hearsay” evidence (what witnesses have heard from others) is not admissible. Witnesses are only allowed to testify to what they know first hand, from their own experience. The same principle appears in German law, where newspapers cannot be sued for libel (Beleidigung) for statements like Er habe den Sheriff erschossen ‘He shot the sheriff’ in indirect discourse, but can be sued for Er hat den Sheriff erschossen. The difference seems to be one of indicating “responsibility” for what is said. If I say Er hat den Sheriff erschossen then I am taking responsibility for the accusation, am ready to testify to it in court, see the scoundrel hanged, etc. On the other hand, if I say Man sagt, er habe den Sheriff erschossen, then I am merely reporting unconfirmed rumors (Gerüchte) or idle talk (Gerede) for which I can take no responsibility.

4.2 Indirect Discourse in German
In German, indirect discourse is indicated by the use of the subjunctive. Either the present subjunctive (Konjunktiv I) or the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) depending on which is most different from the indicative: Er sagte, dass er niemals in diesem Laden Wein kaufe /kaufte ‘He said that he never bought wine in this shop’. In formal style, kaufe is the form of choice since er kaufe is clearly subjunctive, whereas er kaufte could be past indicative. Naturally, in normal conversation, where we are not concerned about possible law suits, kaufte is quite normal. This principle – using the indicative where we are willing to accept responsibility and the subjunctive where we wish to distance ourselves from the statement goes back as far as we have records of the Germanic languages.

4.3 Indirect Discourse in English
Although indirect discourse was historically expressed by the subjunctive in English, the subjunctive has been replaced by the past indicative in the modern language. Subject to a number of complications we will discuss below, we can offer a simple rule for indirect discourse in modern English:

After a past tense verb, a present tense in direct discourse becomes a past tense in indirect discourse if the speaker wishes to distance him or herself from the statement.
For example:

(1) “I will do it”  becomes  He said he would do it.
(2) “I can do it”  becomes  He said he could do it.
(3) “I never drink wine”  becomes  He said he never drank wine.

If the speaker does not wish to distance him-/herself, the tense remains the same in indirect discourse:

(4) “I will do it”  becomes  He said he will do it.
(5) “I can do it”  becomes  He said he can do it.
(6) “I never drink wine”  becomes  He said he never drinks wine.

There is one instance in which the present-past shift is obligatory, i.e., when reporting the words of someone who is dead where the present would indicate that the person is still alive (the statements of dead people belong to the past):

(7) Socrates: “I am blameless.”
(8) Socrates said that he was/is blameless.
(9) Shakespeare: “I am working on a new play called Macbeth.”
(10) Shakespeare said he was/is working on a new play called Macbeth.

4.4 Future complications
When referring to future events, the same possibilities remain open as long as the future event has not yet occurred.

(1) I spoke to him yesterday and he said he will/would take his vacation next week.

The event reported (his vacation) still lies in the future and so I can choose present or past according to whether I wish to take responsibility for his statement or not.

If, however, the event reported is in the past, only the past tense is possible:

(2) I spoke to him last month and he said he would/will take his vacation two weeks ago.

4.5 Past complications
Particularly in British English and in formal style, past tenses can become past perfect after a past tense verb:
(1) “I did it” becomes He said he had done it.
(2) “I never drank wine” becomes He said he had never drunk wine.
(3) “I have never drunk” becomes He said he had never drunk wine.

Notice that the difference between the past I never drank wine, which indicates that the speaker did not drink at some time in the past, and I had never drunk wine, which indicates that the speaker had never drunk wine up till the time of the statement, is neutralized. In American English, this neutralization is generally unacceptable and the main rule (present becomes past after a past tense verb) should be adhered to. Contrast:

(1) He said that he never smoked cigarettes when he was at school.
(2) ?? He said that he had never smoked cigarettes when he was at school.

If (2) is interpretable at all in American, then it would mean that he never smoked cigarettes before he started school, not that he never smoked cigarettes during the time that he was at school.

A particular difficulty is provided by the verb get. Consider:

(3) I’ve got (have in my possession) a letter from my pastor.
(4) I got (received) a letter from my pastor.

Applying the present to past and past to past perfect shifts here produces the neutralized form:

(5) He said he had got a letter from his pastor

which simply does not calculate in American English. To indicate possession, got must be left out:

(6) He said he had a letter from his pastor.

To indicate receipt or change of state, the past participle gotten must be used:

(7) He said he had gotten a letter from his pastor.
(8) He said he had gotten drunk the night before.
4.6 Imperatives
Imperatives (commands) can also be reported in indirect discourse. The form the imperative takes is dependent on the verb that introduces it. After say the construction is parallel to the German construction after sagen:

(1) Blow your nose!
    Putz Dir die Nase!

(2) He said, I should blow my nose.
    Er sagte, ich sollte/soll(e) die Nase putzen.

After tell, English uses an infinitive construction:

(3) He told me to blow my nose.

In general, verbs that request (or forbid) action take the same infinitive construction as is the case in German (e.g., ask, request, order, invite, forbid, beseech, beg, implore, entreat). The negative simply adds not:

(4) He asked me not to shoot the prisoners.

Compare:

(5) He asked me what time it was

where information is requested.

4.7 Epithets (name calling)
An emotional statement directed towards someone is often introduced by an epithet, a name that characterizes the speaker’s attitude toward the person addressed. For example, darling, idiot, you fool, you dirty bastard.

In indirect discourse, these are generally introduced by the verb call:

(1) “You idiot, you let the prisoners escape!”
    He called me an idiot and said that I let the prisoners escape.
4.8 Yes-no questions
Indirect yes-no questions are introduced by if or whether. If is generally less formal:

(1) He asked if/whether we were going to the big game.

Whether is required if the listener is being asked to make a choice:

(2) He asked whether you wanted beer or wine with your dinner (which one).
(3) He asked if you wanted beer or wine with your dinner (either one).

If we add or not, it can immediately follow whether, but not if:

(4) She asked {whether or not/*if or not} we ate meat.
(5) She asked {whether/if} we ate meat or not.

Only whether can follow a preposition or an -ing-participial used as a preposition:

(6) I inquired as to {whether/*if} the train would be on time.
(7) Questions regarding {whether/*if} the trains run on time . . . .

4.9 Deictic problems
Deictic is the grammatical word that refers to pointing. Naturally, when we use indirect discourse, points of reference change. Time expressions without the article: today, tomorrow, yesterday, next week, last summer, etc., indicate time from the standpoint of the reporter. If the reporter says on July 17: “Elrod said he would butcher the hogs tomorrow.” Then the day in question is July 18. If Elrod’s “tomorrow” and the reporter’s “tomorrow” are different days, an expression of relative time (with the article) must be used (e.g., the next day, the following day).

Thus, “I will do it tomorrow” becomes “He said he would do it the following day” unless the statement was made earlier today and his “tomorrow” is still the tomorrow of the report.

The same holds true for adverbs of location. If I say, “Cicero said he would meet us here at 8 p.m.” then “here” indicates the place where I am presently located at the time of the report. If some other place is meant, then it must be explicitly indicated: “Cicero said he would meet us at the Forum at 8 p.m.” The adverb there can only be used if the speaker and hearer know what it refers to. Hence, I could continue: “He (Cicero) said he always likes to get there (to the Forum) early.” Note the following changes:
tomorrow  ⇒  the following (next) day, the day after
yesterday  ⇒  the previous day, the day before
next (week, month)  ⇒  the next (week, month), the following (week, month)
here/there  ⇒  depends on location of the report.

The pronoun *we* in direct discourse can be rendered by *we, they* in indirect discourse depending on whether the listener is included or not. Fortunately, the same rule applies for both German and English:

Listener included:  He said that *we* were invited to the party.
Listener not included:  He said that *they* were invited to the party (and I had to baby sit the children).

Many languages have two different forms (inclusive and exclusive *we*) for direct discourse as well, but English and German only make the distinction in indirect discourse.

### 4.10 The sequence of tenses

Up till now, we have confined our attention to reported speech, i.e., to statements following verbs of speaking. Essentially the same principle is involved, however, with other verbs that take a *that-* clause, such as verbs of thinking. In colloquial German, verbs of thinking are generally followed by the present tense although both the subjunctive and the conditional are possible:

(1) Ich wusste, dass du kommst/käme/kommen würdest.

In English, only the present-becomes-past rule applies:

(2) I knew that you *would* come. (From “will come.”)

Similarly:

(3) I feared that Nixon would be reelected.
(4) I figured that Quale was going to write a book.
(5) I thought that Obama might disappoint us.

After the past tense verb, the present is *never* possible in English!
The conditional

The conditional in English and German has two parameters: time (future, present, past) and mode (real or unreal). Thus, there are six different basic forms with mixed conditions (different times in the clauses) in addition. The construction English and German is parallel, but German has a number of additional constructions that are not permissible in English. Here the contrastive problem is choosing the German form that works in English as well.

5.1 Present real conditions

Like other uses of the present tense, these conditions are not present, but rather, timeless. They express fulfillable, habitual conditions:

1. If I have enough money, I drink real champagne.

Here, if = whenever. Both clauses are in the present tense. Note that the “present” conditional is really timeless. My preference for real champagne started some time in the past continues into the present and will probably continue on into the future.

Here, German allows leaving out the conjunction wenn and inverting:


This is not possible in English: *Have I enough money . . . . In English, inversion is only possible with unreal conditions (see below).

5.2 Future real conditions

These refer to potentially fulfillable conditions in the future. In English, the condition is always in the present tense and the result in the future, usually the will–future.

1. If I have enough money, I’ll buy real champagne for my birthday party.

Notice that German can use the werden–future in the result clause although the present is more common. English must use the future in the result clause. This is a common source of contrastive trouble. The use of the present in the conditional and temporal clauses in English is a historical relict from an earlier state of the language when there was no separate future form.
5.3 Past real conditions
Like the present real conditions, these report on habitual conditions. Only the conditions are no longer current. In (1), I am reporting on an earlier stage in my life. Again, \( \text{if} = \text{whenever} \). English uses two simple past tenses. German can, as usual, substitute the present perfect for the simple past – a deadly sin in English – but not one directly related to the conditional.

(1) When I rang the doorbell, she always ignored it.
(2) Wenn ich geklingelt habe, hat sie es immer ignoriert.

5.4 Present unreal conditions
Present unreal conditions are hypothetical, unfulfillable conditions in the present or future.

(1) If I had enough money, I would drink real champagne (all the time).

The implication in (1) is that I don’t have enough money and I have to make do with prosecco as a consequence.

English has the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) in the if-clause and the so-called conditional (hypothetical future) in the result clause. German generally uses the same tenses:

(2) Wenn ich genug Geld hätte, würde ich echten Champagner trinken.

German can also use the past subjunctive in the result clause. This is impossible in English.

(3) Wenn ich so klug wäre wie du, wäre ich auch reich.
(4) If I were as smart as you, I would be (*I were) rich too.

With unreal conditions, literary English (like German) also allows omitting the if and inverting subject and verb:

(5) Were I as smart as you, I would be rich.

5.5 Future unreal conditions
Hypothetical future conditions can be expressed in a number of ways:
5.5.1 Present/future unreal
This is the same form as the present unreal above used with future meaning:

(1) If I had the money, I would serve real champagne at my birthday party next month.

Compare:

(2) If I had the money, I would buy a new Mercedes (now).

5.5.2 Accidental future unreal
Here the condition is seen as something that might occur purely by accident:

(1) Pick me up a bottle of that Nicaraguan rum if you should (happen to) see one.

German has the same construction:

(2) Besorge mir eine Flasche von diesem Rum aus Nikaragua, falls du eine sehen solltest.

5.5.3 Unlikely future unreal
Here the condition is seen as very unlikely:

(1) If you were to do that again, I would be obliged to twist your nose.

German uses the construction with *sollte*.

In English (as in German) the *unreal* condition permits inversion of subject and verb instead of *if* in the condition:

(2) Were you to do that again, I would be obliged to twist your nose.

5.6 Past unreal conditions
As the American poet (John Greenleaf Whittier) said: “Of all sad words of tongue and pen/ the saddest are these: ‘It might have been’. ” And these sad words are usually expressed as past unreal conditions:

(1) If I had taken your advice, I wouldn’t have married him/her.
Here the usual German and English constructions have the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) in the condition, but they have quite different constructions in the result clause:

(2) Wenn ich deinem Rat gefolgt wäre, hätte ich sie/ihn nicht geheiratet.

German has the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) of the perfect in both clauses. English has the equivalent in the *if*-clause, but uses the past conditional in the result. In German this is marginally acceptable:

(3) Wenn ich deinem Rat gefolgt wäre, würde ich sie/ihn nicht geheiratet haben.

5.7 **Conditional as a substitute for the past subjunctive**

In German the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) is felt to be awkward with strong verbs. No one would say: *Wenn ich schwömme* 'if I swam'. With weak verbs the subjunctive is identical to the past indicative. Hence *Wenn ich kaufte* ‘if I bought’ is ambiguous. Thus, there is a tendency to replace both forms with the present conditional.

(1) Wenn du herüberschwimmen würdest, könnten wir uns treffen ‘If you swam over here, we could meet each other’.

(2) Wenn du mit dem Rauchen aufhören würdest, würde es dir viel besser gehen.

There is nothing like this regular substitution of forms in English. In fact, there is an old grammar book rule that says: never use the conditional in the *if*-clause. This is meant to help you avoid absurdities like *If I would arrive late, the teacher would be angry*. Unfortunately, this rule is not always applicable. The use of *would* in the condition is possible when the sentence expresses a request or suggestion. In such cases, the verb *would* seems to retain at least part of its original meaning “wollen.”

(3) If you would stop smoking, you would feel much better.

In other cases, there is an impersonal subject:

(4) It would be better (for you), if you would stop smoking.

It is not necessary to have the same referent in both clauses:

(5) It would be better for the children, if Arnold would stop smoking.
To see how the rule applies, consider:

(6)  

a. If you made/*would make beans for dinner, Laura would be angry.

b. If you made/would make coq au vin, Laura would be delighted.

In (6a) a probable result is reported. Laura apparently doesn’t like beans. The request form with would make is impossible. In (6b), on the other hand, the speaker is requesting or suggesting coq au vin for dinner (Laura’s favorite dish) and would make is possible.

6 The Subjunctive
The term ‘subjunctive’ comes from Latin subjunctus ‘subordinated’, ‘untergeordnet’. The name followed from the observation that the “subjunctive” almost always occurs in subordinate clauses ‘Nebensätze’. The German term “Konjunktiv” makes no sense at all since these verb forms are not peculiar to conjoined clauses. Stand-alone uses of subjunctive verb forms are better classified as optative (expressing a wish) Were Willy Brandt still alive! or ad hortative (third person command) Someone open a window!

6.1 Subjunctive verb forms
In English and German there are two subjunctive verb forms: the present subjunctive (Konjunktiv I) and the past subjunctive (Konjunktiv II). The terms “present” and “past” bear no relation to real time; they simply tell us which of the principal parts of the verb the subjunctive forms are derived from.

6.1.1 Present subjunctive
In German the present subjunctive is derived from the present stem (infinitive less -en) and in English from the “base form,” which is also the basis of the present.

A formal distinction between the indicative and the subjunctive is not always made. In English (with the exception of the verb be) only the third person singular is distinct: that he (she, it) go. The verb be is, of course, distinct in all of its forms: that I (you, he, she, it, we they) be.

