A Case for the Declarative Performative Verb: Dependent and Independent Conjunction in Moore and English

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Moore, a Niger-Congo language spoken in Upper Volta (West Africa), shows a clear distinction between two fundamental types of sentence conjunction which I shall call dependent and independent. In the former the actions expressed in the conjoined sentences are connected in a sequential or simultaneous dependence (e.g. 'He cooked the meat and (then) ate it.' but *'He ate the meat and (then) cooked it.') In the latter type the sentences are stated as independent facts, though they may be in reality sequentially related (e.g. 'He cooked the meat, and he ate it too.' or 'He ate the meat, and he (was the one who) cooked it too.') I shall suggest in this paper that the notion of a higher sentence containing an abstract declarative performative verb as the obligatory matrix for all declarative sentences such as J. Ross has put forward in his paper,"On Declarative Sentences" can formally account for these two types of conjunction by analyzing dependent conjunction as conjunction between sentences within the complement of a single performative verb and by analyzing independent conjunction as conjunction between performative sentences, each with its own complement. Finally I shall show that a similar distinction exists in English sentence conjunction.

In Moore there occurs after the principal verb of every declarative sentence a post-verbal particle, me, which I shall call the declarative particle.

1)a) a waa me. he come-P D. 'He has come; he came.'[1]
b) a wata me. he come-I D. 'He is coming; he comes.'

This same declarative particle is also obligatorily present in the complements of verbs of declaration such as say, tell, etc.

2) a yeela me tí bamb waa me. he say-P D that they come-P D.
'He said that they have come.'

The declarative particle does not occur in the complements of verbs of command:

3) a yeela me tí bamb wa. he say-P D that they come.
'He said for them to come.'

nor does it appear in the complements of verbs of desiring:

4) a data me tì bamb wa. he want-I D that they come.
'He wants them to come.'

The conjunctive particle which conjoins all sentences, regardless of whether their subjects are identical or not, in independent conjunction is la. Every sentence in an independently conjoined group must contain the declarative particle.

5)a) aKulg$_i$ kula me la a$_i$ gaanda me.
Kulga$_i$ go home-P D and he$_i$ lie down-P D.
'Kulga went home, and he went to bed.'
b) aKulg kula me la aTene gaanda me.
Kulga go home-P D and Tene lie down-P D.
'Kulga went home, and Tene went to bed.'

In dependent conjunction la conjoins only sentences with identical subjects (cf.6); dependently conjoined sentences with non-identical subjects are conjoined by ti (cf. 7). The first of any series of dependently conjoined sentences must contain the declarative particle, but only the first. All subsequent sentences do not have the declarative particle and their verbs are in a neutral, aspectless form.[2]

6)a) aKulg$_i$ kula me la a$_i$ gaande.
Kulga$_i$ go home-P D and he$_i$ lie down.
'Kulga went home and went to bed.'
b)*aKulg kula me la aTene gaande.
7)a) aKulg kula me t'aTene gaande.
Kulga go home-P D and Tene lie down.
'Kulga went home and (then) Tene went to bed.'
b)*aKulg$_i$ kula me t'a$_i$ gaande.

Only dependent conjunction may reduce to VP conjunction:

8)a) aKulg kula me n gaande.
Kulga go home-P D and lie down.
'Kulga went home and went to bed.'
b)*aKulg kula me n gaanda me.

(n is the conjunctive particle for VP conjunction.)
Sentential conjunction that occurs within the complement of a verb of declaration must be dependent conjunction.

9)a) a yeela me t'aTene$_i$ kula me {la a$_i$ / n} gaande
he say-P D that Tene$_i$ go home-P D and (he$_i$) lie down.
'He said that Tene went home and went to bed.'
b) a yeela me t'aTene$_i$ kula me la a$_i$ gaanda me.
he say-P D that Tene$_i$ go home-P D and he$_i$ lie down-P D.
'He said that Tene went home, and (I say) he went to bed.'

In (9b) the last sentence can only be interpreted as being conjoined to the matrix verb say. That Tene went to bed is not being attributed to the complement of the verb say (yeele), but rather it is something that is added by the speaker of the entire utterance.

