

Chapter 1
Linguistics: the scientific study of language

Part II: EXERCISES

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Introductory note to the exercises

The exercises in this book will be accompanied by the abbreviations (T), (L) and (E). The abbreviation (T) stands for 'tie in', and it serves to signal that a particular exercise ties in with the material in the preceding chapter. Such tie-in exercises are signalled by footnotes in the chapter. The abbreviation (L) stands for 'look ahead' and it signals that the material covered in the exercise will be taken up in a later chapter. The abbreviation (E) stands for 'expansion' and it signals that the material covered in the exercise goes beyond that covered in the book. Since the material contained in them has been covered, T-exercises will tend to be 'easier' than L-exercises or E-exercises. Sometimes exercises will combine tie-in elements with new material that is to be treated in a later chapter, in which case we will label them as (T,L). Alternatively

they may partly be exercises of the material in the chapter to which new material is added. Such exercises are labelled (T,E).

Some of the E-exercises will include longer discussion of particular points. Exercises 11 and 12 of this chapter are examples. The reason why the discussion in these exercises is not included in the main body of the text is that the exercises are intended only as illustrations of how research topics can be pursued in linguistics. Using the argumentation developed in the text, the discussions show how particular issues can be picked up and developed further. These 'discursive exercises' typically will not offer an exhaustive or a definitive treatment of the issues in question. Rather, they illustrate how an analysis can be called into question and may have to be reworked in the light of new data or of new theoretical proposals. Recall that scientific theories are not static. A scientific theory is not a painting that you can admire but that essentially is 'dead' in that nothing in it can alter. Science is a search, it is active and alive.

In any branch of science there are only two possibilities. There is either nothing left to discover, in which case why work on it, or there are big discoveries yet to be made, in which case, what the scientists say now is likely to be false. (Nigel Calder, Author of *Magic Universe: The Oxford Guide to Modern Science*. Cited in the *Guardian*, 3.6.4, page 6, col.2)

Exercise 1: Exploiting multiple meaning (T)

- (1) The following is a letter to the editor published in *The Guardian* (13.9.1997, p. 8). Discuss the interpretation of the extract.

Branching out

I was amazed to read in your article about Marc Bolan (The King and I, September 11) that '... a headstone is to be erected by the tree that killed him.' I presume you will be giving full coverage to this example of arboreal largesse and perhaps you will even print extracts of the tree's speech?

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Discuss how the potential for multiple interpretation is exploited the following extracts.

- (2) A couple of hunters are out in the woods when one of them falls to the ground. He doesn't seem to be breathing. The other whips out his mobile phone and calls the emergency services. He gasps out to the operator: 'My friend is dead! What can I do?' The operator, in a calm soothing voice says: 'Just take it easy. First, let's make sure he's dead.' There is silence, then a shot is heard. The guy's voice comes back on the line. He says 'OK, now what?' (*Guardian* G2, 20.12.1, page 4, col.6; 'The world's funniest joke')
- (3) A man spots a farmer standing in a field in the rain. 'Why?' he asks. The farmer replies: 'I am trying to win a Nobel Prize. You get one for being out standing in your field.' (*Observer*, 10.10.4, page 19, col 5)
- (4) My most vivid memory of him and us students was waiting for a train at Victoria and telling jokes in the manner of 'Will the people who took the train on platform seven please bring it back?' (*Guardian*, 22.11.2, page 9; col.6, Letter to the editor, Edward Lynton)
- (5). 'George Best was a fantastic football player and he would have been even better if he'd been able to pass night-clubs the way he passed the ball,' Docherty said of the errant star. (based on *The Guardian* 31.7.2, page 3, col.4)
- (6) Mr Howard said that under Labour a teacher is assaulted every seven minutes (as in the old joke, 'and he's getting pretty damns sick of it'.) (*Guardian*, 1.7.4, page 2, col.7)
- (7) (i) I have always found the advice on medicine bottles to 'keep out of reach of children' to be advice well worth following. (*Guardian*, 18.2.2., page 13, col.4, letter to the editor, from David Carter.)
(ii) Another unintended message: Marks and Sparks' advice to its customers, as printed on all their plastic shopping bags, is: 'To avoid suffocation, keep away from children.' (*Guardian*, 18.2.2., page 13, col.4, letter to the editor, from Dick Brown)

Exercise 2: Ambiguity (T)

The following passages are extracts from published written material. In each of the extracts some segments gives rise to more than one interpretation and could potentially lead to misunderstandings. Sometimes the ambiguity is highlighted in the passage because it is exploited by the author, but in most cases the ambiguity may well go unnoticed because the

context of the extract will privilege one reading rather than the other. Discuss the ambiguities that arise in the examples and identify the linguistic elements that give rise to the multiple interpretations. After you have dealt with the examples one by one try to classify them in terms of the cause of the ambiguity.