In German the situation is similar with three distinctive forms: dass du liebest, dass er liebe, dass ihr liebet. Once again, the verb sein has completely distinctive forms: dass ich sei, du seist, er sei, etc. Sometimes the formal distinction indicative/subjunctive is made clear because the subjunctive does not follow the sequence of tenses:

(1) It was necessary that they do their work well. (subjunctive)

(2) It was good that they did their work well. (indicative)
It is important to note that the present subjunctive does not take the s-ending:

(3) I suggest that she report this to the Director immediately.

6.2 *Do*-support
When negated the present subjunctive does not take *do*-support:

(1) It was important that they not fail.

6.3 Past subjunctive
In English and German the past subjunctive (Konjunktive II) was originally derived from the past plural form. The only verb in English that maintains a distinction between past singular and plural is *be*: *I was, we were*. This explains the subjunctive: *if I were*. In all other cases the past subjunctive and the past indicative are identical in form.

The singular/plural distinction exists in only one German verb, *werden* ‘become’, with the archaic sing. *ward*. From the paradigm *werden* - *ward* - *wurden* -geworden, the subjunctive is derived from the past plural by adding umlaut: *dass er würde*. Similarly, *hülfe* from Middle High German *helfen* - *half* - *hulfe* - geholfen ‘help’.

Other subjunctive forms are now derived from the common past form where this is distinguishable from the indicative, thus *dass ich fände* ‘that I found’.

There is a strong and growing tendency to replace the past subjunctive with the present conditional (Konditional I): *wenn ich finden würde, wenn ich helfen würde* for *wenn ich fände, wenn ich hülfe*. This tendency also affects the weak verbs which (like in English) have identical past indicative and subjunctive forms. Hence, *wenn ich kaufen würde* for *wenn ich kaufte* ‘if I bought’. This routine substitution of the conditional for the past subjunctive is absolutely impossible in English (see above).

6.4 Optative and adhortative
It is often difficult to distinguish between the optative use of the present subjunctive (expressing a desire) and the adhortative (issuing a command in the third person).

There are clear cases like *Long live the king!* which can only be optative and *Somebody call the police!* which is an order directed to a random third person, but what is one to make of *God damn/bless you. The devil take you. So be it?*
6.4.1 The past subjunctive as optative
The past subjunctive is often used as an optative:

(1) Were Willy Brandt still alive! (With verb-subject inversion, cf. (2) below.)
(2) I wish Willy Brandt were still alive!

6.5 Uses of the present subjunctive
The present subjunctive is used in a number of ways.

6.5.1 After verbs of requesting, suggesting, insisting and demanding

(1) I move that the meeting be adjourned.
(2) I demand that he be impeached.
(3) I suggest that she question him carefully.

Note the difference between requesting and questioning:

(4) I asked that he remove his feet from the table. (request with present subjunctive)
(5) I asked what time it was. (indirect question with past indicative)

Note too, that the subjunctive does not follow the sequence of tenses as illustrated in the preceding examples.

6.5.2 Subjunctive with necessary conditions
Similarly, the present subjunctive is used in adverbial clause stipulating necessary conditions:

(1) We will sign the contract provided that he be named president.

Similarly: under the condition that, with the stipulation that, with the proviso that. The indicative seems to be making some inroads here.

After nonfactive impersonal expressions indicating necessity or appropriateness:

(2) It is necessary that he leave immediately.
(3) It was urgent that they call a doctor at once.
(4) It is fitting that he be hanged.

Note the difference between factive and nonfactive use of some expressions:
It is fitting that he be hanged. (He hasn’t been hanged, but I believe the punishment is appropriate.)

but:

It is fitting that he was hanged. (He was in fact hanged and I approve.)

It is fitting that he will be hanged. (It’s a fact that he will hang and I approve.)

The nominalizations of the above verbal and adjectival expressions also take subjunctive complements:

The necessity that he leave early was recognized.

The motion that the meeting be adjourn was rejected.

The suggestion that we retire to the tavern was greeted enthusiastically.

The present subjunctive competes here with the construction with should:

It was fitting that he should hang.

6.5.3 Formal literary uses of the present subjunctive
In formal literary style, the present subjunctive can be used in:

6.5.3.1 Concessive clauses
These are mostly confined to set expressions:

Be that as it may (sei dies, wie es wolle)
That may well be (das mag sein)
Come what may (komme, was kommen mag)

6.5.3.2 Negative clauses of intention introduced by lest
They fought bravely lest they be taken captive (in order not to be . . )

6.5.3.3 Present real conditions
If this be/is treason, let us make the most of it.

Note too the standing expression if the truth be told.
6.5.3.4 Alternative clauses (with or without whether)

(1) Whether this be/is true (or not) is not up for discussion.

And as the giant in “Jack and the Beanstalk” said:

(2) Be he live or be he dead, I’ll grind his bones to make my bread.

6.6 The past subjunctive

6.6.1 Unreal conditions
The most frequent use of the past subjunctive is in present and future unreal conditions:

(1) If I were rich . . . .
(2) If Franz Josef Strauß were to rise from the dead . . . .

Remember that the conditional cannot be used here as in German!

6.6.2 Hypothetical comparisons
The past subjunctive is also used in hypothetical comparisons introduced by as if/as though:

(1) He looks as though he were drunk again.
(2) He talks as if he were rich. (But, he isn’t)

In non-hypothetical comparisons (usually introduced by like), the indicative is used:

(1) He looks like he is drunk again.
(2) He talks like he is rich. (He probably is.)

6.7 With the verb seems
After seems, the indicative is used:

(1) It seems as if we are going to get some rain.

After seemed, either indicative or subjunctive:

(2) It seemed as if he was/were going to be reelected.
Part IV: The English Complementation System – Complex Sentences:

1 Clauses

A clause is a group of words containing a verb, which forms part of a sentence. For example:

(1) a. \([ s \text{ Harry knew } [_{NP} \text{ it } [s \text{ that Sheila was an actress}]]] \]
b. \([ s \text{ Harry knew } (\text{it})] \]
c. \([ s \text{ that Sheila was an actress}] \]
d. \([ s \text{ Sheila was an actress}] \].

Sentence (1a) consists of two clauses: (1b) and (1c). The clause (1b) is called the main clause and (1c) is called a subordinate clause, the object of the verb in the main clause, the equivalent of what Harry knew. Of course, (1c) could stand alone as a sentence if we removed that as in (1d). In this case, the sentence would consist of only one clause and we would say that the part is equal to the whole. Complex sentences like (1a) contain more than one clause.

There are a number of ways that we can characterize and classify clauses and all of them are relevant to our discussion of English grammar.

1.1 Form of the verb

One way of classifying the clause is by looking at the kind of verb it contains.

1.1.1 Finite clause

In our example (1a-c) above, both clauses contain finite verbs – that is, a verb that agrees in person and number with its subject – *Harry knew, Sheila was*. Clauses introduced by *that* always contain finite verbs.

1.1.2 Infinitive clauses

As mentioned (frequently) above, infinitive constructions arise, when little verbs lose their subjects by raising or deletion:

(1) Harry wanted \([ \Theta \text{ to succeed} ] \) (Same-Subject-Deletion).
(2) Harry wanted Sheila \([ \text{to succeed} ] \) (Raising-to-Object).

Since infinitive clauses arise though “removal” of their subjects under the influence a higher clause, it is clear that they must always be subordinate clauses. Only main clauses are required to have overt subjects.
1.1.3 Gerund clauses
Gerunds are strange animals. They are marked by the ending -ing, but not every verb that takes this ending is a gerund. We will treat this problem in detail below.

Gerunds are “verbal nouns” that take the same objects as finite verbs, but do not agree with their subjects – if they have expressed subjects at all:

(1) [Getting into the Guinness Book of World Records] is difficult (no subject).
(2) [Me getting into the Guinness Book of World Records] is impossible (subject in the disjunctive case).

Gerunds are the result of Verb-Raising. They are often confused with abstract nouns which also end in -ing. We will consider this below.

1.1.4 Participial clauses
Participial clauses arise from clause reduction:

(1) They caught the burglar [as he was climbing the fence].
(2) They caught the burglar [climbing the fence].

Here the adverbial clause in (1) is reduced as in (2), leaving only the participle and its object.

1.2 Part of speech
A second criterion for classification is part of speech. A clause may function as a noun phrase (NP), adjective phrase (AP), adverbial phrase (AdvP) or prepositional phrase (PP). Phrases consist of a basic part of speech (noun, adjective, verb, adverb, preposition) and all of its objects or modifiers. See the discussion of Structural Dependency above.

(1) [That the burglar climbed the fence] is amazing (noun).
(2) They caught the burglar [who was climbing the fence] (adjective).
(3) They caught the burglar [as he was climbing the fence] (adverb).

Adjective clauses are usually called “relative clauses” and will be considered at length below.
The prepositional phrase is a purely structural concept: it consists of a preposition plus its object. In fact, the PP often serves as an adverb as in:

(4) I \[\text{VP} \left[ \text{NP} \right. \text{my friend} \left[ \text{AdvP} \left[ \text{PP} \right. \text{at the station} \left[\text{AdvP} \text{yesterday} \right]\right]\right]\].

A PP can also contain an NP object clause as in (5) or a gerund as in (6):

(5) I’m looking forward \[\text{pp} \to \left[ \text{np} \right. \text{a cold beer} \left[\right]\right]\]

(6) I’m looking forward \[\text{pp} \to \left[ \text{np} \right. \text{drinking a cold beer} \left[\right]\right]\]

As (4) above illustrates, a verb phrase (VP) consists of the verb, its modifiers (adverbial phrases) and objects (noun phrases).

1.3 Grammatical function
A third criterion is grammatical function. Noun clauses, for example, can (like simple nouns or noun phrases) serve as subjects or objects. Grammatical function is particularly interesting for adverbial clauses. The “syntax” of traditional grammar books devoted considerable space to this topic and rightfully so. It is important to know how to express purpose, condition, goal, etc. We will be concerned here mostly with the structural consequences. (We have already considered some of these in our discussion of “the strange case of for’’ above.) Consider:

(1) This stuff is good \[\text{for removing blood stains from the carpet} \right\] (purpose).
(2) Whiskey is good \[\text{for you to drink} \right\] (benefactive).
(3) Sheila is eager \[\text{for Harry to succeed} \right\] (goal).

The choice of infinitive with to or the -ing-form (gerund) depends on the function of the adverbial clause – whether it indicates purpose (gerund) or goal, benefactive (infinitive).

1.4 Gerunds and abstract nouns
As mentioned above, gerunds are often confused with abstract nouns which end in -ing. Consider:

Consider the sentence:

(1) Bush runs the country.
The nominalization of the sentence is:

(2) Bush’s running of the country

as in:

(3) The Democrats criticized [NP Bush’s running of the country].

In (2) and (3) above, the verb *run* has become the abstract noun *running* (hence the term “nominalization”). The logical subject of the abstract noun *running* is in the genitive with ‘s. The object has the genitive with of. This is quite parallel to:

(4) The enemy destroyed the city

with the nominalization:

(5) The enemy’s destruction of the city (abstract noun with subject and object genitive).

The German constructions are parallel:

(6) Bushes Führung des Landes/ des Feindes Zerstörung der Stadt

Passive clauses can also be nominalized:

(7) The city was destroyed by the enemy/ die Stadt wurde Zerstört von dem Feind.

(8) The destruction of the city by the enemy/ die Zerstörung der Stadt durch den Feind

1.5 The Gerund = German *zu* + *inf.*, *dass-clause*

The gerund can be distinguished from the abstract noun because it takes a normal object, just like the verb it is derived from:

(1) [NP *Making paper*] is my business. ([Papier *herzustellen]*)

(2) [NP *Running the country*] is Bush’s business. ([Das Land *zu führen]*)

Nevertheless, it functions like the head of a noun phrase. That is, the gerund plus object is clearly the subject of the sentence in sentences like (1) and (2). For this reason, the gerund is often called
a “verbal noun.” The corresponding abstract noun would be *paper making*. Note that the object precedes in the abstract noun derived from the verb as is the case in German *Papierherstellung*.

The subject of the gerund is properly in the disjunctive case, but it often appears in the genitive case, due to the influence of the abstract noun in *-ing*:

(3) *Me/my* getting into the *Guiness Book of Records* surprised you, didn’t it?
(4) Dass ich in das *Guiness Buch der Superlative* gekommen bin . . .

If the subject of the gerund is expressed (*me/my* in the above example), the *dass*-clause is necessary in German. (This is explained under the discussion of *subject clauses* below.)

Since the gerund is a verbal noun, it can appear in other aspect forms. The most important are the imperfect and the perfect gerund:

(5) *Working* on a building site is an important experience for future architects (imperfect).
(6) *Having worked* on a building site is an important experience for future architects (perfect).

The imperfect gerund is timeless. It doesn’t matter when you worked on a building site. The perfect gerund indicates prior time – you should have worked on a building site before applying for a job.

German can keep up here with parallel constructions although they are not as often used: *an einer Baustelle zu arbeiten/gearbeitet zu haben* . . .

English also offers a future inchoative gerund (focusing on the beginning of an action in the future) for which there is no German equivalent. Consider the future passive inchoative:

(7) *Being about to be drafted* into the army is a scary situation.

The difference between the abstract noun and the gerund can be determined by noting the case of the subject if no object is present. In most instances, it is hard to discern any difference in meaning, but note:

(8) I don’t like *John* driving (gerund = He’s been drinking).
(9) I don’t like *John’s* driving (abstract noun = The way he drives).
As an anonymous student pointed out to me, the contrast is even clearer if we use a pronoun subject:

(10) They don’t like me driving. (They don’t want me to drive.)
(11) They don’t like my driving. (They don’t like the way I drive.)

The contrast is clear in the following examples as well. Note that only the abstract noun can take an adjective modifier:

(12) She likes singing folk songs (gerund, she sings).
(13) She likes (good) singing (abstract noun, she does not necessarily sing).

Only the abstract noun can take a determiner (article, demonstrative or quantifier):

(14) The running of the country was left to Bush.
(15) *The running the country was left to Bush.

Although the disjunctive is the proper case for the logical subject of the gerund, the genitive is often used in the “grey zone.” That is, in many instances it is practically impossible to distinguish between the gerund and the abstract noun leading to the conclusion that either the disjunctive or genitive can be used in the subject position. This confusion has gone so far that many authorities condemn the use of the disjunctive form and demand the genitive, ignoring examples like (10) - (11) above that show that they mean different things!

1.6 Subject Clauses
An abstract noun, a gerund (-ing), for + to, to, or that-clause can all serve as the subject of an English sentence:

1. a. [NP Bush’s running of the country] displeased the Democrats (abstract noun).
   b. [NP Bush running the country] displeased the Democrats (gerund).
   c. [S For Bush to run the country] would be a disaster (for the Democrats) (for + to).
   d. For Bush [S to run the country] would be a disaster (to).
   e. [S That Bush ran the country] displeased the Democrats (that-clause).