One further point of interest is the behavior of the negative in relation to the two types of conjunction.[3] There is evidence that the negative, as well as certain other modals and adverbs, is a separate verb which takes as its complement the sentence which it negates. (I will not take the space to review this evidence here, but a detailed analysis can be found in my Ph.D. dissertation

on Moore.) The basic form of the negative is pa placed before the main verb. A particle ye may occur at the end of the sentence which the negative negates. This final particle gives an indefinite sense to the negation. (The declarative particle is not present when ye is present.)[4]

10) a) a pa waa me. he not come D. 'He didn't come (at all).'
b) a pa wa ye. he not come ye. 'He hasn't come (yet).'

When the negative comes at the head of a dependently conjoined series, no other negative may occur with any of the other verbs in the series. In other words, there may be only one negative for a dependent series.

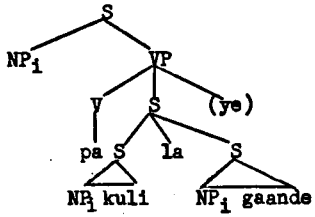
11)a) a_i pa kula me {la a_i / n} gaande.
he$_i$ not go home D and (he$_i$) lie down.
'He didn't go home and go to bed.'
b)*a pa kula me {la a / n} ka gaande.

If the indefinite particle occurs with the negative, it must come at the end of the entire series:

12)a) a_i pa kul {la a_i / n} gaand ye.
he$_i$ not go home and (he$_i$) lie down ye.
'He hasn't gone home and gone to bed.'
b)*a pa kul ye {la a / n} gaande.

Thus in (11a) and (12a) there is a single negation whose scope is the entire conjoined series. The base structure is illustrated in (13).

13)



On the other hand, in independent conjunction the scope of negation never extends over more than a single sentence.

14)a) a pa kula me la a gaanda me.
he not go home D and he lie down-P.D.
'He didn't go home, but he went to bed.'
b) a pa kul ye la a gaanda me.
he not go home ye and he lie down-P.D.
'He hasn't gone home (yet), but he's gone to bed.

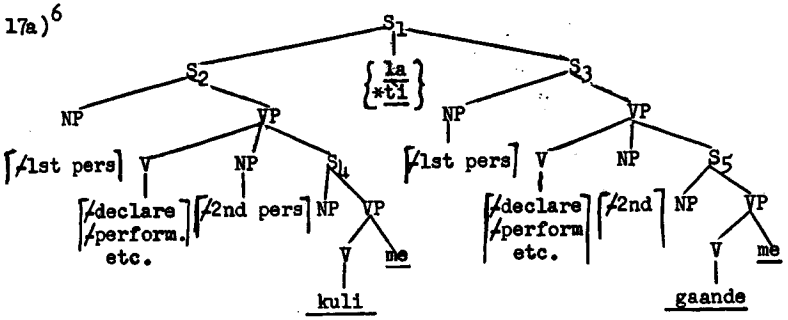
15)a) a kula me la a pa gaanda me.
he go home-P D and he not lie down D.
'He went home, but he didn't go to bed.
b) a kula me la a pa gaand ye.
he go home-P D and he not lie down ye.
'He went home,but he hasn't gone to bed.
16)a) a pa kula me la a pa gaanda me.
he not go home D and he not lie down D.
'He didn't go home, and he didn't go to bed.
b) a pa kul la a pa gaand ye.
he not go home and he not lie down ye.
'He hasn't gone home and he hasn't gone to bed.'

(11a) and (12a) are not reductions of (16a) and (16b). Because of the fact that the scope of negation in dependent conjunction extends over the whole series, there is a semantic ambiguity to (11a) and (12a). One may deny the statement: 'John went home and went to bed.' for 3 possible reasons: a)Itis false that John went home but true that he went to bed; b) it is true that John went home but false that he went to bed; c)it is false that John went home and false that he went to bed. This is equivalent to the logical equation $\sim(P \cdot Q) \equiv (\sim P \cdot Q) \vee (P \cdot \sim Q) \vee (\sim P \cdot \sim Q)$ where the left hand side of the equation is a representation of the base tree in (13). The 3 disjoint statements in the right side are equivalent to the unambiguous independently conjoined sentences of (14) - $(\sim P \cdot Q)$, (15) - $(P \cdot \sim Q)$, and (16) - $(\sim P \cdot \sim Q)$. For someone to utter (11a) or (12a) he would have to have the knowledge embodied in either (14), (15), or (16) as a presupposition.