- (1) Jackie Child's youngest daughter was just two when she was jailed for manslaughter nine years ago. (*Guardian*, G2, 27.7.1, page 10, col.1)
- (2) 'Have a fag.'
'You're making me into a smoker, Mrs Anthony. Thanks, I will. But you should try to cut them down, they aren't too good for you.'
'Twenty a day since I was twenty-five and seventy yesterday,' said Mrs Anthony.
'Seventy! Gracious, you'll be ... '
'Seventy years of age yesterday.'
'Oh, Seventy. Isn't it time you had a rest then?'
(Muriel Spark, *Memento Mori*, MacMillan 1959, Penguin, 1961, 1977: 54)
- (3) If you feel threatened in a taxi, firmly ask the driver to stop and get out. (based on *Guardian*, G2, 7.3.3, page 7, col.2)
- (4) Perhaps they hadn't intended to kill, only confront him jointly, threaten and shock. But the French cook's knife had been handy, lying on the table maybe. (Rendell, Ruth. 1994, *An Unkindness of Ravens*. Arrow books, 213)
- (5) 'I can't get used to wearing my engagement ring yet. The other day I even scratched my nose with it because it's so big – the ring I mean.' (based on 'Diana, a tribute.' *Sunday Times Supplement, Style*, 7 September 1997, page 11.)
- (6) In the survey, 200 couples were asked to keep reading diaries for three weeks. (*Guardian*, 27.5.2, page 8, col.8)
- (7) What funny story about your life do you tell your grandkids (if you've got any)?
Do you mean, if I've got any funny stories, or any grandchildren. As it happens I have three grandchildren and no funny stories. (*Independent*, interview Gore Vidal. 11.8.1999, page 7, col.6)
- (8) We need more robust measures. (Headline, *Guardian*, 29.11.3, page 20)
- (9) Error lets bad meat trader off the hook (headline) (*Guardian*, 24.5.4, page 6, col 7)

Comment on the interpretation of the underlined sections in the following passages:

- (10) a Since 2003 individual drivers have also been subject to a licensing regime and it is a source of some satisfaction to drivers of black cabs that many mini cab drivers and firms have struggled to comply. 'The mini cabs are in dire straits,' claimed Mr. Oddy. 'In reality people need moving around London and mini cabs don't to the same sort of work black cab drivers do.' (*Guardian*, 3.9.4, page 14, col 6)
- b Rhys Jones lived in the penthouse and a swimming pool was built in the basement. 'Black-cab drivers ask me if he still lives there,' says Ellis. (*Observer Magazine*, 25.7.4, page 38, col.3)

Discuss the orthography in (10b).

Exercise 3: Time specifications and their interpretations (T)

Discuss the interpretation of the underlined time specifications in the following examples.

- (1) Tony Blair admitted that he had run into 'tough times' in recent months yesterday. (*Independent*, 5.9.3, page 2, col.1)
- (2) Mr Straw decided to appoint a panel of Independent doctors to examine General Pinochet on January 5. (*Guardian*, 13.1.2000, page 1, col.3)¹
- (3) We found out that he had been given a scholarship to the RAF just after the accident, which was an awful timing (*Guardian*, 19.5.1., page 4, col.8)
- (4) Men who use internet chatrooms to 'groom' young girls for sex were warned that they face long jail terms yesterday. (*Guardian*, 16.10.3, page 5, col.1)
- (5) George Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, formally made the long anticipated announcement of his plan to retire from office in the autumn yesterday. (*Guardian*, 9.1.2., page 3, col 1)

Exercise 4: Auxiliary (T)

¹ For discussion of this example see also Chapter 2, section 1.1.