Notice that (1a) and (1b) mean quite different things. In (1a), the Democrats don’t like the way Bush runs the country, whereas in (1b) they do not like Bush being president at all (perhaps
because Gore won the popular vote). This was explained above (cf. John’s driving vs. John
driving). Similarly, (1c) and (1d) are different in meaning although they contain the identical
string of words: for Bush to run the country In (1c) Bush is the cause of the disaster, in (1d) he
experiences the disaster. The bracketing should make it clear why this is so. In (1c) there are two
noun phrases with for. The first, for Bush is part of the subject, the second for the Democrats
indicates the victim (experiencer). In (1d), Bush is experiencing the disaster as well as the person
running the country. Different underlying structures must be responsible for the difference in
meaning.

The underlying structure of (1c) is:

(2) [S1 [PP for [NP it [S2 Bush run the country]] would be a disaster for the Democrats]].

Bush is raised replacing it and leaving the lower clause (S2) without a subject – which results in
the infinitive: for Bush [to run the country]. Bush runs the country, the Democrats suffer the
consequences.

In (1d), the underlying structure must have Bush as both the agent (subject of the lower clause)
and the experiencer (for object of the main clause):

(3) [S1 [PP for [NP it [S2 Bushi run the country]] would be a disaster for Bushi]]

Bushi in the lower clause (S2) is deleted under identity to Bushi in the main clause (S1) yielding:

(4) [S1 [PP for [NP it [S2 θi to run the country]] would be a disaster for Bushi]]

It and for are deleted before to (Garbage-Collection), yielding To run the country would be a
disaster for Bush. If we topicalize for Bush by moving it to the front we get (1d) with the proper
bracketing and indexing to make Bush both the agent of the subject clause and the experiencer of
the main clause. Notice that there is a clear pause after for Bush in (5b):

(5) a. [θi to run the country] would be a disaster for Bushi.

b. For Bushi [θi to run the country] would be a disaster.

The gerund construction (1b) is the result of verb raising. The subject is in the disjunctive case:
\[(6) \quad [S_1 \text{NP it } [S_2 \text{Bush } [v_p \text{ run the country}]] \text{ would displease the Democrats}]].

\[(7) \quad [S_1 \text{NP Bush running the country} \text{ would displease the Democrats}].\]

The that-clause, (1e) is no more mysterious. The subject is not deleted and Verb-Raising does not take place. Extraposition can take place (preserving it) giving us:

\[(8) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [S_1 \text{NP it } [S \text{ that Bush ran the country}]] \text{ displeased the Democrats} \ (= \ 1e). \\
\text{b. } & \text{It displeased the Democrats } [S \text{ that Bush ran the country}] \text{ (with Extraposition).}
\end{align*}\]

Thus, an at first bewildering variety of constructions can be reduced to a limited number of transformations on straightforward underlying structures: EQUI (Equivalent-Noun-Phrase-Deletion, which includes Same-Subject-Deletion, Dative Deletion and For-Deletion), Raising-to-Subject, Verb-Raising and Extraposition. All of these operations are well-documented in other parts of the grammar.

It is worth noting that für in German, like English for, can indicate the person affected: ein Desaster für Bush ~ a disaster for Bush. But, für is never a complementizer (a word that binds together the clauses of a sentence) as it is in English. Consider:

\[(9) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [S \text{ Es wäre ein Desaster für Bush } [S \text{ das Land zu führen}]]. \\
\text{b. } & * [S \text{ Es wäre ein Desaster } [S \text{ für Bush das Land zu führen}]]
\end{align*}\]

One additional observation is necessary. While that-clauses and infinitive clauses can be extraposed, gerund constructions cannot:

\[(10) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & [\text{NP Bush running the country} \text{ displeased the Democrats} \ (= \ 1e)]. \\
\text{b. } & * \text{It displeased the Democrats } [\text{NP Bush running the country}] \text{ (with Extraposition).}
\end{align*}\]

Apparently only clauses can be extraposed as in (8) above. Verb raising changes the verb to a noun so that the resulting structure, as in (10a), is no longer a verb clause, but has become a noun phrase (gerund).

We can account for this structurally by noting that noun clauses are always introduced by it as in (8a) above. If Extraposition does not apply, the it is superfluous and is removed by Garbage
Collection. If Extraposition does apply, the *it* remains as the dummy subject that fulfills the overt subject requirement.

With the gerund, however, the nominalized clause replaces the *it*. Hence, a structure like (10b) is impossible because there is no *it* to serve as a dummy subject.

With Raising to Subject, the *it* is also replaced, but the remaining infinitive clause is obligatorily moved to the end to prevent it from standing between the subject and the verb of the main clause:

\[
(11) \begin{array}{ll}
\text{a. } \text{[NP it } [s \text{ that no student (will) pass the exam}] \text{ is certain.} \\
\text{b.* } [s \text{ [NP no student] [VP to pass the exam] [VP is certain]}. \text{(Raising-to-Subject)} \\
\text{c. } [s \text{ [NP no student] [VP is certain] [VP to pass the exam]}. \text{(Extraposition)}
\end{array}
\]

The reason for this is that the subject NP and the VP must stand shoulder to shoulder. No phrase (or clause) is allowed to come between them. Complex subject NPs consisting of more than one phrase or clause are not affected:

\[
(\text{i}) \text{[NP No student [s who has not attended the lecture] [VP will pass the exam].}
\]

This is not a question of words, but phrases or clauses:

\[
(\text{ii}) \text{[NP Sheila] [VP quickly shut the door].}
\]

In (ii), *quickly* intervenes between the subject and the verb, but it is part of the VP. This is a fine example of Structural Dependency.

1.7 Object clauses

We have already had a great deal to say about object clauses in the general discussion of transformations above. Here we can summarize the results. As objects of the verb, we find three basic kinds of noun clauses: *that*-clauses, infinitive clauses, gerunds:

\[
(1) \text{Sheila knew (it) [that Harry drank a pint of vodka a day] (that-clause).}
\]

\[
(2) \begin{array}{ll}
\text{a. } \text{Sheila wanted Harry [0 to stop drinking] (infinitive clause).} \\
\text{b. } \text{Harry wanted [0 to drown his sorrows in alcohol] (infinitive clause).}
\end{array}
\]

\[
(3) \begin{array}{ll}
\text{a. } \text{Harry liked [0 drinking absinthe as well] (gerund).} \\
\text{b. } \text{Sheila didn’t like [Harry drinking absinthe] (gerund).}
\end{array}
\]

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Both the infinitive clause and the gerund can undergo Same-Subject-Deletion as in (2b) and (3a). With different subjects, infinitives are the result of Raising-to-Object (2a) and gerunds the result of Verb-Raising (with the subject in the disjunctive case) (3b).

1.7.1 Choice of complements
The choice of complements in simple object clauses (not object of a preposition where the gerund is always used) is a difficult matter. There are three different approaches to this problem that are worth briefly exploring: verb aspect, semantic classes and factive predicates.

1.7.1.1 Verb aspect and mood
Verb aspect is the most fundamental approach to the problem and also the most abstract and elusive. The other two approaches can probably be derived from aspect, but an attempt to demonstrate this here would go beyond the scope of our discussion.

The basic principle was recognized by Henry Sweet (the great English grammarian, who provided the model for Henry Higgins in My Fair Lady). He came quite close to the mark:

When the [infinitive] is substituted for the gerund in the subject-relation, it seems to bring out more strongly the attributes of phenomenality–action and quickness . . . . Some verbs, such as like, prefer, can take either the [infinitive] or the gerund in the object-relation. Here, again, the general difference between I like to get up early and I like getting up early seems to be that the latter implies duration and habit. But it is often difficult to see any distinction. [A New English Grammar (1898: 121)].

In this connection, Sweet mentions Hamlet’s famous To be or not to be soliloquy. Here the question is life or death, put up with it or not. It is a question of decision (infinitive) rather than duration or repetition (continuous).

To this we can easily add the that-complement. It is interpreted straightforwardly according to the tense and aspect of the verb in the that-clause. Thus, we have:

(1) I forgot to mail the letter (the action itself).
(2) I forgot mailing the letter (the process).
(3) I forgot that I (had) mailed the letter (action prior to verb of main clause).
Notice that in (1), the letter did not get mailed. The action itself was forgotten and hence not performed. In (2), however, the process was performed, but forgotten. And similarly, in (3) the process was performed, but forgotten later.

It is natural that the *that*-clause with the present subjunctive should be used with verbs of requesting since there is always doubt about whether a request will be fulfilled:

(4) I demand that he leave immediately (but, who takes orders from me).
(5) I request that there be a recess (who knows what the judge will do).

We can sum up by saying that the *-ing*-form is *durative* or *iterative* ‘repeated’, the *to*-form is *aorist* (reports on the fact without reference to duration or repetition – see the discussion of verb tenses above) and the *that*-forms take on various meanings according to the tense, aspect and mood of the verb in the *that*-clause.

Although the basic principle involved could not be simpler, the interactions with semantics and pragmatics create a very complex picture. As Sweet points out, sometimes you can perceive no difference. Other times, the difference can be dramatic:

(6) a. I tried turning the key to the right (but the engine didn’t start – durative or iterative).
   b. I tried to turn the key to the right (but it wouldn’t budge – aorist).

In (6a) the process was carried out, but not in (6b). Unless the event happened, it cannot be durative or iterative.

Some other examples of differences in meaning caused by the choice of complementizer:

(7) a. I hate bothering you (in general – iterative).
   b. I hate to bother you (this one time – non-iterative).

(8) a. I regret telling you that you failed your exams. (I said it and I am sorry.)
   b. I regret to tell you that you failed your exams. (Statement of fact. *I regret* as a formula for introducing bad news.)
(9)  
a. I like to feel independent (aorist – expression of preference).
   
b. I like feeling independent (durative – I am independent and I like it).

(10)  
a. I’m afraid to kiss her (aorist – I haven’t tried it yet).
   
b. I’m afraid of kissing her (iterative – every time I attempt to do it).

In (6a-b) above the contrast is between durative or iterative and aorist. In (6a), the action was carried out – hence durative/iterative verb form. (Generally, you turn and hold the key for a few seconds until the care starts (durative). If this does not work, you try again and again (iterative) before giving up and calling the Automobile Club.) In (6b), however, we have the aorist. No duration/repetition is indicated – so I tried it, but it didn’t happen. The key refused to turn.

Similarly in (7a-b), (7a) indicates a repeated action, whereas (7b) only addresses the fact of the matter – bothering you in principle. Pragmatically, (7b) is a good way to announce that you are about to violate the principle and bother the hearer. On the other hand, (7a) would be more appropriate if you were bothering the hearer again in a matter considered settled.

Sentences (8a-b) can be explained in the same way as (6a-b). Either it had duration and happened, or it did not and didn’t happen. Pragmatically, in (8a) I regret is used to introduced an apology for something you have done, while (8b) is used as a formula to introduce something that hasn’t happened yet, but will forthwith and is unpleasant. If, on the other hand, the news is pleasant, we introduce it with I am glad/I am happy.

Sentences (10a-b) are in one respect the most interesting. They yield to the same analysis as we have applied to the other pairs. Sentence (10b) is iterative, (10a) is not. But, notice that (10b) involves a prepositional object (afraid of). The preposition alone would justify the gerund on syntactic grounds. But, in (10a), where we wish to avoid an iterative or durative interpretation, the preposition is “mysteriously” deleted. Now we know why.

1.7.1.2 Semantic classes

We have already discussed semantic classes under the heading of “semantic rules” above. Verbs of liking and disliking take gerund complements, the very same verbs when used as verbs of choice take infinitive complements:

(1) Sheila likes [to dance the tango (rather than the samba)] (choice).
(2) Sheila likes [dancing the tango (after several Martinis)] (like and dislike).
Notice that these can be equally well explained by aspect. Sentence (2) is durative, indicating the experience that Sheila enjoys. Sentence (1), with the aorist, refers to the “phenomenon,” a choice that does not involve duration or iteration.

This does not mean that semantic classes are irrelevant. It is quite likely that we use semantic classes when adding new vocabulary. That is, when we learn a new verb of liking and disliking, we add it to the same class as verbs of liking and disliking we have previously learned as we suggested in our discussion of semantic rules above. It is not surprising that verbs that are semantically similar should share the same aspect.

1.7.1.3 Factive predicates

Factive predicates (verbs and be + Adj) presuppose that their complements are true (a fact):

(1) I regret [that I told you that there is no Santa Claus].
(2) I am sorry [that I told you that there is no Santa Claus].

Both (1) and (2) presuppose that I told you that there is no Santa Claus and simply express an attitude toward “the fact” that I told you.

Notice that negating the factive predicate does not change the truth value of the predicate:

(3) I do not regret [that I told you that there is no Santa Claus].
(4) I am not sorry [that I told you that there is no Santa Claus].

In (3) - (4) as well, I have told you the horrible truth, but, in this case, I do not regret my decision to do so.

This is quite different from nonfactives:

(5) Dick told Rosemary [to erase the tapes].
(6) Dick did not tell Rosemary [to erase the tapes].

In (5) - (6), the destruction of the evidence is not presupposed. The evidence may or my not have been destroyed. The two sentences present contradictory statements about what Dick actually did.
The importance for our analysis is that *that*-clauses presuppose the truth of their content (under certain circumstances, e.g., in the past tense) and infinitive clauses never do. Gerund clauses also allow both interpretations. This is particularly clear with subject complements:

(7) [To get into *The Guinness Book of World Records*] is/would be difficult.
(8) [That I got into *The Guinness Book of World Records*] surprised you, didn’t it?
(9) [Getting into *The Guinness Book of World Records*] is/was difficult.

In (9), assuming that we are talking about personal experience rather than generalities, only the past tense verb indicates that the indefinite subject actually made it into the book.

1.8 Objects of a preposition = German *da*-construction (O.E. inflected infinitive)

As pointed out above, a verb that is the object of a preposition always takes the *-ing*-form.

(1) I am looking forward to [meeting you] = Ich freue mich darauf, Sie kennen-zulernen.

If the subject of the main clause and the object clause are different, the subject of the object clause must be expressed and stands in the disjunctive or the genitive:

(2) I am looking forward [to him/his drinking a real German beer].

Note that *him* in (2) is not the object of the preposition *to*. The object is the verb *drinking*, which accordingly appears in the long infinitive *-ing*-form. Its subject is properly in the disjunctive case. The use of the genitive arises through confusion with the abstract noun. Here, German requires a *dass*-clause:

(3) Ich freue mich darauf, dass er ein echtes deutsches Bier trinkt.

Note that the German and the English constructions are really very different despite the fact that they share the subject deletion rule for same subject in both clauses. In English, the verb is the object of the preposition. In Old English, the verb was a long inflected infinitive. That is, from the infinitive *drinkan*, the inflected form *to drinking* was derived. Later this became *to drinking*.

Careful with *to*. Sometimes *to* is the infinitive marker and not a preposition:

(4) I used to go / I’m used to going
This leaves unsolved the analysis of the extravagant German *darauf, dass*-construction to which we will return below. (See also Summary of Transformations in the Appendix and my *German Grammar in English for International Students*.)