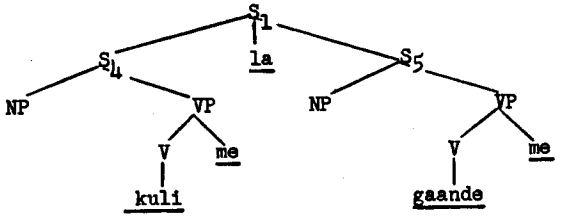
We have, then, the following facts to account for: 1) the difference in deep structure between dependent and independent conjunction; 2) the fact that the same conjunction (la) which conjoins both sentences with identical and non-identical subjects in independent conjunction is used to conjoin only sentences with identical subjects in dependent conjunction; 3)the presence of the declarative particle (me) in all sentences of any independently conjoined group but only in the first of a dependently conjoined series; 4) the difference in scope of the negative (and other such verbs) in dependent and independent conjunction.[5]

If we accept the existance of a declarative performative as postulated by Ross, all of the above facts can be explained. First, let us say that this abstract performative verb belongs to that class of verbs of declaration noted in example (2), which take a sentential complement in which the verb must be followed by the declarative particle me. Secondly, every declarative utterance is embedded as the complement of such a performative. We can then account for independent conjunction as conjunction between performative sentences as exemplified by the base tree in (17a). All of S_2 and S_3 except their sentential complements will be deleted leaving the surface tree in (17b). Dependent is explained as conjunction within the complement of a single performative as shown in the base tree (18). (In the surface all of S_1 except the sentential complement S_2 is deleted.)

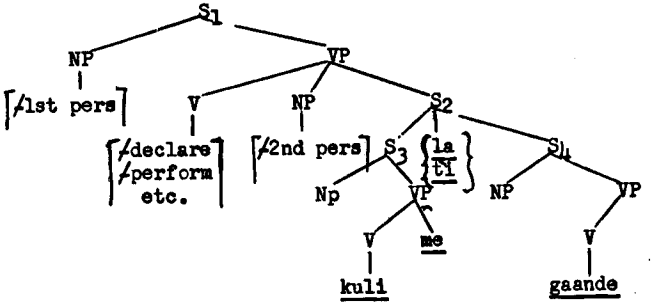
17a)[6]



17b)



18)



Since all performative declarative verbs have a 1st person singular subject, all conjunction between performative sentences involves identical subjects, regardless of whether or not the subjects of the complement sentences are identical. There is now a very simple rule for insertion of conjunctive particles: sentences with identical subjects are conjoined by la (this includes all performative sentences) and sentences with non-identical subjects are conjoined by ti.

As for the declarative particle, we can now formulate a rule which inserts me after the first verb in the complement of any verb with the feature [+declare]. (This will include, of course, non-performative verbs such as yeele 'say'.) In (17a) both the verb of S_4 and that of S_5 receive a declarative particle. In (18) only S_3 receives a particle. (Actually, the trees in (17a) and

(18) represent a stage in derivation which is post conjunctive particle insertion and post declarative particle insertion.)

That the scope of the negative can extend over more than one sentence in dependent but not in independent conjunction is explained by the fact that a performative verb cannot be negated. In other words, there is no negative performative verb, so negative is confined to complements like other non-performatives.

Before concluding, I would like to add some examples which seem to indicate that the same two types of conjunction are present in English, though not as clearly marked in the surface as in Moore. The 'additional' adverbs too and also and their negative reflex either when occurring in unreduced sentence conjunction take as their scope of modification only the sentence which immediately precedes. They have the function of 'adding' that sentence to the one which in turn precedes it.

19)a) John went home, and he went to bed too.
b) John didn't go home, and he didn't go to bed either.