In section 2.2.1 of the chapter we roughly defined auxiliaries as follows:

A provisional (and very approximate) characterisation of auxiliaries, to be refined in chapter 3, is that they are elements that are typically followed by a verb.

Discuss the appropriateness of the definition on the basis of the following examples:

- (1) James is definitely writing another novel.
- (2) Has James already finished his novel?
- (3) He hasn't talked to his publisher yet but he will soon.
- (4) I promised I would get you a present and get you a present, I will.
- (5) The baby is asleep in its cot.²

Exercise 5: Copula *be* (T)

On the basis of (1) show that *be* is an auxiliary when followed by the progressive participle:

- (1) The baby is sleeping in its cot.

Consider now (2):

- (2) The baby is asleep.

In this example *be* relates a subject, *the baby* and an adjective *asleep*. The adjective expresses a property of the subject and this use of the adjective is often referred to as **predicative**.

Copula *be* links a subject and a predicate. In (2) copula *be* is not followed by another verb.

Examine the morphological and distributional properties of *be* when used as a copula. Does copula *be* behave as a lexical verb or as an auxiliary? Provide arguments for your answer.

Exercise 6: Copula *be* and other linking verbs (T)

Consider the examples below.

² See also Exercise 5.

- (1) Mary was very tense.
- (2) Mary seemed very tense.
- (3) Mary remained very tense.
- (4) Mary became very tense.
- (5) Mary looked very tense.

In each of these examples we basically ascribe a property 'very tense' to the referent of the name *Mary*. The link between the property and the subject is established by means of the words *was*, *seemed*, *remained*, *became*, *looked*. What is the category of these words? Are they auxiliaries or full verbs? Motivate your answer.

Exercise 7: 'Emphatic *do*' (T)³

Consider the underlined occurrences of *do* in the following examples. Can we eliminate *do* and preserve a grammatical sentence? It turns out that if we eliminate *do* we must attach the inflection that is associated with *do* to the verb itself and the resulting sentences will be acceptable. Looking at the contexts in which the sentences with *do* are used: try to identify a common contextual factor that relates all these examples.

- (1) I don't remember much of anything she said in the church foyer or what I uttered back. She had that dazzling effect on me. Truth is, she still does. What I do recall is that she invited me to a holiday party two nights later at the mutual friend's place. (*Chicago Tribune*, 22.12.3, Section 13, page 9, col.1)
- (2) Coleman, who describes himself as a 'semi-professional punter', gave evidence at a trial in Southampton in October 2001 and his statements to the court then will form the basis of the case against him. It is still not clear if he will turn up for the 10 a.m. hearing at the club's headquarters in London, but the feeling at Portman Square yesterday was the he would indeed appear to defend himself. ...If Coleman does

³ See also Chapter 3, section 1.2.3.2. for discussion.

- appear this morning, the Jockey Club may also wish to inquire about another part of the evidence. (*Guardian*, 22.1.3, page 14, col.1+2)
- (3) On Tuesday Clarett disputed the contention of university officials that he had failed to file the proper paperwork that would have allowed him to attend the funeral. ... Each side is right, Clarett did fill out the papers but filled them out too late to receive tickets to fly home. (*New York Times*, 2.1.3., page D1; col.1)
- (4) Jackson is hardly a virgin forest. Like most of the state's redwood land, it has been logged intermittently since about the middle of the 19th century..... But the forest does have thousands of acres of 80- to 100-year old redwoods (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 28.11.2. A34,col.1)
- (5) I'm probably more benevolent towards Mr Livingstone than a lot of people and I actually do think he's very brave in trying congestion charging. (*Guardian*, 3.1.3, page 3, col.4)
- (6) People close to Senate leader Tom Daschle say he should be considered a possible candidate, but many Democrats say they would be surprised if he does run. (*Atlanta Journal constitution*, 1.12.2, page A6, col.5)
- (7) But that's the trouble with middle-aged men these days: they're so busy trying to convince the world that they really do like Eminem that they have forgotten several decades of their past (*Los Angeles Times*, 26.11.2, page E13, col.3)
- (8) In the new report, mice that were fed only every other day – but could gorge on the days they did eat – saw similar health benefits to ones that had their diet reduced by 40 percent. (*Washington Post*, 29.4.3 page A3, col.5)
- (9) We were told journalism is a science. It didn't make sense then nor does it now. But it does make sense that we were learning a profession. (adapted from *Washington Post* 29.4.3, page A22, col.4).
- (10) When it was first established in 1900, the Nobel committee clearly thought [the Peace Prize] should be awarded to people who really did believe in peaceful solutions and non-violence. (*Guardian*, 7.12.2, page 10, col 1)

Exercise 8. Contextually related ellipsis (L)⁴

⁴ We will be looking at the relevance of ellipsis for determining structure in Chapter 2, section 1.6.