### 1.9 Clause prepositions and subordinating conjunctions

There is good reason to break down the traditional category “subordinating conjunction” into two different kinds of words – clause prepositions with their objects and clause-introducing particles. How this works is best illustrated by example. Consider the “subordinate conjunction” meaning ‘because’ in a number of ancient and modern European languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Prep.</th>
<th>Obj.</th>
<th>Part.</th>
<th>Construction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old English</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>þæm</td>
<td>þe</td>
<td>for þæm þe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gothic</td>
<td>du</td>
<td>þamma</td>
<td>ei</td>
<td>du þamma ei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old High Ger.</td>
<td>bi</td>
<td>thiu</td>
<td>thaz</td>
<td>bi thiu thaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiddish</td>
<td>far</td>
<td>dem</td>
<td>vos</td>
<td>far dem vos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icelandic</td>
<td>af</td>
<td>þvi</td>
<td>að</td>
<td>af þvi að</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>par</td>
<td>ce</td>
<td>que</td>
<td>parce que</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>por</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>que</td>
<td>porque</td>
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<td>Italian</td>
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<td>che</td>
<td>perche</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>po</td>
<td>tomu</td>
<td>što</td>
<td>potomu što</td>
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</table>

(⟨þ⟩, ⟨ð⟩ = ⟨th⟩)

Notice that the complete construction consists of three parts: a preposition, its pronominal object and the particle that introduces the subordinate clause. One or more parts of the construction can be missing (cf., Spanish and Italian, where the object pronoun is missing although present in the sister language French).

English *because* can be analyzed as *by + cause + (that)*. The particle *that* is almost always left out in the modern language, but there are abundant examples of *because that* from the King James Bible to Emily Dickenson.

(i) *Because that* he had been often bound with fetter and chains . . . . [Mk 5,4 KJV]
(ii) *Because that* you are going and never coming back . . . . [Emily Dickenson]

The object, *cause*, has not (yet) been reduced to a pronoun.
In modern German, we still have many instances of preposition plus object: *nachdem, indem, trotzdem*. With *seitdem (dass)* the particle appears as well although mostly it is left out. Literary examples are not hard to find.

The forms cited above have an inflected form of the pronoun, e.g., *seit + dem*, but there are also many that have no pronoun: *damit (OHG mit diu)*, *dadurch*, *darauf* (also *auf dass*).

We can derive these strange forms with *da + prep.* as follows:

(1) a. *Da* freue ich mich auf dem [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst].  
   b. *Da* freue ich mich auf [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst] (Obj-Deletion)  
   c. *Da(r)auf* freue ich mich [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst] (Prep-Attraction)  
   d. Ich freue mich *darauf* [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst]  

For the underlying structure, cf. colloquial *Da kann ich nichts für, Da wird man nicht dick von* ‘I can’t do anything about that, You won’t get fat from that’.

The basic structure with all of its parts present is (1a). The preposition (*auf*) and its object (*dem*) are in the main clause. The subordinate clause (which modifies the object *dem*) is introduced by the particle *dass*.

In (1b), the object of the preposition is deleted. In (1c), the preposition is attracted to the sentence introducing particle *da* with the addition of *r* as a transitional sound if the preposition begins with a vowel. In (1d) *darauf* is moved to the clause boundary. The V-II Rule applies to yield the normal word order: *freue ich ⇒ ich freue*.

With identical subjects in the two clauses, the derivation proceeds in the same way, only Same-Subject-Deletion with formation of the infinitive clause follows as in (2b).

(2) a. *Da* freue ich mich auf dem [dass ich ein bayrisches Bier trinke].  
   b. Ich freue mich *darauf* [ein bayrisches Bier zu trinken]. (Same-Subj-Deletion)  

Thus, many or perhaps most subordinate clauses are derived from constructions with clause prepositions. We will consider some other ways of forming subordinate clauses below.
1.10 Adverbial clauses

1.11 The absolute participial construction - German (rare)

The so-called absolute participial construction functions like an adverbial clause without a subordinating conjunction. The relationship between the participial clause and the main clause remains vague:

(1) Leaving the movie theater, Dillinger was caught in a hail of bullets.

In German, a subordinate clause is appropriate here (‘Als/während/nachdem er das Kino verlassen hat(te) . . .’) German cannot be as noncommittal as English can.

In (1), relationship between the participle and the rest of the sentence is temporal but vague. Other relationships are possible:

(2) Being considered armed and dangerous, Dillinger was shot down without warning.

Here the relationship is causal.

The perfect participle can also be used to indicate that the state or action in the participial clause was completed before the state or action of the main clause:

(3) Having concluded our business, we returned home.

The perfect participle should not be used if the order of events is clear as in:

(4) Opening the window, he stuck his head out.

Other tense forms are rare but possible, e.g. future passive inchoative:

(5) Being about to be devoured by the monster, Beowulf leaped to safety.

One clear source for this form is Adverbial-Clause-Reduction which removes the subordinating conjunction along with the subject and the auxiliary be:

(6) [As he was] leaving the movie theater, Dillinger was caught in a hail of bullets.

For another source, see the next section.
1.12 Adverbial adjuncts with prepositions

These are the equivalent of a subordinate clause. Here the -ing-clause is the object of a preposition. These usually have the same subject in the -ing-clause and the main clause. In German, subordinate clauses are necessary although an abstract noun is also possible:

(1) After reading the report, we rejected the plan.
(2) After we (had) read the report, we rejected the plan.
(3) Nachdem wir den Bericht gelesen haben, . . .
(4) Nach Lesen des Berichts . . .

The derivation is straightforward:

(5) [PP After [NP it [S1 we rejected the plan]
[\ S2 we read the report]

Same-Subject-Deletion removes we in the lower clause. Verb-Raising produces reading. Theoretically, this should work with different subjects as well with the subject of the lower clause being cast into the disjunctive – and it does although the construction is not common:

(6) After him telling us to raise our hands, we decided to surrender.

We can produce the absolute construction by leaving out the preposition as well:

(7) Reading the report, we rejected the plan.

Here too, there is a stylistic rule that says: Avoid using the perfect participle where it is superfluous.

(7) ? After having opened the window, he stuck his head out.
(8) After opening the window, he stuck his head out.

The preposition after (let alone common sense) is sufficient to indicate that the window was opened first. The perfect participle would be stylistically acceptable only if, for example, some great difficulty was involved in opening the window.
Note that the preposition is not always identical to the subordinating conjunction:

(9) *On* considering the evidence, we rejected the charges.
(10) *When* we (had) considered/*After* we (had) considered . . . .

In addition, the abstract noun may take a preposition that differs from the conjunction used with the full or reduced clause:

(11) *While* (we were) discussing the matter . . . .
(12) *During* the discussion of the matter . . . .

1.13 Adverbial clauses after verbs of perception

In English these have an *-ing*-participle. In German, they take an infinitive without *to* or a subordinate clause introduced by *wie*. These are not gerunds in English and do not allow genitive subjects. They do allow passive:

(1) We saw him/*his crossing the street* ‘Wir sahen ihn, die Straße überqueren’.
(2) He was seen crossing the street.
(3) Bond felt the scorpion crawling up his leg ‘Bond fühlte, wie der Skorpion an seinem Bein hochkroch’.

Additionally, *find, catch, detect, apprehend* and other verbs of “capturing” take this construction:

(5) Don’t let me catch you driving my car ‘Lass mich dich nicht dabei erwischen, wie du mein Auto fährst’.

Once again, because of their basic meaning, these verbs focus on the process rather than the mere fact of occurrence of the action. Due to the meaning of the verbs in the main clause, the action of the verb in the subordinate clause clearly occurs simultaneously. You see things as they are occurring, you catch someone in the act.

These constructions can be analyzed as the result of Adverbial-Clause-Reduction (which removes the conjunction, the subject of the subordinate clause and the verb *be*).

(6) We saw him [while he was] crossing the street → We saw him crossing the street.

It is important to distinguish this construction from the gerund (which results from Verb-Raising and takes either a disjunctive or a genitive subject and a direct object).
(7) Would you mind [me/my opening a window]?
(8) You can rely on [him/his being punctual].

Here passivization of the pronoun is quite impossible! On the other hand, if Subject-Raising can apply, passivizing him is unproblematic:

(9) You can rely on him [to be punctual] → He can be relied on to be punctual.

In (9), of course, the his cannot be substituted for him since him is the object of the preposition.

This construction must also be distinguished from the infinitive without to:

(10) We saw her cross the street.

Here the implication is that he she actually got to the other side, while the -ing-construction leaves this open. The reason for this is clear enough. The form crossing is durative. Hence, we observed the ongoing process. On the other hand, cross is aorist – we saw the action as a whole.

The German equivalents:

(11) Wir sahen, wie sie die Straße überquerte.
(12) Wir sahen sie, die Straße überqueren (haben sie die Straße überqueren sehen).

are neutral – she may have made it across or not. To express doubt clearly, some sort of paraphrase is necessary:

(13) Wir sahen sie, wie sie dabei war, die Straße zu überqueren.

There is no special construction to indicate that she made it to the other side.

Note the peculiar passive:

(14) She was seen to cross the street.

This is like the infinitive without to that follows make, where the to also reappears in the passive construction:

(15) They made him do it. ⇒ He was made to do it.
Note too that German does not allow passivization:

(16) Wir sahen sie, die Straße überqueren. → *Sie wurde gesehen, die Straße (zu) überqueren.

The reason for this seems to be that German does not allow cyclic application of Raising-to-Object and Passive (the Freezing Parameter, see Appendix).

1.14 Clauses with aspectual verbs

Up till now, we have only considered the basic aspect system that involves the helping verbs (auxiliaries) *be* and *have* plus a present or past participle. There are, however, a number of other aspect auxiliaries that are not normally regarded as such. English has, for example, special verbs for indicating the beginning or the end of a state or activity as well durative and iterative. These differ from the traditional auxiliaries in that they involve two separate clauses. Consider:

(1) He *is* going to school next week.
(2) He *starts* going to school next week.

Normally, we would analyze *is going* in (1) as a complex verb form: *is* + *going*. In (2), however, we seem to have two clauses with the same subject: *he starts* + *he goes*. Sentence (2) can be derived by Same-Subject-Deletion followed by Verb-Raising:

(3) He starts it [he go to school next week].
(4) He starts [to go to school next week] (Same-Subject-Deletion).
(5) He starts [going to school next week] (Verb-Raising).

Whether the derivation stops at (4) or continues on to (5), depends on aspect just like the choice of simple or continuous form with complex verb forms.

1.14.1 After verbs of action – starting, stopping, continuing

After verbs of action that indicate the beginning or the continuation of an action like *start, begin, continue, keep on*, either *ing*-complements or *to*-complements are used – sometimes without any perceptible difference in meaning:

(1) I started {to smoke/smoking} at age 19.
(2) Harry continued {to wash/washing} the dishes after Sheila told him she wanted a divorce.
The difference is subtle to be sure. But, it goes back to our basic distinction between aorist and durative/iterative complements.

In cases where either complement can be used, the distinction is not communicatively important as in (1) above. Here it does not matter whether we focus on the beginning of a durative/iterative process or just when the fact became a fact – either would be appropriate in most cases.

Sentence (2) is more interesting. The most likely interpretation with to wash is that Harry continued to do his share of the house work despite Sheila’s decision to divorce him. With washing, this interpretation is possible because the -ing-form can be interpreted iteratively. But, the sentence can also be interpreted duratively, meaning that Harry was washing the dishes when Sheila made her fateful announcement, but he did not allow himself to be distracted and continued washing the dishes (grounds enough for a divorce).

The verb keep meaning continue or repeat only takes the -ing-complement because it focuses on the duration or repetition of the action.

(3) She kept (on) singing until we all left (durative).
(4) Keep (on) trying until you reach him (iterative).

The Verbs of “stopping” are similar. Those that indicate the end of a habitual activity take an -ing-complement as expected (end of durative or iterative process):

(5) Max [stopped/quit/gave up/left off/]smoking when his doctor told him he had lung cancer (iterative, unless Max was smoking when he got the bad news).

Similarly, two verbs of completion take -ing-complements:

(6) Fred [finished/completed] painting the wall this morning.

The verb stop indicating temporary interruption of an activity or the end of a habitual activity takes an -ing-complement:

(7) Fred stopped painting the wall (in order to eat lunch) (durative).
(8) Fred stopped smoking (when he read the warning on the package) (iterative).

Note that with stop, the to-complement specifies the purpose of the interruption. Compare:
(10) I stopped talking to her last week. (We are no longer on speaking terms.)
(11) I stopped to talk to her last week. (I stopped whatever I was doing in order to talk to her – purpose clause.)

In German, the distinction is made between aufhören + inf and aufhören um + inf., where um introduces a purpose clause.

Most verbs of stopping cannot take a to-complement, indicating what activity was stopped, but can take a purpose clause:

(12) Wilson {paused, interrupted, halted} the lecture (in order) to go out for a cigarette.

This explains the peculiar behavior of stop, noted above. Since stop is used to indicate the end of an ongoing process, stop to (where no ongoing process is indicated) can only be interpreted as stop (in order) to.

The verb cease ‘aufhören’, which cannot take a purpose clause, indicates ending a state with a to-complement (aorist) and ending an ongoing action with an ing-complement (durative):

(13) The Neanderthals ceased to exist about sixty thousand years ago (state).
(14) Fellini ceased breathing at 10 p.m. (action).

1.14.2 After verbs of motion and position

After verbs of motion (come, run, climb) and verbs of position (sit, stand, lay) for simultaneous action, the delimited (-ing) form is used:

(1) He always stood there watching me (iterative).
(2) He sat there smirking at the Director (durative).

Here neither motion nor position seems to be important – they simply indicate an ongoing durative or iterative action. The derivation is straightforward:

(3) He sat there (and he was) smirking ~ He sat there smirking.
1.14.3 After *go* with verbs of motion (incohative)

After *go* used as an aspectual verb to indicate the beginning of an action, only verbs actually involving motion are allowed.

Thus:

(1) We went *bowling, swimming, jogging*, etc.

but not:

(2) *We went *sleeping, eating, smoking*, etc.

Compare:

(3) *We went singing.

(4) We went caroling (walking from house to house in order to sing).

*We went drinking is possible* because people often go from bar to bar (‘barhopping’), but not *We went eating* because one normally only eats in one place.

On the other hand, German has *essen gehen, trinken gehen, schlafen gehen*, etc., without restriction. In the present tense, it is a near future form like the equivalent construction in the Romance languages, cf. French *je vais manger* ‘ich gehe essen’. The basic aspect is “incohative” (focusing on the beginning of the action – hence, near future in the present, beginning of the action in the past:

(5) Wir sind (gleich danach) essen gegangen. ‘Right afterwards, we went out (in order) to eat.

2 Relative Clauses

In the previous section, we considered noun clauses and adverbial clauses (i.e., entire clauses that function as noun phrases or adverbs). In this section, we will consider adjective and determiner clauses generally known as “relative clauses.”

2.1 Relative clause – adjective and determiner

Recall that there are two kinds of modifiers that generally precede the noun in English – adjectives (which answer the question What kind of?) and determiners, which tell us which one(s) or how many. Thus, in the noun phrase *that dishonest politician*, “dishonest” tells us what kind of
politician and “that” points out which one. This distinction is universal, but presents a special problem for English grammar because the two types – determiner and adjective relative clauses – are grammatically distinct:

(1) He’s the man who shot the sheriff.
(2) He’s the man that shot the sheriff.

We will make this distinction clearer below. But, first let us take a look at the different kinds of relative clauses in English.

2.2 Relative pronouns and relative particles

The relative clause repeats the noun it modifies in the form of a relative pronoun in German and in English. Consider the following as a point of departure:

(1) You saw the man (and I saw him too).

For our linguistic intuitions (‘Sprachgefühl’), this sentence is not a main clause plus a subordinate relative clause, but two coordinated clauses – although there are languages which have relatives with just this structure. We will call pronouns like him in the second clause “resumptive pronouns” or “coreferents.” They refer back to the head noun (here: man).