(19a) and (19b) are equivalent to the independently conjoined sentences (in Moore) in (5a) and (16). In both (19a) and (19b) each of the sentences in the conjoined pair has a primary stress, with the stress falling on bed in each case in the second sentence. (The subjects are identical in all English examples cited) When too or either appears with a series of dependently conjoined VP's, however, it always takes the entire series as the scope of its modification.

20)a) John went home and went to bed too.
b) John didn't go home and go to bed either.

In (20a) and (20b) there is only one primary stress for the whole series and there is an understood preceding sentence stating that someone else did the same thing as John. Notice that a reduction of the independent conjunction of (19a) and (19b) produces conjoined VP's which are separated by a slight pause. Also, the primary stress on bed remains, and the negative in the second sentence cannot be deleted (cf. 22c).

21)a) John went home, and went to bed too.
b)*John went home and went to bed too.
22)a) John didn't go home, and didn't go to bed either.
b)*John didn't go home and go to bed either.
c)*John didn't go home, and go to bed either.

The above facts indicate that (20a) and (20b) are not reductions of (19a) and (19b), whereas (21a) and (22a) are. It is my contention that the base structure for the sentences of (19) is like that shown in (17a) and that of (20) like the tree in (18). I also contend that the negative in English, like in Moore, belongs to a separate sentence which enables it to include an entire dependent series in its scope (cf. 20b). This means that (20b) has the same syntactic and presuppositional properties that were attributed to (11a) and (12a) above.[7]

While in Moore dependent conjunction optionally reduces to VP conjunction, in English such reduction is obligatory. (There is no direct translation equivalent in English of (6a) and unreduced (11a).) On the other hand, English permits optional reduction of independent conjunction to VP conjunction, but Moore does not (cf. 8b).

In summary, I have shown that in Moore there are two types of conjunction, dependent and independent, and that by adopting the idea of a declarative performative verb we can explain in a natural way these two types of conjunction as well as such related facts as the lack of the non-identical subject conjunction (tì) and the exclusive use of the identical subject conjunction (1a) in independent conjunction; the different behavior of the declarative particle (me) in the two types of co-ordination; and the differing scopes of the negative. In addition I have provided evidence that suggests that the same two types of conjunction exist in English and that the performative analysis put forward for Moore will also work for English.

NOTES

1) For the sake of clarity I shall use only intransitive verbs to illustrate the declarative particle, since when followed by an NP or adverb it elides and is present only tonally. With the exception of the complementizers tí and tì and the conjunctive particle tì, I shall not mark tone. After each Moore example I have provided both a literal translation and an English gloss. In the literal translations I have used the following symbols: P = perfective; I = imperfective; D = declarative.

2) There are certain exceptions to this which I will not discuss here. But the central fact is that in independent conjunction all verbs must show aspect.

3) The following remarks about the scope of negation in conjunction also apply to modals such as 'will' and adverbs such as 'still', 'again', 'then', 'sometimes','if' and many others all of which are verbs in Moore. They have the same relationship to the sentences they modify as the negative in the tree in (13) below. Because of limitations of space, I shall discuss only the negative.

4) The lack of aspect on the main verb wa ('come') is due to the fact that it is an infinitival complement of the negative verb pa. The final -a on wa (in 10a) and on all verbs is a complement marker and not a sign of aspect. The perfective aspect is indicated by tone,and so will not be apparent in the Moore sentence. The aspect or lack of it can always be remarked in the literal translation. (cf. note 1)

5) An additional difference between the two types of coordination is that in general only sentences with non-stative verbs can enter into dependent conjunction. Two sentences, one with a stative verb and the other with a non-stative or where both have stative verbs, can only be independently conjoined. I shall not discuss this facet further in this paper.

6) It will be noted that sentential complements are not represented in this analysis as being dominated by NP. There

are many arguments against such an analysis in Moore.
7) I will not attempt an analysis of *too*, *also*, and *either* in this paper, since that would demand the presentation of additional facts, which would lead us too far afield. I introduce them here merely to demonstrate the two types of sentence conjunction.

REFERENCES

1) Peterson, Thomas H. AGenerative Analysis of the Tone System and Syntax of Moore, unpublished (and unfinished) Ph.D. dissertation.

2) Ross, J. "On Declarative Sentences", unpublished mimeo, MIT (1968)