As shown by examples (2) and (7) in Exercise 2, material from a sentence may sometimes be omitted or deleted. The omitted material can usually be recovered from the context. In the following examples locate all instances of ellipsis. Identify which material has been omitted. Indicate the ellipsis by means of the symbol \emptyset and consider which element immediately precedes it.

Example

- (a) I asked him to write the report but he wouldn't.
- I asked him to write the report but he wouldn't \emptyset .
- Omitted material: *write the report*;
 \emptyset is preceded by the contraction of the auxiliary *would* + negation

- (1) He wants to be the boss. In Silver Spring yesterday, he was. (*Guardian* 23.10.2, page 1, col.5)
- (2) When he first ran for office four years ago, Gov. Gray Davis vowed to save California's old-growth forests. He hasn't, as Moloney sees it, and she wants him to live up to that long-ago campaign promise. (*Los Angeles Times*, 26.11.2, page B7, col.2)
- (3) A lot of prisoners lie and say they are sorry about something when they are not. (*Guardian*, 17.1.3. page 1, col.30)
- (4) This study compared complications in 552 ARF patients in the intensive care unit at four academic hospitals, 326 of whom received diuretics on a particular day and 226 who did not. (*Los Angeles Times*, 26.11.2, page F7, col.1)
- (5) Whitelaw had given his word to be loyal to her, and he was. (*Guardian*, G2, 11.9.2, page 4, col.4)
- (6) Sometimes I feel like I would like to crawl away and hide. But I will not. (*Guardian*, 11.12.2, page 1, col.2)
- (7) I have never been to Australia, but a friend who has assures me that Moody is quite correct. (*Guardian*, Sport, 14.12.2, page 4, col.3)
- (8) After all, Francesca's hardly news any more. We are all trying to forget her. As if we could. Although we should. I can't. (Francis Fyfield, *Undercurrents* Warner books 2001, p. 50. First published/ Little Brown and Company 2001)

- (9) We're also keen to have a meeting with all parties and find out what's gone wrong, because it's obvious something has. (*Guardian* , 13.12.2, page 15 , col.4)
- (10) Under government policy, Cubans who make it to shore are generally allowed to stay, while those who do not are sent back to their homeland. (*New York Times*, 28.11.2, page A26, col.2)

Exercise 9: Substitutes for units containing a verb (L)⁵

In the previous exercise we saw that to avoid repetition, a string of words is sometimes omitted. In examples (2), (4), (6), (7-10), the omitted strings contained a verb. For instance: (8) has 3 ellipsis sites:

- (i) a We are all trying to forget her. As if we could Ø. Although we should Ø. I can't Ø.

The symbol Ø stands for *forget her*:

- (i) b We are all trying to forget her. As if we could forget her. Although we should forget her. I can't forget her.

In each case, the ellipsis site is preceded by an auxiliary: in (i) the relevant auxiliaries are *could, should, can't*.

In the examples below the repetition of a string of words is avoided not by omitting it but by substituting it by one word or by a short string of words. The substitutes are underlined in the examples. Identify which strings have been replaced by the underlined words:

- (1) When he was named chief by Mayor James K. Hahn, Bratton told The Times that he wanted to establish close ties with prominent leaders in the city's minority communities. In doing so, he said, he would be better able to keep local leaders informed of police action and reduce the likelihood of communities 'exploding in anger'. (*Los Angeles Times*, 26.11.2, page B10, col.5)

⁵ For the role of substitution in syntactic analysis see Chapter 2, section 1.3.