Now let us substitute the particle wh- for and (interestingly wh-originally meant ‘and’) and move the pronoun to the front:

(2) You saw the man (wh- I saw him too) ⇒
(3) You saw the man (whom I saw too) (wh- + him = whom).

In German, this process is much more transparent. The relative clause is introduced by the particle da:

(4) Sie sahen den Mann (da ich sah ihn auch) ⇒
(5) Sie sahen den Mann (den ich auch sah) (da + ihn = den).

The process of moving the coreferent to the front and joining it to the relative particle is called relative pronoun formation (RP-Formation).

In English, we can substitute the particle that for and, and simply delete the “coreferent” resumptive pronoun in the relative clause:
(6) You saw the man (that I saw him too) →
(7) You saw the man (that I saw 0 too).

The symbol 0 marks the place where the pronoun was deleted.

Standard German has no equivalent construction, but Bavarian does:

(8) Sie haben den Mann gesehen, wo ich 0 auch gesehen habe.

The particle wo is the equivalent of English that. (There are, however, extra complications with
the Bavarian relative clause that we will discuss at the end of this section.)

Standard German even has a particle construction in which the coreferent is neither deleted nor
moved to the front to form a relative pronoun, but appears as a “resumptive” pronoun in the
relative clause:

(9) Es war so(lch) ein Tag, [wie wir ihn kaum in München sehen].

Compare English:

(10) It was such a day [as we seldom see 0 in Munich]

with deletion of the “resumptive” pronoun.

Both English and German have participial relative clauses. These can be derived from an
underlying relative clause with a verb in the continuous or passive form:

(11) Three kings [who were bringing gifts] arrived from the east →
(12) Three kings [bringing gifts] arrived from the east.

(13) A Bible [which was printed by Gutenberg] was presented to the library →
(14) A Bible [printed by Gutenberg] was presented to the library.

The relative pronoun and the form of be are deleted to from the participial relative. This is known
as Relative-Clause-Reduction.

Note that German too has both kinds of participial relatives (e.g., drei Geschenk bringende Könige/ eine von
Gutenberg gedruckte Bibel, but there is no full form for the present participle. That is, *drei König, die
Geschenke bringend waren is not German!
English has an additional form of relative clause not found in German, the **infinitive** relative as in:

(16) The first man [*to walk on the moon*] was Neil Armstrong.

The types of relative clauses available in English and German are summarized in the next section:

### 2.3 Major types of relative clauses

All relative clauses include a verb. We can classify them according to the kind of verb form they contain:

- **Finite verb:** The story [*which you heard*] is true.
- **Present participle:** I saw a man [*wearing red suspenders*].
- **Past participle:** The jewels [*stolen from the Kremlin*] were never recovered.
- **Infinitive:** The last man [*to walk on the moon*] was Eugene Cernan.

Standard German relies mainly on relative clauses with finite verbs and relative pronouns. In literary (especially newspaper) style, participial relative clauses are used (e.g., *die vom Kremel gestohlenen Juwelen* ‘the jewels stolen from the Kremlin’). In a few special cases, the particle construction with *wie* or *wo* occurs (e.g., *er las so viele Bücher, wie er konnte* ‘he read as many books as he could’).

### 2.4 Defining, restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses

It is necessary to distinguish three kinds of relative clauses (not just two as is the general practice): **defining relative clauses**, which may be introduced by *that*, or *0* (see below for a discussion on when the particle can be left out), **restrictive relative clauses**, which are introduced by a relative pronoun (*who, which*, etc.) and **nonrestrictive relative clauses**, which are introduced by a relative pronoun and set off by commas in writing to indicate a difference in intonation. The participial clauses are restrictive or nonrestrictive (see below) and the infinitive clauses are defining. Hence, the structural classification in the previous section is not arbitrary, but represents significant differences in meaning.

The difference between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses is clear and easily formulated in set theory.
The restrictive relative forms a set intersection with its head noun. Thus,

(1) My brother [who lives in Los Angeles] just bought a new car
defines the intersection of the set of my brothers and the set of residents of Los Angeles.

The nonrestrictive (who, which, set off in commas):

(2) My brother,[who lives in Los Angeles], just bought a new car
tells us that my brother is a subset of the residents of Los Angeles. Where (1) tells the hearer who I am talking about, (2) simply provides extra information.

It is essential to mind the commas. Violating this punctuation rule can lead to disaster:

(3) My wife who lives in Los Angeles just bought a new car
implies bigamy!

Postposed participial relative clauses are always restrictive:

(4) (The) students [carrying axes] were stopped by the campus police.
That is, just those students who were carrying axes.

Preposed participial relatives can be restrictive or nonrestrictive. The difference is singled by accentuation. The restrictive clauses are accented:

(5) The ax-carrying students were stopped by the campus police (restrictive).
(6) The ax-carrying students were stopped by the campus police (nonrestrictive).

Defining relative clause are much more difficult to pin down leading to the impression that that, $\emptyset$ (defining) can be used interchangeably with who/which (restrictive). Although this often, even mostly, the case, there are clear instances in which who/which cannot be substituted for that, $\emptyset$:

(7) She lost the best friend {that, $\emptyset$, *who} she ever had.
The distinction seems to be that defining relative clauses function as adjectives rather than determiners (i.e., they indicate what kind of one(s) rather than which one(s)). In (7), for instance, the restrictive who would seem to be ungrammatical because you can have only one best friend and there is no way that friends she ever had can restrict best friend. We will see a number of cases like this as we continue our investigation of relative clauses. (For more on that see “What’s that” in the Appendix.)

2.4.1 Proper names

Proper names that refer to a single individual cannot take restrictive relative clauses. The reason for this is obvious – a set consisting of a single individual cannot be further restricted by a relative clause:

(1) Joseph Priestley, who discovered the element oxygen, also wrote an English grammar.

There is only one Joseph Priestly, hence the relative clause is nonrestrictive.

On the other hand, a name (like Sam, John, Sabine) can refer to many individuals. A defining or restrictive relative clause can be used to identify the one meant. In this case, the name is preceded by the definite article:

(2) The Sabine {who, that} left the party early is Sam’s sister.

There are many Sabines. I am talking about the one who is Sam’s sister.

2.5 Who, whom, whose, which

The relative pronouns who refers to “persons” while which refers to nonpersons. Whom is the objective case form of who. Whose is the genitive of both who and which

In standard English, whom is only used after prepositions although in formal style it may be used as an object without a preposition:

(1) a. The man about whom we spoke . . . . (very formal)
b. The man whom we spoke about . . . . (formal)
c. The man (who) we spoke about . . . . (colloquial)
(2) a. The man whom we saw . . . . (formal)
b. The man (who) we saw . . . . (colloquial)
(3) a. The man whose car was stolen . . . .
b. The religion whose followers are persecuted . . . .
As the parentheses indicate, the object who can and is usually left out in colloquial English. The next section explains this more thoroughly. As (3b) indicates, whose is fine with abstract nouns like religion, but this does not extend to inanimates. The chair whose back was broken sounds quite awkward.

2.6 Omission of the relative pronoun and the relative particle

The relative particle can be left out if no confusion results.

(1) The man[0 I saw] fell down

but not:

(2) *The man [0 fell down] broke his leg.

The reason for this is that the string of words: the man fell down in (2) is interpreted as a complete sentence as there is nothing to mark the beginning of the relative clause. Inserting that avoids this problem: the man [that fell down] . . .

This also explains why the following is acceptable:

(3) What is it (that) makes people grumble about the weather?

The string what is it makes cannot be interpreted as a complete sentence and thus the “border marker” that can be left out. This was discussed above as an example of a “perceptual rule.”

2.7 Complex relative clauses

In German, a relative clause must directly follow its head. In English, it may be separated from its head by any number of intervening clauses. (We discussed this under the topic “Long-Distance Movement” above.) Consider:

(1) The guest [{who, that, 0} Lady Farnsworth instructed the butler [to ask the maid [to remind the gardener [to have the chauffeur drive e to the station]]] missed his train. (The symbol e means ‘empty’.)

Here, the relative pronoun who has been moved from the position marked with e over three intervening clauses to the position immediately following the head noun. This is quite impossible in German although my students provided the following paraphrase:
Der Gast, wegen dem Lady Farnsworth den Diener aufgetragen hat, die Magd zu bitten, den Gärtnern daran zu erinnern, den Fahrer zu veranlassen, ihn zum Bahnhof zu bringen, hat seinen Zug verpasst.

Notice that the relative pronoun in wegen dem originates in its own clause and stands directly after its head noun. The resumptive pronoun ihn, which refers to the head noun Gast remains in place and its place is not empty as in the English sentence. German can do it, but it has to follow its own rules.

In complex relative clauses with a finite verb where the subject of the relative clause is identical to the head noun, the border marker that, who, which has to be left out:

(3) The woman [who, that, 0/ you said [e bought the apples]] is my sister.

It is clear that who cannot stand in the position marked by e in S₁ because it has been moved to the front of the long-relative clause, positioning it after its head noun. But, what about that?

Here again, the problem is perceptual. A string of words like:

(4) *You said that bought the apples

would be interpreted as an object noun clause with a missing subject:

(5) You said [that 0/ bought the apples]

and finite object clauses have to contain a subject pronoun for their verb to agree with (cf. the Overt Subject Parameter). But, why doesn’t the same problem arise in a simple relative clause:

(6) The woman [that e bought the apples] . . . .

The answer is that in (6) the relative clause directly follows its head (and not a verb as in (5)) and thus cannot be misinterpreted as an object clause with a missing subject.

While we are on the subject of the interaction between relative clauses and the perceptual rules, it is worth noting that perfectly grammatical sentences can be ambiguous for perceptual reasons. Consider:

(7) The woman you told the Director bought the apples is the governor’s wife.
Now, ask yourself: Who bought the apples the woman or the Director?

The answer, of course, is that it could be either one, depending on where the perception mechanism decides to locate the empty node $e$. Is the proper bracketing (8) or (9)?

\[
\begin{align*}
(8) & \quad \text{[The woman, you told the Director, [e, bought the apples]] is the governor’s wife.} \\
(9) & \quad \text{[The woman, you told e, [the Director bought the apples]] is the governor’s wife.}
\end{align*}
\]

In real-life communication, the decision lies beyond grammar and the perception mechanism. Pragmatics decides: Were you talking to the Director or the woman?

2.8 Preposition stranding

In German prepositions are always moved to the front with the relative pronoun:

\[
(1) \quad \text{Die Frau, von der wir die Gurken bekommen haben, . . . .}
\]

In English, this construction is possible with the relative pronoun, but rarely used. In general, the preposition is “stranded”:

\[
(2) \quad \text{The woman from whom we got the cucumbers . . . . (very formal)}
\]

\[
(3) \quad \text{The woman \{who, that, \emptyset\} we got the cucumbers from . . . . (normal)}
\]

The transformation that moves the entire prepositional phrase to the front along with the co-referent, as in (1) and (2), is called “Pied-Piping” (after the legendary Pied Piper of Hamlin).

Sentences like (3) involve “preposition stranding” – the coreferent is deleted leaving the dangling preposition “stranded.” Preposition stranding is quite unusual. Even languages that allow relativization with deletion of the coreferent for simple objects require a coreferent after a preposition, most also require Pied-Piping:

Yiddish, a high German language once widely spoken in eastern Europe, allows both a resumptive pronoun and deletion with a direct object (4), but requires the resumptive pronoun after a preposition (5). Pied-Piping is also possible as in (6), but stranding is strictly avoided:

\[
\begin{align*}
(4) & \quad \text{Yid. der man vos ikh hob (im) gezen ‘the man that I saw (him)’} \\
(5) & \quad \text{er iz der man vos ix arbet far im ‘he is the man that I work for him’} \\
(6) & \quad \text{er iz der man far vemen ikh arbet ‘he is the man for whom I work’}
\end{align*}
\]

French requires Pied-Piping:
(7) Fr l’homme que j’ai vu ‘the man that I saw’
(8) C’est l’homme pour qui je travaille ‘That is the man for whom I work’.

Similarly Spanish:

(8) Sp el hombre que vi ‘the man that (I) saw’
(9) Es el hombre para quien trabajo ‘(He) is the man for whom (I) work’.

2.9 Preposition attraction
Preposition attraction is possible in both German and English. Here the relative clause is introduced by wo, where. The coreferent is deleted and the preposition is moved to the second position in the clause:

(1) a. Der Mann [wo ich rede von ihm]
   b. Der Mann [wovon ich rede]
(2) a. The man [where I speak of him]
   b. The man [whereof I speak] (archaic)

2.10 Generalizing relative clauses
Generalizing relative clauses refer to a whole class of objects:

(1) a. He who rides a tiger does not easily dismount.
    Wer auf einem Tiger reitet, steigt nicht leicht wieder ab.
   b.* Who rides a tiger does not easily dismount.
(2) {That which, what} must be done will be done.
   {Das was, was} getan werden muss, wird getan.

Note that English can substitute what for that which just as in German, but that who requires a head noun. Leaving out the he in the first sentence above produces an ungrammatical sentence although some other antecedent such as she, anyone, people, etc. could be used instead. It certainly seems “unfair” that English allows the headless construction sentences like (2), but not (1). This is a frequent cause of errors.

2.11 Continuative clauses with which
Consider the following:

(1) He looked like a professor – which he was.
Here, *which* is not a relative pronoun referring to *he* (or it would be *who*), but rather the equivalent of *and that*, where *that* refers to the whole proposition: *he looked like a professor.*

(2) He looked like a professor *and that* he was.

German has a similar construction with *was*:

(3) Er sah aus wie ein Professor, *was* er auch war (*und das war er auch*).

This is an example of the original meaning of *wh-* (German *w-*) in the meaning ‘and’.

In (4) below, we have both a relative and a continuative clause:

(4) He looked like a professor *who* had corrected too many exams – *which/and that* he was.

The restrictive relative clause has *who* since professors are human (most of the time). The restrictive relative *who* refers back to the head noun *professor*. The continuative *which* refers to the entire proposition: *He looked like a professor who had corrected too many exams*.

Continuative clauses with *which* can always be used if a parallel construction with *and that* is possible:

(5) Otto defused the bomb carefully {*and that, which*} was the proper way to do it.

### 2.12 The fact that

Another construction that looks suspiciously like a relative clause, but isn’t is introduced by a “classifier”:

(1) The fact that John has blood on his hands doesn’t prove anything.

*The fact* classifies the *that*-clause that follows as a fact. There many other classifiers such as, *the suspicion that*, *the notion that*, *the belief that*, etc. It first glance, the *that*-clause in (1) above might be taken for a relative clause modifying the head noun *fact*. However, if this were the case, we would expect that *which* could be substituted for *that* – which is not the case:

(2) *The fact which* John has blood on his hands doesn’t prove anything.
Notice that (1) is more or less synonymous with:

(3) That John has blood on his hands doesn’t prove anything.

The underlying structure of (3), cf. the discussion of subject clauses above, is:

(4) \[ \text{NP it} \text{ [s that John has blood on his hands]] doesn’t prove anything.}\]

Either Extrapolation applies yielding:

(5) \[ \text{NP it] doesn’t prove anything [s that John has blood on his hands]\]

or else \textit{it} is deleted before the following clause yielding (3).

In sentences like (1), the underlying \textit{it} is simply replaced by a classifier, in this case, \textit{the fact}.

This is extremely practical for sentences with prepositional object clauses:

(6) The jury was very impressed by \[ \text{NP it [s that John had blood on his hands]} \].

Since \textit{that}-clauses cannot be the object of a preposition, either \textit{by} would have to be omitted yielding:

(7) The jury was very impressed that John had blood on his hands

or else, Verb-Raising would have to apply:

(8) The jury was very impressed by John having had blood on his hands.

All together, it is far simpler to replace the object \textit{it} with a classifier which can be the object of a preposition:

(9) The jury was very impressed by \textit{the fact} that John had blood on his hands.

German, of course, does not have this problem thanks to Preposition-Attraction (see above):

2.13 Relative clauses and subject complements

A subject complement is a noun phrase or a noun clause that follows the linking verb be. In a sentence like *He is a fool*, the noun phrase *a fool* is a subject complement. Relative clauses modifying subject complements can be introduced by *that* or by the relative pronouns *who* or *which*. There is, however, an important difference between the constructions. Consider the following:

(1) I am not the fool *that* you take me for.
(2) I am not the fool *who* you take me for.

Both of these sentences are grammatical, but they mean very different things. In (1), the relative clause (with *that*) is defining. It implies that I am not a fool, that is ‘fool’ is not one of the defining characteristics of me. In (2), with the restrictive *who*, I admit to being a fool, but claim that I am some other fool than the one you take me to be – which is not grammatically wrong, but communicatively bizarre.

Here the subtle difference between defining (*that*) and restrictive (*who*) is clear. Sentence (1) says that the condition Q (member of the set of fools) does not apply to the set P that includes just me. In (2), however, set membership is admitted and I am saying Sorry, wrong set intersection.

In German, the distinction is made by accentuation:

(3) Ich bin nicht der Nárr, für den du mich hältst. (I am not a fool.)
(4) Ich bin nicht dér Narr, für den du mich hältst. (I am a different fool.)

Notice that the noun is accented when the relative clause functions as an adjective and the determiner is accented when it functions as a determiner.

Similarly, after *all*, *only* and superlatives, *which* is not possible where no subset can be formed:

(5) All {that, 0, *which} I can say is that I’m sorry.
(6) She lost the best friend {that, 0, *who} she ever had.

but:  (7) She told her story to all {that, who} would listen (the listeners can be a subset of *all*).
2.14 The relative particles *as* and *but*

The relative particle *as* is very common, but unlike *that*, is only used in a few constructions. It is obligatory following a noun with the determiner *such*:

(1) It was *such* a day *as* we seldom see in Munich.
(2) It was a day *such as* we seldom see in Munich.

Here German uses the relative particle *wie*, but requires a resumptive pronoun:

(3) Es war *so(lch)* ein Tag, *wie* wir *ihn* in München kaum sehen.

It is also obligatory in the constructions *as many as*, *as much as*:

(4) He read *as many* books on the subject *as* he could find.
(5) You can take *as much* time *as* you want.

German also uses the relative particle without resumptive pronoun:

(6) Er las *so viele* Bücher zum Thema, *wie* er finden konnte.
(7) Du kannst dir *so viel* Zeit nehmen, *wie* Du brauchst.

After the same we can use *as* or *that*. *That* can be left out:

(8) That’s the same man {as, that, 0} I saw yesterday.

The particle *but* is very old fashioned. It only used after negatives:

(9) There was scarcely a plantation near me *but* had some of them (Defoe).
 (= that didn’t have some of them)

Compare:

(10) There is no one that knows him *that* thinks he is honest (everyone thinks he is dishonest).
(11) There is no one that knows him *but* thinks he is honest (everyone thinks he is honest).

2.15 The particle *whether*

In complex relative clauses, the relative clause proper can be introduced by *whether*:
(1) The book [(that) the editor asked me [whether I could review e for next month’s issue]] was far too long (e marks the gap in the relative clause).

2.16 Relative clause reduction
Relative clauses of the form \(wh + be + participle\) can be reduced to form participial relative clauses.

(1) That man [(who is) crossing the street] is Clark Kent.

The reduced construction is also found with verbs that have no continuous form:

(2) Questions requiring further discussion will be considered again next week.

but not:

(3) *Questions [which are requiring] further discussion . . .

Passive relatives can always be reduced:

(4) A Bible [(which was) printed by Gutenberg] was presented to the library.

In English, extended participles always follow as in the examples above: the man crossing the street, a Bible printed by Gutenberg. In German, these participial constructions are always preposed: der die Straße überquerende Mann, die von Gutenberg gedruckte Bibel. Unlike their German counterparts, the English reduced forms are felt to be quite natural and are probably more frequent than the full clauses that underlie them.

The simple past participle in the reduced clause is subject to a rather odd restriction. It can only be preposed if it is polysyllabic (more than one-syllable long). Hence, we can say:

(5) The rescued passengers were brought ashore = the passengers [who were rescued] but not:
(6) *The saved passengers were brought ashore = the passengers [who were saved].

Here you must be careful to distinguish between real past participles and past participles that have become adjectives. For example, lost can be used as a predicate adjective:

(7) The child is lost.

Hence, the lost child is a normal adjective construction.
On the other hand, *found* cannot used as a predicate adjective, but only in the passive construction:

(8) *The child is found.
(9) The child was/has been found.

Since *found* is a true participle and consists of a single syllable, it cannot be preposed:

(10) *The found child was returned to her parents.

### 2.17 Relative clauses with infinitives

Infinitival relative clauses (relative clauses that have lost their subjects) occur both as simple and complex relatives. They are always defining:

(1) I haven’t got a thing [to wear e].
(2) He has a book [to read e].
(3) The book [that you wanted me [to buy e for you ]] is out of print.
(4) The house [that Jack built for Jill [to live e in]] was destroyed by fire.

These relatives conceal an underlying construction with *for*:

(5) I haven’t got a thing, [\text{PP} for \text{NP it}]

\[ \text{[s, I wear it.]} \]

The *it* in the lower clause referring to the head noun *thing* is cancelled in the normal way (deletion of the coreferent). The subject of the relative clause is either raised to the object position of *for*:

(6) I haven’t got a thing for *me* [to wear]

or deleted because it is identical to the subject of the first clause:

(7) I haven’t got a thing [to wear].
(8) I haven’t got a thing *for you* to wear (with different subjects).

In both cases, the verb of the relative clause becomes “subjectless” and an infinitive results.

The derivation of (4) above is more complicated, but involves the same set of transformations:
In the bottom-most clause ($S_3$), *house* is deleted by way of coreferent deletion (*house* $\Rightarrow$ *it* $\Rightarrow$ *e*) as usual in relative clauses and *Jill* is raised to the object of *for* in the middle clause ($S_2$), yielding an infinitive with no subject and no object! In the middle clause *house* is deleted as it was in the lowest clause, resulting in *The house Jack built for Jill to live in was destroyed by fire.*

Indefinite subjects (PRO) also are deleted as in:

(9) That was the right thing [for it [ PRO say it,]] $\Rightarrow$

(10) That was the right thing [to say].

2.18 “Parasitic gaps”

Sometimes gerunds used after prepositions in are apparently missing their objects. In the literature, these missing objects are often referred to as “parasitic gaps”:

(1) This is the report we filed without reading 0. ‘Hier ist der Bericht, den wir zu den Akten gelegt haben, ohne *ihn* zu lesen’. ( 0 = parasitic gap.)

(2) This is the spoiled tuna fish we threw up after eating 0. ‘Dies ist der verdorbene Thunfisch, den wir ausgekotzt haben, nachdem wir *ihn* gegessen haben’.

We can now tackle the problem of parasitic gaps because we have developed a general theory of deletion. Consider that there are several ways of getting rid of subjects: Same-Subject-Deletion, Dative-Deletion, Indefinite-Subject-Deletion and Resumptive-Pronoun-Deletion as part of Relative-Clause-Formation.

For objects, however, Resumptive-Pronoun-Deletion is the only possibility because it is the only transformation that eliminates NPs other than subjects in English. Hence, parasitic gaps must be caused by this transformation. It remains only to determine the underlying structure. We can propose:
Starting with $S_3$, we is eliminated by Same-Subject-Deletion and the report (after being replaced by the pronoun it) by Resumptive-Pronoun-Deletion producing “the parasitic gap.” The verb read is raised to the object of the preposition without in $S_2$ producing the -ing-form. In $S_2$, report is once again deleted by Resumptive-Pronoun-Deletion.

This gives us the surface structure: *This is the report we filed without reading.*

### 2.19 Relative adverbials

Where the relative clause indicates time or place, the relative pronoun can be replaced by the relative adverbials *when* (time) or *where* (place).

1. Cursed be the day {on which, when} I was born.
2. Let’s drink a toast to the town {in which, where} I was born.

In German, we can use *wo* for time and place (not all speakers accept time):

3. Verflucht sei der Tag, {an dem, wo} ich geboren wurde.
4. Heben wir die Gläser auf die Stadt, {in der, wo} ich geboren wurde.

In temporal clauses, *that* can be used as the normal relative particle (with a stranded preposition) or as the equivalent of *when* (without a stranded preposition).

5. Cursed be the day {that, 0} I was born (on).

This is a historical relict. Modern *that* replaced Old English *þe* which meant both ‘that’ and ‘when’.

If *that* is taken to be a particle introducing the relative clause, then the preposition is left stranded after (*day* $\rightarrow$ *it* $\rightarrow$ *e*). Of course, *that* can also be left out as no confusion results:

6. Cursed be the day (that) I was born on.
If *that* is taken as the successor to *be* with the meaning ‘when’, there is no preposition or coreferent in the second clause. Of course, *that* be left out as usual:

(7) Cursed be the day (that = when) I was born.

*That* can also substitute for *why* in a purpose clause. Here *which* is quite impossible since the clause can only be defining, not restrictive:

(8) That’s the reason {why, that, 0, *which} I spoke.

Compare:

(9) That’s the reason which he gave (restrictive).

Similarly, in German *der Grund, warum or der Grund, dass*.

### 2.20 Relative clause in Bavarian

The relative clause in Bavarian is somewhat more interesting than the standard German equivalent. I can only list a few features (derived from standard sources) here. More information may be available in your head (that is, if you are fortunate enough to have learned both Bavarian and standard German).

#### 2.21 The particle *wo*

In standard German, the particle *wo* is limited in use to time and place (see above). In Bavarian, it can be used without restriction provided that the head noun and the relativized NP are in the same case:

(1) deà Buà, wo dá dâheàkimd (= der Junge, der herkommt) (both nominative)  
(2) den Manddl, wo i kâffî håb (=den Mantel, den ich gekauft habe) (both accusative)

Mixing cases is not possible in “Standard Bavarian”:

(3) *de Mô, wo dees keàd (der Mann, dem das gehört)

but it is possible in the Munich subdialect, where it functions somewhat like Yiddish *vos* or English *that*. 
2.22 The particle *wo* plus the relative pronoun

With different cases of the head noun and the relativized NP, an inflected relative pronoun precedes the particle:

(1) Sigsd du den Mō, deà wo då gāhd? Siehst du den Mann, der (wo) da geht?

The relative pronoun is optional if the cases are the same:

(2) de Bolizisd, (deà) wo mi auschrient hâd = der Polizist, (der) wo mich aufgeschrieben hat.

This construction with relative pronoun plus particle is not found in modern English, but abounded in earlier stages of the English language. Old English:

(3) hwær is ludeiscra leoda cyning, *se þe* acenned is ‘wo ist der jüdischen Leute König, *der wo* geboren ist?’ ‘Where is the king of the Jews that has been born’ (Matth. 2:2) (*se þe* = *der wo*).

Middle English:

(4) a doghter *which that* called was Sophie ‘a daughter who was called Sophie’ (Chaucer - Tale of Melibius §1).

2.23 The relative pronoun

The relative pronoun *deà/de/dees* corresponding to standard *der/die/ das* can always be used instead of the particle *wo*. Hence, there are three possibilities if head noun and relativized NP are in the same case:

(1) deà Breiss, {deà, wo, deà wo} gjodld hâd = der Preuße, {der, wo, der wo} gejodelt hat.

2.24 The second person clitic

The ending of the second person singular and plural of the verb is attached to the relative pronoun or the following particle:

(1) Dees is need deà Mō, {densd du, den wosd du} gsuâchd hâsd
(2) Dees is need deà Mō, {dens ees, den wods ees} gsuâchd habds
= Das ist nicht der Mann, den du gesucht hast ‘That’s not the man, you were looking for’

(Source of Bavarian data: Ludwig Merkle (1976) Bairische Grammatik, München:dtv.)

Also see “What’s that?” in the Appendix.
Appendix:

A Note on Condition (C):

In the discussion of the “Bahnhofsätze” we left open the puzzling Condition (C), which limits the acceptable reorderings of constituents in German sentences. It is restated here for convenience:

C. The verb (past participle), unless it stands first, must follow the direct object.

This condition actually follows from the “Satzklammer” – like the V-II rule – a general condition on German constituent order. The “Satzklammer” requires that the Verb Phrase in sentences with a compound verb (AUX + Verb) be “sandwiched in” between the AUX and the Verb with the Verb coming last in the VP, e.g.,

(1) Ich (haben gestern meinen Freund gesehen) ‘I saw my friend yesterday’.
(2) Ich (werde morgen auf den Mark gehen) ‘I will go to the market tomorrow’.

This basic rule is “disturbed” by a transformation called “Right-Dislocation.” Right-Dislocation allows the movement of a nonessential constituent outside the Satzklammer. A slight pause is necessary to make the sentence grammatical.

(3) Ich (haben gestern auf dem Bahnhof meinen Freund gesehen). (Satzklammer)
(4) Ich (haben gestern meinen Freund gesehen) – auf dem Bahnhof. (Right Dislocation)

Right Dislocation of the direct object meinen Freund is not possible because removing the direct object from the Satzklammer would leave the sentence incomplete. That is, the verb sehen requires a direct object, but it does not require an adverbial of location, time, etc. Sentence (4) is complete without the addition of gestern or auf dem Bahnhof:

(5) Ich habe meinen Freund gesehen.

Without the direct object, the sentence is incomplete:

(6) *Ich habe gestern gesehen.

In other words, Right Dislocation can only apply to nonessential constituents like adverbials. It cannot apply to essential elements like the direct object of a transitive verb:
Clearly, this restriction does not apply to topicalization:

(8)  $S \text{[NP Meinen Freund] [AUX habe] [NP ich] [VP gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen] }_S$

The reason for this appears to be that the topicalized constituent *meinen Freund remains within the clause* $[S \ldots S]$ where as with right dislocation the dislocated constituent is clearly outside the clause as signaled by the necessary pause as in (4) above and the ungrammatical nature of (7).

Dislocation of a necessary constituent, both right and left, require leaving a copy within $[S \ldots S]$. Left dislocated constituents do not, however, follow the case assignment within the clause:

(9)  $\text{Der Direktor – [s ihn haben sie unterschätzt]}_s$ “The director – him they underestimated. (Left-Dislocation)

(10)  $[S \text{Ich habe ihn auf dem Bahnhof gesehen}_s - meinen Freund. }_S$ (Right-Dislocation)

Condition C can be dispensed with entirely since it is a reflection of a more general condition on German grammar – restriction moving constituents outside of the clause.