- (2) Is there anything that can prevent Hurricanes? To date, science and technology have not given us the ability to do so. (*Chicago Tribune*, 3.1.4, section 1, page 28, col 1)
- (3) Can stout shoes save you during a nuclear attack? They might do, providing you shake the radioactive dust from them before going inside. (*Guardian*, G2, 1.4.4, page 15, col. 4)
- (4) I believe that if I were to continue to play for Zimbabwe I would do so only by neglecting the voice of my conscience (*Guardian Sports*, 17.3.3, page 6, col.2)
- (5) Your leader (Local voters must use their power, April 30) is right. So they must, but why then stop at suggesting the proportional representation that alone can make it worthwhile to vote? (*Guardian* 5.5.3, page 19, col. 4, letter to the editor, Prof. George Hutchinson, Southampton)
- (6) During the appearances, Bratton rejected the idea of flooding South Los Angeles streets with officers. Doing so would probably raise the ire of a community with a long history of confrontation with police rather than solve any problems. (*Los Angeles Times*, 26.11.2, page B1+10, col.1)
- (7) The national primary care research and development centres at Manchester and York universities, which carried out both this study and 1998's, acknowledge that not all the doctors who say they want to leave will. But previous research has shown that many will do so. (*Guardian*, 3.1.3, page 1, col.1)
- (8) We save life first and we do the rest if we possibly can. The priority is to save life. If we can put the fire out, we will do so. (*Guardian*, 14.11.2, page 1, col.4)
- (9) I'm sure that neither of them could have murdered Brooks. It's a physical impossibility, knowing about dates and times. But *she* could have done. Ellie Smith could have done – if only just. (Colin Dexter. *The daughters of Cain*. 1994 MacMillan. Pan, 330)
- (10) 'What was your accent like?' 'Southern Welsh; You can still hear the trace of it, mind you.' 'So you can,' said Isobel. (Muriel Spark, *The Bachelors*, Penguin edn. 1963: 101; first published by Macmillans 1960).

Exercise 10: Substitution by so (L)⁶

⁶ For the role of substitution in syntactic analysis see Chapter 2, section 1.3.

In Exercise 9 we have seen that strings of words containing a verb may be replaced by *do* (3,9), and by *do so* (1,2,4,6,7,8). *Do* and *do so* in fact always replace a string containing a verb. In examples (5) and (10) of Exercise 9, a string of words containing a verb is replaced by *so*. The relevant part of (10) is repeated below:

- (i) 'You can still hear the trace of it.' So you can,' said Isobel.
So= *still hear the trace of it*.
Hear is a verb.

Examine the examples below. Could we generalise the pattern illustrated in (i) and say that *so* always substitutes for a string of words containing a verb?

- (1) We have counselled against the war, but once it's a reality the story moves on and so will we. (*Guardian*, G2, 17.3.3, page 7, col. 4)
- (2) The towns [Paula Radcliffe] has lived in (Nantwich, Bedford and Loughborough) are the epitome of Middle England. And so is she. (*Guardian* 17.12.2, page 13 col.1)
- (3) Willie Whitelaw on a meeting with the West German interior minister: 'He's very keen on terrorism. So am I. (*Guardian*, G2, 11.9.2, page 5, col.4)

Exercise 11: Classifying examples: locative inversion (E)

In this exercise we return to the classification of inversion patterns. The exercise is longer and more discursive than the preceding exercises. It probably also is slightly more demanding. The goal is to carry further the kind of investigations started in the chapter and see where that would lead us. In this particular exercise we will discover that English has more than one type of inversion and not all patterns in which an auxiliary appears to the left of the subject are cases of SAI. Exercise 12 ties in with Exercise 11 and makes the same point.

Recall that we discussed the derivation of word order patterns in which the subject of a sentence is preceded by an auxiliary. Let's start from (1a). Identify the subject and replace it by a pronoun. Does the example contain any auxiliaries? Is the auxiliary immediately followed by a full verb? Using SAI, form a direct question based on (1a).⁷

⁷ See Chapter 1, section 2.3.2.

- (1) a This startling insight will naturally emerge from doing the syntax course.

The subject of the sentence is *this startling insight*. The sentence refers to a future event, futurity being signalled by the auxiliary *will* which is followed by the infinitive of the verb. The various modifications suggested above are illustrated in the following sentences:

- (1) b It will naturally emerge from doing the syntax course.
c Will this startling insight naturally emerge from doing the syntax course?

Observe that when we apply SAI, we only move the auxiliary *will* in front of the subject; we cannot also move the verb *emerge* in front of the subject, regardless of whether we take the adverb *naturally* along:

- (1) d *Will emerge this startling insight naturally from doing the syntax course?
e *Will naturally emerge this startling insight from doing the syntax course?

Observe finally that we can also apply SAI to (1b), whose subject is a pronoun:

- (1) f Will it naturally emerge from doing the syntax course?

Now consider (2a). What is the subject? Is there an auxiliary? How would we form a direct question?

- (2) a This startling insight naturally emerges from doing the syntax course.

The subject of (2a) is again *this startling insight*, there is no auxiliary. We can replace the subject by a pronoun. When we want to ask a question we apply SAI, inserting the auxiliary *do* as a last resort.⁸

- (2) b It naturally emerges from doing the syntax course.

⁸ See Chapter 1, section 2.2.2.

- c Does this startling insight naturally emerge from doing the syntax course?

Again, we can also apply SAI with *do* insertion to (2b), with a pronominal subject:

- (2) d Does it naturally emerge from doing the syntax course?

Observe that in order to ask a question we cannot invert the verb with the subject:

- (2) e *Emerges it naturally from doing the course?

This is because in English full verbs do not invert with subjects. This was expressed in generalisation (47) in the text, repeated here as (3):

- (3) Verbs that are not auxiliaries do not invert with the subject .

Consider the position of the underlined verb in the following example in the light of the generalisation in (3):

- (4) a From behind detail of courses and qualifications emerges the progressive conviction that no one can ever learn enough. (based on *Guardian*, 14.2.2, page 9, col 1)

In (4a) the verb *emerges* precedes the subject. We note that the subject itself is long and complex (*the progressive conviction that no one can ever learn enough*). At first sight we might think that example (4a) constitutes counter-evidence to our generalisation in (3). If this were true we would have to re-examine the data and somehow weaken our generalisation.

However, closer examination of (4a) reveals that this example must be treated as a separate pattern. This can be seen if we compare this sentence with those in (1) and (2). Recall that in the cases of SAI illustrated above, a subject could be replaced by a pronoun (1f, 2d). If we try to replace the subject by a pronoun in (4a) the result is unacceptable:

- (4) b* From behind detail of courses and qualifications emerges it.

To facilitate further comparison with the examples in (1), let us modify example (4a) slightly. We can do this by inserting the auxiliary *will* in (4a), thus locating the event in the future. The resulting order is as in (4c) and not that in (4d):

- (4) c From behind detail of courses and qualifications will emerge the progressive conviction that no one can ever learn enough.
- d *From behind detail of courses and qualifications will the progressive conviction that no one can ever learn enough emerge.

We see that in this example the subject is preceded by both the auxiliary and the verb. Recall that this order was not possible with respect our typical examples of SAI: (1d) was unacceptable.

If you compare the inversion patterns in (1,2), which we identify as instances of SAI, and the variations associated with example (4), there are a number of differences to note. In the routine examples of SAI as applied to (1a), the subject can be a pronoun (1b), and only the auxiliary *will* precedes the subject (1c). In (4a), the subject cannot be a pronoun (4b), the subject follows both the auxiliary and the lexical verb (4c). We summarise the differences in Table 1:

Table 1: Two inversion patterns

	SAI (1,2)	Inversion type II (4a)
Can the subject be a pronoun	Yes	No
Auxiliary-subject-verb	Yes	no
Auxiliary-verb-subject	no	yes

The inversion pattern illustrated in (4a) has a restricted distribution. One typical manifestation is that illustrated here, in which the first component of the sentence is a locative element, here *from behind detail of courses and qualifications*. The pattern in (4a) is often referred to with the term **locative inversion**⁹. In such patterns, the subject has to be relatively heavy; as we

⁹ For a description of locative inversion see Emonds (1976: 34-7), Coopmans (1989), Hoekstra and Mulder (1990), Bresnan (1994), Culicover and Levine (2001).

have seen, a pronominal subject is not possible.¹⁰ The subject is found in a position towards the end of the sentence, where it is highlighted.

Identify the locative inversion patterns in the following examples. Compare their properties with those summarised in Table 1. Can the subject be replaced by a pronoun? For examples without any auxiliary, try inserting one (with appropriate change of verb form): what is the resulting word order? For examples with auxiliary, comment on the relative position of auxiliary, subject and verb.

- (5) On the credit side of South Africa's balance sheet goes the 8.4 million people who now have access to clean water, 3.8 million with electricity, and 1.46 million who have new homes. (*Guardian*, 24.5.3, page 11, col 2)
- (6) Behind the celebrations and enthusiasm lies a project marked by controversy. (*Guardian, Life*, 18.3.4 page 2, col 1)
- (7) From this has stemmed the bad manners and casual crime we see today. (*Independent*, 20.8.4, page 12, col 2)
- (8) Through the door rushes his estranged brother, Turley, running for his life. (*Guardian, Review*, 20.3.4. page 13 col 5)

Exercise 12: Classifying examples: predicate inversion (E, L)

In this exercise we examine the classification of inversion patterns. The exercise is similar to Exercise 11 in that it is longer and more discursive than Exercises 1-10. The idea is again that we carry further the kind of investigations started in the chapter and see where that would lead us. In particular we will find confirmation that English has more than one type of inversion, a point already shown in Exercise 11, and we will discover that not all patterns in which an inflected form of *be* appears to the left of the subject are cases of SAI. This exercise ties in with Exercise 11 and makes the same point.

Recall that we have discussed the derivation of word order patterns in which the subject of a sentence is preceded by an auxiliary. Let us start from (1a). Identify the subject

¹⁰ In Chapter 5, Exercise 15 we will see that in French postverbal pronouns pattern differently from postverbal NPs. As this is the very last exercise of the book, this is not the right moment to tackle it!

of the sentence and replace it by a pronoun. Does the example contain any auxiliaries? Is the auxiliary followed by a full verb?

(1) a Cost is complicating matters.

The subject of (1a) is *cost*; we replace the subject by a pronoun in (1b):

(1) b It is complicating matters.

Apply SAI to the example in (1a,b) to form a direct question¹¹. What is the resulting order? As you can see we have straightforward sequences of auxiliary-subject:

(1) c Is cost complicating matters?
d Is it complicating matters?

When we apply SAI, we cannot also move the verb *complicating* in front of the subject:

(1) d *Is complicating cost matters?
e *Is complicating it matters?

Let us now turn to (2a). How does it differ from (1a)?

(2) a Cost will be complicating matters.

The difference between (1a) and (2a) is that the state of affairs expressed by the latter sentence is situated in the future. This is achieved by means of the auxiliary *will*. By adding *will* to (1a) we create a sentence with two auxiliaries: the modal auxiliary *will* and the non-inflected form of *be*.¹² Identify the subject and replace it by a pronoun. The subject of the sentence is *cost*. We can replace the subject of (2a) by a pronoun.

¹¹ See Chapter 1, section 2.3.2.

¹² We will discuss sentences containing more than one auxiliary in more detail in Chapter 3, section 4.

(2) b It will be complicating matters.

Apply SAI to the examples in (2a,b) to form a direct question¹³. What is the resulting order?
As you can see we again have straightforward sequences of auxiliary-subject:

(2) c Will cost be complicating matters?

d Will it be complicating matters?

Observe that when we apply SAI, we must move only one auxiliary: it is not possible to move two auxiliaries across the subject (2^e), nor is it possible to move both auxiliaries as well as the full verb (2f):

(2) e *Will be cost complicating matters?

f *Will be complicating cost matters?

Let us formulate this in terms of a general principle:

(3) SAI moves only one auxiliary across the subject.

We can summarise the various patterns as in Table 1:

Table 1: SAI

Can the subject be a pronoun		yes
One auxiliary	Auxiliary-subject-verb	yes
	Auxiliary-verb-subject	no
Two auxiliaries	Auxiliary- subject –auxiliary verb	yes
	Auxiliary -auxiliary – subject – verb	no
	Auxiliary- auxiliary - verb - subject	no

¹³ See Chapter 1, section 2.3.2.

Consider the examples in (4): the underlined subject is preceded by the verb *be*. Is *be* an instantiation of copula *be* or of auxiliary *be*? What arguments could you offer in support of your analysis?

- (4) a Complicating matters is cost. (*Washington Post*, 10.12.2, page A16, col 1)
b Helping to run the house were a cook, a housemaid and a manservant. (Carol Shields, *Jane Austin*, Phoenix, 2000: 123)

Identify the participles associated with the auxiliaries. We find that in the examples the participle (*complicating*, *helping*) precedes its auxiliary. Restore the sentences to a more neutral word order in which the subject precedes the auxiliary and the verb:

- (5) a Cost is complicating matters.
b A cook, a housemaid and a manservant were helping to run the house.

The initial element of the examples in (4) is a string of words containing the participial form of the verb (*complicating*, *helping*). Given that they display the order auxiliary- subject we might conclude that the examples in (4) are simply examples of SAI.

However this conclusion would be rash. We first examine (4a). Try replacing the subject in (4a) by a pronoun. The resulting sentence is no longer acceptable.

- (5) c *Complicating matters is it.

The examples in (4) and in (5) contain just one auxiliary *be*. To examine if they really illustrate SAI we could also try to test our generalisation in (3). What would happen if there was a sequence of auxiliaries, as in our earlier examples in (2)? Recall that principle (3) summarises our finding that SAI moves only one auxiliary to the left of the subject. Try adding the future maker *will* to the sentence, replacing the present tense form of *be* by *will be*.

- (6) a Complicating matters will be cost.

Observe that if we insert a future marker *will* in example (4a), the resulting order is that in which both *will* and *be* precede the subject *cost*. If we apply SAI as described in (3) above,

then only the auxiliary *will* should precede the subject. But in (6), if only the auxiliary *will* precedes the subject while *be* follows it the sentence is unacceptable:

- (6) b *Complicating matters will cost be.

If you return to the main properties of SAI as summarised in Table 1, you will see that the inversion which is illustrated in (4) is quite different from SAI. We summarise the differences in Table 2, where we use the abbreviations listed below. In the discussion above, identify which examples provide evidence for the various properties:

Subject = SU, auxiliary = Aux, verb = V, acceptable: OK, unacceptable: *.

Table 2: Two inversion patterns

		SAI	Examples in (3)
	SU = pronoun	OK	*
One Aux	Aux – SU	OK	OK
Two Aux	Aux – SU – Aux	OK	*
	Aux – Aux - SU	*	OK

Because of the differences between the two patterns, we will not consider the examples in (4) as illustrations of SAI. This means that the term SAI is restrictive: not every sequence in which an auxiliary precedes the subject is automatically an instantiation of SAI. If you examine the properties of (4b) along the lines outlined above you will conclude that that example to is not an instantiation of SAI.

The patterns illustrated in (4) are often referred to as **predicate inversion**. In predicate inversion patterns the string of words that would follow *be* in the neutral order, the predicate, precedes *be* and the subject, which would normally precede *be*, follows *be*. Examples (7)-(10) also illustrate predicate inversion. Restore the sentences in (7)-(10) to the more neutral order, in which auxiliary *be* is preceded by its subject:

- (7) Hurting the industry's ability to raise fares is the fact that the big airlines are putting more seats back into the skies to battle the rapid expansion of the budget airlines.
(*Wall Street Journal*, 29.3.4, page A6, col 6)

- (8) Sitting next to her in the remote cabin was 71-year old Elisabeta Sigilyetova, one of the last living speakers of a rare dialect of Khanty, a regional tongue nearly overwhelmed by Russian's Slavic majority. (*Wall street Journal*, 26.3.4, page A1, col 4)
- (9) Enjoying the festivities at the Sterling Fire Department's Patton Hall are, clockwise from above, Robyn, Blocher's dog, Winston, 5; Melanie Howard and Cosmo, 2, and , from left, Scott Morrison, Blocher, Cinston, and Blocher's father, Bill Blocher. (*Washington Post*, 25.3.4, 'Loudoun', p.1 col 1)
- (10) Tucked away in the back of the booth of Haboltdt & Company , a Paris dealer, is perhaps the best old master drawing here. (*New York Times*, 8.3.4. page E5, col 6)

We return to the patterns illustrated in (4) and in (7)-(10) in Exercise 20 of Chapter 4.¹⁴

¹⁴ For discussion see Birner (1992), Birner and Ward (1992), Emonds (1976: 34-43), Den Dikken and N→ss (1993), Heycock & Kroch (1997).