**A further complication:**

There is a further complication in that most speakers would accept (1) below but none would accept (2):

(1)  Gestern auf dem Bahnhof habe ich meinen Freund gesehen.

(2)  *Gestern meinen Freund habe ich auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.

The reason for this is that the constituent Adverbial can have a complex structure consisting of one or more adverbial phrases. Sentence (2) is ungrammatical because two different constituents are involved – an adverbial and a direct object, violating the V-II rule.

Many speakers who are willing to accept (1) are reluctant to accept (3):

(3)  ?Auf dem Bahnhof gestern habe ich meinen Freund gesehen.

I suspect that the reason for this is that in German the normal constituent order is *time* before *place*. Stacking two adverbials before the auxiliary is a strain. Putting them in marked order as well *place before time* is too much. Thus, (3) is probably stylistically unacceptable, but not actually
ungrammatical. Once again these observations more us a step closer to “the truth,” but do not weaken the basic analysis. Here is the original list of twenty-two “Bahnhofsätze”:

(1) Ich habe meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.
(2) Meinen Freund habe ich gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.
(3) Gestern habe ich meinen Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.
(4) Auf dem Bahnhof habe ich meinen Freund gestern gesehen.
(5) Gesehen habe ich meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof.
(6) Ich habe gestern meinen Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.
(7) Ich habe gestern auf dem Bahnhof meinen Freund gesehen.
(8) Meinen Freund habe ich auf dem Bahnhof gestern gesehen.
(9) Gestern habe ich auf dem Bahnhof meinen Freund gesehen.
(10) Auf dem Bahnhof habe ich gestern meinen Freund gesehen.
(12) Gesehen habe ich gestern auf dem Bahnhof meinen Freund.
(13) Ich habe meinen Freund gestern gesehen - auf dem Bahnhof.
(14) Ich habe meinen Freund gesehen - gestern auf dem Bahnhof.
(18) Gestern habe ich meinen Freund gesehen - auf dem Bahnhof.
(20) Gestern auf dem Bahnhof habe ich meinen Freund gesehen.
(22) Meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen habe ich.

Incorrect constituent order:

(23) *Meinen Freund ich habe gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen.
A Note on the Freezing Parameter in German:

The Freezing Parameter is a small, but important difference between English and German. We have had occasion to mention it a number of times in the text, relying on a simple definition:

Freezing Parameter: If the Freezing Parameter is positive (+), then a subject [1] that has been demoted to an object [2] cannot be promoted to a subject [1] again in a higher clause.

Here we will offer a more detailed explanation of freezing. Consider the following German sentence:

(1) Der Zeuge sah ihn [2].

We can passivize the sentence, moving the direct object to subject position:

(2) Er [1] wurde vom Zeugen gesehen.

This is parallel to English:

(3) The witness saw him [2].
(4) He [1] was seen by the witness.

Now, substitute a clause object for the pronoun in the German sentence:

(5) Der Zeuge sah [NP es [S er [1] ließ die Pistole fallen]]

The pronoun er is raised to the object position of the verb sah (replacing es). The verb in the subordinate clause appears in the infinitive because it no longer has a subject it can agree with:

(6) Der Zeuge sah ihn [2], [die Pistole fallen lassen].

The same operations are possible in English:

(7) The witness saw [NP it [S he [1] dropped the pistol]]
(8) The witness saw him [2] [drop the pistol]

Now, ihn/him is the object of the verb in the first clause. In English, Passive can be applied again, yielding:
(9) He [1] was seen [to drop the pistol by the witness].

In German, a further application of Passive is impossible:

(10) *Er [1] wurde gesehen, [die Pisotle fallen (zu) lassen vom Zeugen].

Since Passive can apply to the object of *sehen* as in (2), it is puzzling that it can’t apply in German, cf. (10) although the English equivalent (9) presents no problems.

The relevant restriction here is the **Freezing Parameter**, as defined above. In German, the parameter is positive. Raising applies in (6), thus further movement by Passive as in (10) is not possible.

In English the Freezing Parameter is set to negative. A noun phrase can be moved freely. Presumably, the default setting of the Freezing Parameter in Universal Grammar is positive. The little language learner assumes that noun phrases can only be moved once in this configuration unless (as in English) evidence to the contrary is encountered, cf. (9).

When one learns a new language where the Freezing Parameter is negative, some effort is required to overcome the default setting in Universal Grammar. Exercises are required. The important thing to note here is that the exercises are not meant to drill patterns, but parameters.

Note, however, that most German speakers do, however, accept sentences like:

(12) Er [1] wurde von der Polizei laufen gelassen ‘He was let go by the police’.

Since “little verbs that have lost their subjects” (as through Raising) become infinitives and here we have a past participle, it is clear that a one-clause construction without Raising is involved. That is, (12) is passive transform of:


with a single verb *laufenlassen*, with the past participle *laufengelassen* not unlike *schwimmengegangen* to *schwimmengehen*. Thus, Raising is not involved in (12) and the Freezing Parameter is not violated.
**Subject-Raising**

The Freezing Parameter when set to positive prevents a subject once demoted to object from being promoted again. There is, however, another movement transformation, Raising-to-Subject, that raises a subject of an embedded clause to the subject position of the next higher clause. Consider:

(2) Es scheint, [dass er [1] (von jemanden [chô]) ermordet worden ist] ‘It seems that he was murdered (by someone)’ (Passive).  
(3) Er [1] scheint, [ermordet worden zu sein] (Raising-to-Subject) ‘He seems to have been murdered’.  

Although (3) is stylistically unusual, it is grammatically well-formed and acceptable to native speakers of German.

Hence, there is no way to avoid the conclusion that *ihn* in the embedded clause of (1) has been moved twice to reach the subject position of the first clause in (3) – once by Passive, yielding (2) and then by Raising-to-Subject, yielding (3).

This confirms our definition of the Freezing Parameter. It is *not* simply moving twice which is prohibited, but demotion followed by promotion ([1] → [2] → [1]). In (1) - (3), we have the sequence [2] → [1] → [1], which does not involve promotion of demoted NPs.
What’s that?
As early as 1924, Otto Jespersen put forward the view that *that* is not a relative pronoun related to the demonstrative as in *I know that*, but rather identical to the conjunction *that*, which introduces a subordinate noun clause as in *I know that you saw the man.* (*The Philosophy of Grammar*, p. 85f.)

He develops this view at length in his mammoth *Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles* (1927:165ff.), and his *Essentials of English Grammar* (1933:361ff.), a one-volume condensation of the former, meant for students. Here is a summary of his arguments:

1. *That* as a demonstrative has the plural *those*. Relative *that* is invariable:

   (1) a. Harry read *that* book/those books.
   b. The book/books *that* Harry read were boring.

2. *That* introducing a relative clause can usually be deleted as is the case with *that* introducing an object clause: Demonstrative *that* cannot:

   (2) a. The books *{that/0}* Sheila read were exciting.
   b. Harry knew *{that/0}* Sheila read those books.
   c. Harry learned *{that/*0}* in school.

3. The pronoun *that* can be the object of a preposition. Relative *that* strands prepositions:

   (3) a. I asked Sheila *about that*.
   b. I hadn’t read the books *that* Sheila asked *about*.
   c. * I hadn’t read the books *about that* Sheila asked.

4. The pronoun *that* is always pronounced with a full vowel: [ðæt], relative that can be pronounced with a reduced vowel [ðt]:

   (4) a. I didn’t know *that ([ðæt]/*[ðt])]*.  
   b. I didn’t know *that ([ðæt]/[ðt])* Sheila was Harry’s wife.
5. If we take relative *that* to be a pronoun, than we must recognize *as, but, than* as pronouns as well. Of course, these are used in more limited contexts than *that*. *As* is used with *such* and *same*. *But* is somewhat archaic and only used in negative contexts. *Than* is only used in comparisons:

(5) a. Harry uses the same toothpaste *as/that* Sheila does.
   b. There were none around me (*but were/that* were not) shipwrecked. (Defoe)
   c. The boot cost more money (*than* they had/all the money *that* they had).

To this we can add our comparison to Bavarian (here in standard German orthography):

(6) a. Das ist der Mann, *wo* die Post bringt.
   b. That is the man *that* brings the mail.
   c. Das ist der Mann, *der wo* die Post bringt.
   d. a doghter *which that* called was Sophie ‘a daughter who was called Sophie’ (Chaucer - Tale of Melibius §1).

Here, certainly, no one would wish to argue that *wo* is a pronoun. Unlike *that*, *wo* cannot be confused with a demonstrative pronoun. Furthermore, (6c) already has a relative pronoun - *der*, so *wo* cannot be anything other than a clause introducing particle as in (6a).

The same argumentation applies to earlier stages of English as (6d) illustrates. The example, from Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* written around 1400, exactly parallels modern Bavarian *der wo*. *Who* for persons was introduced later.
Summary of English Transformations for Problems of English Grammar

1 Subject deletion
The subject of an embedded clause is deleted under identity to a noun in the next higher clause. Because the verb of the lower clause has no subject, it appears as an infinitive.

1.1 Same-Subject Deletion
The subjects of the two clauses are identical:

(1) Harry, wants [NP it [S Harry, drink a cold beer]]
(2) Harry, wants [NP [S 0, to drink a cold beer]].

The unused *it* is removed in (2) by Garbage-Collection.

1.2 Dative Deletion
The subject of the lower clauses is deleted under identity to the indirect object in the upper clause.

(1) Lady Farnsworth told the chauffeur [NP it [S he, drive the guest to the station]]
(2) Lady Farnsworth told the chauffeur [[NP 0, to drive the guest to the station]].

1.3 for-Deletion
The subject of the lower clause (S₂) is deleted under identity to the object of *for* in the upper clause (S₁) yielding (2). In (3), Extraposition has taken place, *for* is removed by Garbage-Collection. In (4) the infinitive clause remains in place and both *for* and *it* are removed:

(1) [S₁ [PP For [NP it [S₂ Bush₁, run the country]]] would be a disaster for Bush₁]
(2) [S₁ [PP For [NP it [S₂ 0₁ to run the country]]] would be a disaster for Bush₁]
(3) [S₁ [NP it] would be a disaster for Bush₁][S₂ 0₁ to run the country]]
(4) [S₂ To run the country would] be a disaster for Bush.

2 Indefinite Subject Deletion
Indefinite subject of the lower clause (*PRO*) is deleted. No identity is involved. The same underlying structure leads to Raising-to-*for* (see below) if the subject is specified. Once again *for* is dropped before *to.*
It is time for it to go.

3 Raising (noun phrase)

The subject of an embedded clause is raised into the next higher clause.

3.1 Raising-to-Object

The subject of the lower clause is raised to object position in the upper clause, replacing it. In the absence of a subject, the verb of the lower clause is in the infinitive form.

(1) It is certain [NP it [NP every student] pass the examination]
(2) [Every student] is certain [to pass the examination].
subject of the verb, if present, is properly in the disjunctive form (me, you, him, her, it, us, them). Because of confusion with the abstract noun in -ing, we often find the genitive instead (cf. my getting for me getting in the example below).

4.1 Verb -Raising to subject position

(1) It is certain
\[ S \]
\[ I \text{ get into the Guinness Book of World Records} \]
(2) \[ NP \text{ Me/My getting into the Guinness Book of World Records} \] is certain.

4.2 Verb-Raising to object position

(1) Sepp \(_i\) likes \[ NP \text{ it } [S \text{ Sepp}_i \text{ watch football on television}] \]
(2) Sepp likes \[ NP \text{ watching football on television} \] (with Same-Subject-Deletion).
(3) Sepp \(_i\) enjoys \[ NP \text{ it } [S \text{ he tell stories about their mountain village}] \]
(4) Sepp \(_i\) enjoys \[ NP \text{ him telling stories about their mountain village} \] (different subjects).

4.3 Verb-Raising to prepositional object

(1) I am looking forward to \[ NP \text{ it } [S \text{ I drink a cold beer}] \]
(2) I am looking forward to \[ NP \text{ drinking a cold beer} \] (with Same-Subject-Deletion).
(3) I am looking forward to \[ NP \text{ it } [S \text{ he drink a real Bavarian beer}] \]
(4) I am looking forward to \[ NP \text{ him drinking a real Bavarian beer} \] (him is disjunctive).

5 Extraposition
A clause subject (less often, a clause object) is moved to the end of the sentence leaving behind it to mark the origin of the movement.
(1) [\text{NP It is obvious}
\hspace{1cm}
\hspace{1cm}
[\text{s That Nixon was lying}]

(2) a. [\text{s That Nixon was lying}] is obvious (without Extraposition).
b. [\text{NP It}] is obvious [\text{s that Nixon was lying}] (with Extraposition).

(3) I hate [\text{NP It}
\hspace{1cm}
\hspace{1cm}
[\text{s that Harry criticizes Sheila in front of her friends}]

(4) I hate [\text{NP It} [\text{s that Harry criticizes Sheila in front of her friends}]] (Extraposition).

6 Passive
The direct object [2] or indirect object [3] of a clause is promoted to subject [1]. The original subject is demoted to a chômeur [chô].

(2) b. A frog [1] was given to her [3] by Fred [chô] (Passive [2] →[1], [1] → [chô]).
(4) d. She [1] was given a frog [2] by Fred [chô] (Passive [3] →[1], [1] → [chô]).

7 Un-Accusative
The direct object of a clause is promoted to an empty subject position. The verb is not passivized.

(1) a. 0 [1] opened the door [2]
(2) b. The door [1] opened (Un-Accusative).

Compare:
(3) Frances [1] opened the door [2]
(4) The door [1] was opened by Frances [chô] (Passive).
8 Nominalization
A verb is changed into an abstract noun and the clause in which it occurs into a noun phrase. The abstract noun may take various forms, e.g., \( \textit{run} \sim \textit{running}, \textit{destroy} \sim \textit{destroying} \) or \( \textit{destruction} \). Both the subject and object of the abstract noun are in the \textit{genitive}. The subjective genitive takes 's, the objective genitive takes \textit{of}.

(1) a. The enemy destroyed the city.
(2) b. [NP The enemy’s destroying of the city]
(3) c. [NP The enemy’s destruction of the city]

Prepositional objects remain unchanged:

(4) a. The troops withdrew from Ruritania.
    b. [NP The troops’ withdrawal from Ruritania]

Passive is also possible:

(4) The troops were withdrawn from Ruritania.
    [NP The withdrawal of the troops from Ruritania]

9 Adverbial Clause Reduction
An adverbial clause in the continuous form loses its conjunction, subject (under identity) and the auxiliary.

(1) a. They caught Dillinger, \( \text{as he was coming out of the movie theater.} \)
    b. They caught Dillinger, \( \text{coming out of the movie theater}. \)
    c. Dillinger was caught \( \text{coming out of the movie theater} \) (with Passive).

10 Relative Clause Formation
Relative clauses are adjective clauses that modify a head noun. In the underlying structure, the relative clause contains a resumptive pronoun that refers to the head noun:

(1) The \textit{man}, \( \text{that I saw} \textit{him} \) was smoking a cigar.

\( \text{man} = \text{head noun, him = resumptive pronoun referring to the head noun} \)
10.1 Relative Clause Formation by coreferent deletion
English and many other languages form relative clauses by simply deleting the resumptive pronoun (coreferent).

(1) a. The man [that I saw him] was smoking a cigar.
   b. The man [that I saw 0] was smoking a cigar.

10.2 Relative Clause Formation with relative pronoun
Relative clauses are also formed by “merging” the resumptive pronoun to a base (wh-) at the head of the clause.

(1) a. The man [who- I saw (hi)-m] was smoking a cigar.
   b. The man [who-m] I saw was smoking a cigar.

10.3 Relative Clause Reduction
Relative clauses that contain a present or past participle can be reduced to form participial relative clauses.

(1) a. Three kings [Adj who were bringing gifts] arrived from the east.
   b. Three kings [Adj bringing gifts] arrived from the east.

(2) a. A Bible [Adj which was printed by Gutenberg] was presented to the library.
   b. A Bible [Adj printed by Gutenberg] was presented to the library.

10.4 Preposition Stranding and Pied-Piping: and Preposition-Attraction
Normally, English deletes or moves the resumptive pronoun after a preposition, leaving the prepositions “stranded” at the end of the clause, but Pied-Piping and Preposition-Attraction are also possible (cf. German below):

(1) a. The man [that I speak of him] is no longer alive (underlying structure).
   b. The man [that I speak of 0] (Coreferent-Deletion, preposition stranded).

(2) a. The man [wh- I speak of him] is no longer alive (underlying structure).
   b. The man [who(m) I speak of 0] (RP-Formation).
   c. The man [of whom I speak] ← of wh + him (Pied-Piping).
(3) a. The man [where I speak of him]

In (3b) the object him is deleted and the preposition is attracted to where, which introduces the relative clause. This construction was common in Shakespeare’s English. It is fundamental to the formation of subordinate clauses in German. See discussion in the next section.
Summary of Additional German Transformations for Problems of English Grammar

1  Topicalization
Topicalization moves a verb phrase constituent to the front of the sentence.

(1) a. Ich habe [vp meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen]
    b. *Gestern ich habe [vp meinem Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen]

Topicalization must be followed by Verb-Subject Inversion.

2  Verb-Subject Inversion
Verb-Subject Inversion reverses the order of the finite verb (i.e., the verb inflected for person) and the subject.

(1) a. Ich habe [vp meinen Freund gestern auf dem Bahnhof gesehen]
    b. Gestern ich habe [vp meinem Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen] (Topicalization)
    c. Gestern habe ich [vp meinem Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen]. (VP-Inversion)

3  Verb-Phrase Inversion
Verb-Phrase Inversion reverses the order of any two constituents of the verb phrase except the verb itself.

(1) a. Gestern habe ich [vp meinem Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen]
    b. Gestern habe ich [vp auf dem Bahnhof meinem Freund gesehen]. (VP-Inversion)

4  Right Dislocation
Right Dislocation moves an optional member of the verb phrase to the right, outside the verb phrase and the clause. In our example, *auf dem Bahnhof* and *gestern* are optional because the sentence would be complete without them: ich sah meinen Freund.

(1) a. [s Gestern habe ich [vp meinem Freund auf dem Bahnhof gesehen] s]
    b. [s Gestern habe ich [vp meinem Freund gesehen] s] - auf dem Bahnhof (Right Dislocation)
5 Passive

   c. * Sie wurde einen Frosch gegeben (not possible).

[2] → [1] is blocked by the Freezing-Parameter in sentences with Subject Raising.

(2) a. Ich sah [NP es [S er lies die Pistole fallen]]
   b. Ich sah [NP ihn [S die Pistole fallenlassen]] Subject-Raising
   c. * Er wurde gesehen [S die Pistole fallen(zu)lassen]

So-called impersonal passive has [1] →[chô] with no promotion. The dummy subject es is required by the V-II rule: The finite verb must be the second constituent in a declarative main clause. If topicalization applies as in (1c), es is replaced by the topicalized constituent.

(3) a. (PRO) hat gestern getantz und gesoffen.
   b. Es wurde gestern getantz und gesoffen (von PRO) [1] →[chô] (dummy subject es).
   c. Gestern wurde getantz und gesoffen (Topicalization of gestern).

6 Pied-Piping and preposition attraction

   b. Der Stift [mit dem ich schreibe] ← mit da-ihm (Pied-Piping)
(2) a. Der Stift [wo ich schreibe mit ihm]
   b. Der Stift [womit ich schreibe 0] ← mit ihm (Preposition-Attraction)

7 Subordinate Clause Formation
German subordinate clauses consist of three elements: clause preposition, object, clause introducing particle of the subordinate clause. One or more of these elements may be left out. The subordinate clause can be seen as an adjective (relative) clause modifying the object of the preposition:
(1) a. *Da freue ich mich* [pp auf dem dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst].
   b. *Da freue ich mich* [pp auf θ dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst] (Obj-Deletion)
   c. *Da(r)auf freue ich mich* [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst] (Prep-Attraction)
   d. *Ich freue mich darauf* [dass du ein bayrisches Bier trinkst]

For the underlying structure, cf. colloquial *Da kann ich nichts für, da wird man nicht dick von.*

With same subject deletion:

(2) a. *Da freue ich mich* [pp auf dem dass *ich* ein bayrisches Bier trinke].
   b. *Ich freue mich darauf* [ein bayrisches Bier zu trinken]. (Same-Subj-Deletion)

Examples of Extraposition without preposition and optional object pronoun:

(3) a. *Ich weiß es* nicht, [wann sie kommt].
   b. *Ich weiß nicht* nicht, [wann sie kommt].

Example with clause introducing particle:

(4) a. *Ich gehe hin,* [wenn du mitkommst].
   b. *Ich gehe hin,* [ob du mitkommst oder nicht].
Review Questions:

**First and second language learning:**

1. What is the difference between first and second language learning?

2. What do children learn when they learn a language besides words and phrases?


4. How is it possible that children who are neighbors learn the same grammar although the topics of conversation are so different (e.g., opera in my house, football at the neighbors)?

5. How can children learn the whole grammar although they are mostly exposed to fragments of sentences like *auf dem Tisch* rather than complete sentences like *Deine Brille liegt auf dem Tisch* ‘Your glasses are lying on the table’.

6. When do we loose the ability to learn “first languages”?

7. Why is school instruction in English so ineffective?

8. Why did rich Romans buy their children educated Greek slaves?

9. What is the Language Acquisition Device (LAD)?

10. What are *principles* and *parameters*?

11. Explain the Overt Subject Parameter.

12. What are the two different interpretations of: *Why do you think [that O.J. did it]*? Why is this sentence ambiguous?

13. Why does German: *Warum denkst du[dass O.J. es getan hat]*? have only one interpretation?

14. How do we express the other interpretation in German? What parameter accounts for this?
Contrastive linguistics and the difficulties of English:

15. Where do second language learners encounter difficulty in learning a foreign language? Give a concrete example using the definite article in English and German.

16. What is interference?

17. What is the mapping problem?

18. What are the two major areas of difficulty for German speakers of English?

19. What is a syntactic rule? Give an example.

20. What is a semantic rule? Give an example.

21. When do we use *some* in a question. When do we use *any*? What kind of rule is this?

22. Why does the sentence *Some Bavarians have blue eyes* seem to imply that some Bavarians do not have blue eyes? Is this a matter of logic?

23. What is wrong with the following sentence: *The man [is waiting for you] looks dangerous.* What kind of rule is involved.

24. School books tell us that a temporal adverb (like *yesterday*) can come at the beginning or the end of the sentence. Is this always the case? What kind of rule is involved?

25. Why is a man who is six- *feet* tall a six- *foot* tall man? What kind of rule is this?

26. Could the twenty acceptable variants of the *Bahnhof*-sentence have been learned from experience? Explain.

27. What is the syntactic relationship between: (a) *Alice thought that the Queen believed that the knave stole the tarts* and (b) *The tarts were thought by Alice to have been believed by the Queen to have been stolen by the Knave*? How does this show that syntax is based on rules?

28. How do we explain the *-ing*-form of the verb in *He’s tired of going to bed early*?
29. The preposition *for* is sometimes followed by an infinitive and sometimes by an *-ing-* form. How do we know which one to use?

30. Why is the sentence *Flying planes can be dangerous* ambiguous?

31. You learned in school that the interrogative pronoun *who* refers to persons. Why do we say: *Which of you stole the tarts?*

32. Consider the sentences (a) *Harry promised Ralph to fix the car* and (b) *Harry promised that he would fix the car.* Who fixes the car in (a), in (b). Explain.

33. Why is it difficult to explain the use of the article *the*?

34. What is the difference between *all, every, any, each*?

35. Does *I can’t get no satisfaction* mean ‘I can get some satisfaction’? Explain.

36. Why do we say: *John and me went to the movies* but not *Me went to the movies*?

37. You learned in school that the forms of the helping verb *be* can always contract with the previous word (e.g., *he is* ~ *he’s*). Does this apply to the following sentence: *He is taller than I am?* Explain.

38. What is the difference between the English and German passive constructions?

39. What is Un-Accusative?

**The English tense and aspect system:**

40. How many tenses does English have? Name them.

41. What is aspect?

42. Explain the following terms: aorist, delimited, durative, iterative, resultative. Give an example of each.

43. What is a “nonvoluntative” verb? Give an example. Why is this category important?
44. What three functions does the so-called present have?

45. Which is a worse insult (a) or (b) explain why: (a) John is a bastard or (b) John is being a bastard?

46. What is the difference between (a) I teach at the University of Applied Sciences in Munich and (b) I am teaching at the University of Applied Sciences in Munich? Explain.

47. What function does the past continuous have. Illustrate with an example.

48. What is the effect of using two past continuous tenses as in: She was thinking of something else all the time you were talking to her.

49. Which form of the verb is used to describe past states or events?

50. What difference is there between the function of the present perfect form in English and German? Can we always use the present perfect in German where it is used in English? How about the other way around?

51. Does the present perfect tell us about what is going on now in English, in German?

52. What English verb form indicates that an activity began at some point of time in the past and is continuing in the present?

53. When do we use the past, the present perfect with just?

54. Explain the difference between the following: (a) Did you see John this morning? and (b) Have you seen John this morning?

55. Explain the difference between the following: (a) You have smoked two cigarettes in the last half hour and (b) You have been smoking two cigarettes for the last half hour.

The future:

56. Does English have a future tense (one that is used to refer to future time alone)?

57. What is meant by grammaticalization?

58. What do the ten English futures forms express?
59. What is the future definite and the future indefinite? Give examples.

60. What is the difference between We shall overcome and We will overcome?

61. Why is the following statement odd: “She is having a baby next Tuesday”?

62. Explain the difference between the following: (a) He hangs next Thursday and (b) He is to hang next Thursday.

63. When can we use the simple present with future meaning?

**Indirect discourse:**

64. What is indirect discourse?

65. How does German use the indicative and the subjunctive in indirect discourse?

66. State the basic indirect discourse rule for English.

67. Can German and English always make the same distinctions between direct and indirect discourse?

68. When must we use a past tense verb after a verb of saying in the past.

69. When, in English, must we use a past tense in indirect discourse to refer to future events in direct discourse

70. In colloquial English, if and whether are used more or less interchangeably. When must we use whether in indirect discourse?

71. What is the English equivalent of Ich wusste, dass Du kommst? What is the English rule?

**Conditions:**

72. What are the two basic kinds of conditions?

73. What are the three basic time forms for conditions?
74. What is the basic contrastive problem between German and English regarding conditions?

75. When can German use würde, etc. in an if-clause? When can English use would in an if-clause?

The subjunctive:

76. What are the English equivalents of Konjunktiv I and II in German?

77. What is the only verb that has separate forms for the “Konjunktiv II” in English?

78. When do we use the Konjunktiv I in German? How does the English usage differ? What kinds of verbs in English require subjunctive complements? What kind of rule is this (syntactic, semantic, etc.)?

79. How do we explain the difference between the following use of subjunctive and indicative after asked: (a) I asked that he remove his feet from the table and (b) I asked him what time it was.

80. Explain the difference between the following: (a) It is fitting that he be hanged and (b) It is fitting that he was hanged.

81. Explain the difference between the following: (a) He talks as if he were rich and (b) He talks like he is rich.

The complementation system:

82. What is a phrase?

83. What is a clause?

84. What is a complement? What are the four different kinds of complement. Give examples.

85. How can we distinguish between an abstract noun and a gerund?

86. What is the difference in meaning between I don’t like him driving and I don’t like his driving? How can we explain this difference?

87. Why is the sentence Flying planes can be dangerous ambiguous?
88. Why do the sentences *Flying planes can be dangerous* and *To fly planes can be dangerous* mean the same thing? Give the derivations to support your answer.

89. Both English and German have participial adjectives as in *falling leaves/fallende Blätter*. What difference do we find if we extend the participle with *in the autumn/im Herbst*?

90. What is an absolute participial construction? How do express this construction in German (or in your language)?

91. What are “clause prepositions” and “clause-introducing particles”?

92. Consider verbs with prepositional objects like *to look forward to/sich freuen auf*. How do German and English differ as to how they handle clause complements like *I drink a cold beer/ich trinke ein kalt Bier*?

93. Explain the difference between *I like being independent/I like to be independent*. What semantic features of the verb *like* account for this difference?

94. How can we explain this (previous question) using aspect?

95. Explain the difference between *I saw him crossing the street/I saw him cross the street*. How does the German equivalent *ich sah ihn, die Straße überqueren* compare to the two English possibilities. How about your language?

96. In which case are we no longer friends? *I stopped talking to her last week/I stopped to talk to her last week*? Explain.

97. In German we can say *wir gingen schwimmen/wir gingen schlafen*. Can we use the equivalent English construction *we went + verb-ing* in both of these cases? What rule is involved?

98. What is Extraposition? What kind of sentential subjects allow it?

99. One of the equivalents of German *Nachdem er das Fenster öffnete, steckte er den Kopf hinaus* is *After he had opened the window, he stuck his head out*. Give the other two.

Relative clauses:

100. What part of speech (noun, adjective, determiner, verb, etc.) does a “relative clause” function as?
101. Give examples of the four kinds of relative clauses in English classified according to the kinds of verbs they contain. Does German have equivalent constructions? How about your language?

102. What is the difference between a defining, restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses?

103. When do we use commas to set off relative clauses in English, in German?

104. When can we leave out the clause boundary marker (who, which, that)?

105. Is that a relative pronoun?

106. What is a complex relative clause? Does German have these too? Your language?

107. What is preposition stranding?

108. Give the English equivalent of Wer auf einem Tiger reitet, steigt nicht leicht wieder ab. What important difference is there between the German and the English construction?

109. Consider the following: He looked like a professor – which he was. What kind of clause is introduced by which. How do you know?

110. How do we explain “classifiers” like the fact in The fact that John has blood on his hands doesn’t prove he’s guilty?

111. What is the difference between I ’m not the fool that you take me for and I ’m not the fool who you take me for? How can we explain this?

112. Why is *She lost the best friend who she ever had unacceptable?

113. What are reduced relative clauses?

114. What is the difference in meaning between (a) There was no one who knew him that thought he was honest and (b) There was no one who knew him but thought he was honest?

115. Give the underlying structure of The house Jack built for Jill to live in burned down. Explain how the surface structure is derived.
116. Why is it obvious that “parasitic gaps” are derived from relative clauses?

117. What is the English equivalent of Bavarian wo in relative clauses like *deà Breiss, wo gjodld hâd ‘der Preuße, wo gejodelt hat’.*
Sources and Inspiration:


