Comments on Nonfinite Adverbial Patterns in English Prose Fiction: A Simple Model for Analysis and Use

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Abstract

This study aims to present an accessible model of some frequent nonfinite adverbial types occurring in English prose fiction. As its main syntactic argument, it recognizes that these adverbials are mostly elliptical in that there are some dependent-clause markers one can assume to be implicit when supplying those elements back into the clause complex. Some comments are provided at the end on the interfaces existing between these adverbials and other systems and forces in language. These marry up with linguistic and discursive concepts like rank-shifting, necessary indeterminacy, and ambiguity as an integral part of literary semiosis, figures of speech, stylistic parallelism, cohesion, and so on. This study affords better and deeper insights into the nature of the clause and the creative verbal play brought off in natural situations of use. It also has implications for advanced students and teachers of English, program/syllabus designers and evaluators, linguists, and applied linguists.

Keywords: Nonfinite; Adverbial; Elliptical; Prose Fiction

1. Introduction

The text of fictional narratives in English deploys a large array of hypotactic and paratactic clause complex types (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) in which a commensurate range of adverbials are used. Adverbials could conveniently be defined, in general terms, as covering the whole range of finite and nonfinite adjuncts (circumstantial adjuncts in systemic-functional terms), adverbial clauses and adverbial phrases; anything that falls outside the Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) pattern of the sentence in its syntactic composition. This study seeks to determine, in a simplified way, most accessible to those advanced nonnative learners of English wishing to maintain their cognitive and proficiency levels, such as seemingly intertextual adverbial patterns emerging across a selection of modern and 19th century fiction and narrative texts. These groupings of adverbials appear to be intertexts: Textual, discoursal, and stylistic devices and patterns that are semiotic resources for meaning-making available to and used by discursive genre-creating practices of the authors subscribing to those genres, in the light of the fact that they

belong to different time periods and have produced written works in different contexts.

2. Theoretical Background

Various sources engaged, one way or another, with some form of systemic functional linguistics (SFL); for example, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004), Thompson (2004), Wright and Hope (1996), Eggins (1994), Martin et al. (1997), and Morley (2000) have highlighted the importance and the vital role of the clause as the fundamental tripartite unit of meaning for every semantic content or configuration; every clause simultaneously carries ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. A configuration is a self-contained pretextual semantic content configuring the process, participants involved in it, and the attendant circumstances.

There are several theoretical underpinnings feeding into the probing of the linguistic operations involved in literary prose. An instance of these is prominence in literature-text, which is called foregrounding (e.g., Leech & Short, 2007; Simpson, 2004), and, of equal note and concern, the fact that ordinary communication process is characterized by the idea that every variation in the surface text represents an underlying discoursal strategy, and that special patternings in literature-text are characterized to represent special literary discoursal strategies (Lotfipour-Saedi, 2008). Three of these have been described as indirection, indeterminacy, and dehabitualization (Lotfipour-Saedi, 1992), which would be manifested in numerous ways, one of which being grammatical (structural) parallelism (Lotfipour-Saedi, 2008).

That said, note should be made of the fact that the evolutionary character of constituency and the multifaceted nature of the structures made available by the system of the clause and clause complex have been the focus of much theoretical thought and talk within SFL. This finds expression in the following quote from Halliday (2009) which touches upon lines of argument very germane to our concern here, especially when the logical metafunction (i.e., the stringing together of clauses in coherent texturing) is implicitly thought by Halliday to be essential to narrative text. By a single syntagmatic time line, Halliday is simply referring to the clause because the clause is a syntagm which is a self-contained unified whole with a configuration of meaningful elements and onto which three simultaneous meanings are mapped:

The payoff in evolutionary terms is clear. Given that different strands of meaning (i.e., different sets of systemic features) are being combined into a single syntagmatic time line, the more varied the structural resources, the more freely they can be brought together. The speaker can put any spin (i.e., interpersonal) on any topic (i.e., experiential) at any discursive moment (i.e., textual)–and keep the story

going along indefinitely (i.e., logical). Such a pattern is more likely to be viable—o be favoured in the evolution of language–than one in which every component of the meaning (i.e., every metafunction) is realized in just the same way.

What this means, as relevant to the purposes of the moment, is that there is a rich pool of resource for meaning making offered by the clause towards the expression of various meaning types, especially when it comes to the clause complex.

3. Objectives and Methods

With a focus on the texts of the English novel and through attempting to identify what traditionally are referred to as reduced or dangling clauses, this study seeks to present a simpler model for these adverbials in the clause and the clause complex. In this study, the adverbial is assumed to basically be the element that breathes life into the clause complex, especially the hypotactic one (i.e., subordinate/dependent clause in traditional parlance). Therefore, any analysis of the clause complex and the adverbial has, but to keep it in view that the two textual and systemic phenomena are deeply interwoven in essence.

To put it in different terms, this study aims to look at what lies outside the SVO pattern in the structure of the clause in prose fiction when it is NOT accompanied by explicit markers of (to use the traditional term) dependent clause status and consider it collectively as the adverbial element. Then, the goal is to present a model that attempts to strip away at what seems to be inessential complexity in different models and conceptualizations of this grammatical, discursive, and functional unit that also takes on very profound stylistic angles in the language of prose fiction. Putting forward a simple model will create the grounds for rearticulating anew the creativities and parallelisms in the structure of the adverbial. But the latter requires another separate and dedicated treatment or set of research ventures.

To clarify the spirit of the objective further, there are various elliptical or nonfinite adverbials that seem to be peculiar to the text of fiction and narrative, little explored as such in previous studies, except large-scale computerized corpus-based research that is, sometimes, so broad and all-inclusive that certain important and genre-specific textual and stylistic categories are left, only partially treated. But manual research renders higher delicacy and rigor (Semino & Short, 2004; Tognini-Bonelli, 2004), and a small-scale study such as this goes about the analysis using manual and, therefore, more profound and insightful ways.

It should be added that, even though these are seen to occur very frequently in the genre of the novel and in prose fiction, in general, the objective is not to undertake a frequency analysis and distribution of these patterns, but rather to only

illustrate how they, as nonfinite adverbial elements, can be looked at from a simple unadorned perspective. The names the researcher gives to the categories discussed are provisional names, phrased in a tell-tale informative way so that the main objective here stands a better chance of fulfillment, that of stripping away at the inessential complexity of these adverbial and sentential categories in English prose fiction, of attempts at disentangling it.

What we call participial adverbial manifests itself as nonfinite elements acting as adverbial with either a present or past participle comprising them, with both types displaying what seems to be the omission of similar grammatical slots (hence, ellipsis and elliptical). It seems that, instructively and instructionally speaking, looking at these nonfinite elements in this elliptical light will have remarkable promise in paving the path for learning them, within a simplified model most accessible to advanced learners of English who wish to keep their proficiency alive by authentic means. It is this simplification process that the researcher aims at in this study.

4. Present Participle as Elliptical Adverbial

Examples of what the researcher calls *elliptical participial adverbial* with a present participle constituting its core is legion in English prose fiction. Legions are nonfinite and reduced elements acting as the adverbial and dependent clause outside the SVO structure that go by these same or other names elsewhere in the literature (e.g., Biber et al., 1999; Blake, 1990; Wright & Hope, 1996). Before dealing with actually occurring clause complexes in samples of novels and by way of a provisional example, consider this clause complex (the invented illustrative examples are not numbered; only the clause complexes actually used in English novels are):

- *I knocked on John's door, dealing with many problems.*

For a simple account of the adverbial towards instructive and instructional purposes, one can begin by postulating that:

- Any element that falls outside the SVO pattern of the sentence can be called an adverbial.

Another such simplifying principle would posit that:

- If anything falls outside the SVO pattern but is a nonfinite clause (with a past or present participle in it), it will carry implicit (elliptical) meanings of generally two types: temporal simultaneity/sequence or reason.

This translates into the fact that the above sentence can implicate two potential interpretations on each instance of use, resulting from putting back in the

elements that have undergone ellipsis (i.e., have been omitted); these are put in parentheses:

- *I knocked on John's door (while/as I was) dealing with many problems.*
- *I knocked on John's door (because/as I was) dealing with many problems.*

First, it should be noted that it seems such elliptical participial adverbials can be simply explained by reference to the differential designation of either of the meanings for *as*; one played out as *while/when/after* (i.e., some sort of sequence of time) and the other as *because/since* (i.e., some sort of reason/cause). Also, the ultimate (relatively correct) interpretation here rests on the parameters making up the context of situation or register (Halliday, 1985; Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999): What the text is talking about as its main subject and purport (field of discourse), the relative social relationship between the addressor and addressee (i.e., tenor of discourse) and the role of text and medium (i.e., mode).

But, sometimes, even without context and without the need to refer to the unfolding meaning or other contextual clues, the clause will mostly carry one semantic interpretation on its own:

- *I knocked on John's door, finding no one else to turn to.*

For this clause complex, the on-the-spot intuitive interpretation would be:

- *I knocked on John's door (as/because) I found no one else to turn to.*

Now, in practice, it is observed that the above pattern appears to be used quite often in English sentence composition, especially within the English novel. Actual examples as used in different (agreeably well-established) English novels follow, all of which are what the present researcher calls elliptical participial adverbial, though of the present participle kind. Such adverbials are immediately reconstructed below to flesh out the point being made here about the elliptical, omitted elements in the adverbial. The analyses are the nonelliptical agnates for the original sentences. Agnation designates other options in the paradigmatic/systemic network of realization for the same meaning; related terms/expressions are said to be agnate with each other (Matthiessen et al., 2010):

1) *Feeling no disposition to reply to him, I contented myself with an inward speculation on the differences which exist in the constitution of men's minds.* (Charlotte Bronte*: "The Professor"*)
    - *(While/as I felt) no disposition to reply to him, ...*
    - *(Because/as I felt) no disposition to reply to him, ...*

2) *Mrs. Dursley came into the living room carrying two cups of tea.* (J. K. Rowling: *"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"*)

   - *Mrs. Dursley came into the living room (while/as she was) carrying two cups of tea.*

   - *Mrs. Dursley came into the living room (because/as she was) carrying two cups of tea.*

In 1, the context and unfolding meaning provides for the *while/as* interpretation, although the *because/as* reading is not entirely out of the question. In 2, though, the *because/as* reading would be very unlikely, it is most probably erroneous even without taking the syntagmatic context into account.

Below are further instances following the same pattern, as occurring in the language of the English novel. In 3 and 4, only one of the two interpretations is allowed, and, thus, only one unpacked version is in order:

3) *All morning I was dreading lunch, fearing his bizarre glares.* (Stephanie Meyer: *"Twilight"*)

   - *All morning I was dreading lunch, (while/as I feared) his bizarre glares.*

4) *At first, being little accustomed to learn by heart, the lessons appeared to me both long and difficult.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"Jane Eyre"*)

   - *At first, (as/because I was) little accustomed to learn by heart, the lessons appeared to me both long and difficult.*

5) *Feeling pain invade me on all sides, I sat down and wept.* (Mary Shelly: *"Frankenstein"*)

   - *(While/as I felt) pain invade me on all sides, I sat down and wept.*

   - *(Because/as I felt) pain invade me on all sides, I sat down and wept.*

Unlike 3 and 4, where the clause complex contextual meaning renders it easy to assign a reading, in 5, even by taking contextual variables into account, it is difficult to nail down which sense is being meant. Frankenstein's monster, feeling desolate and frowned upon by all mankind around him, cold and wet and pain, physical and mental, crushing him from all sides, sits down to weep. Here, it should be noted that, as already argued by many linguists and thinkers, one of the hallmarks of literary language, distinguishing it from nonliterature (although there can never be an absolutely literary genre neatly bracketed off from nonliterary ones), is the tendency of literary language to preserve and maintain ambiguity and

indeterminacy: the simultaneous presence of sometimes contrasting meanings for the same stretch of language (Fabb, 2003; Leech & Short, 2007; Lotfipour-Saedi, 1992; Short, 1996; Simpson, 2004; Widdowson, 1975;). This principle of literary discourse manifests itself par excellence in the case of sentences such as the above, where, it seems, both senses being discussed can apply without one amenable to cancelation. Looked at from a systemic, Hallidayan perspective, such semiotic phenomena are, in fact, instances of metaphor where there is stratal tension between the semantics and the lexicogrammar, semantic compounding, and some transference of meaning (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; Ravelli, 1999; Taverniers, 1999), among a sea of other features. But arguing that the simultaneous interpretations typical of systemic-functional readings and the case of grammatical metaphor apply to our discussion here requires an entirely different treatment in its own right.

5. Past Participle as Elliptical Adverbial

Examples of elliptical participial adverbial with a past participle constituting its core are in abundance in English prose fiction; it is only the inherent stylistic variation found in different authors' works that determines which one is used more than the other, but ample use is made of both adverbial participial devices in almost every English work of fiction. For purposes of illustration and before looking at actual instances of this type in samples of novels, here is an invented example picking up the same main clause as in the invented introductory examples above, but using a past participle as nonfinite elliptical adverbial:

- *I knocked on John's door, filled with hatred toward Jack.*

For this sentence, just as with the present participle discussed above, there are two on-the-spot, intuitive interpretations that could be triggered; in this case, it seems both of them have to be maintained simultaneously:

- *I knocked on John's door, (as/while I was) filled with hatred toward Jack.*
- *I knocked on John's door, (as/because I was) filled with hatred toward Jack.*

But again, sometimes, even without context and without the need to refer to the unfolding meaning or other contextual clues, the clause will mostly carry one interpretation on its own:

- *I knocked on John's door, (as/because I had been) told a little earlier on in the morning to do so.*

For this clause complex, the sense of *as/because* is more relevant than *as/while* even without pragmatic recourse to contextual parameters. Below are some actually occurring clause complexes using this pattern in English prose fiction:

6) *To Malfoy's left, his wife made an odd, stiff nod, her eyes averted from Voldemort and the snake.* (J. K. Rowling: *"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows"*)

   - *To Malfoy's left, his wife made an odd, stiff nod, (as/while) her eyes (had been) averted from Voldemort and the snake.*

7) *Sometimes, preoccupied with her work, she sang the refrain very low, very lingeringly.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"Jane Eyre"*)

   - *Sometimes, (as/while she was) preoccupied with her work, she sang the refrain very low, very lingeringly.*

8) *Each one of them, stapled to telephone poles and taped to street signs, was like a fresh slap in the face.* (Stephanie Meyer: *"Breaking Dawn"*)

   - *Each one of them, (as/while it had been) stapled to telephone poles and taped to street signs, was like a fresh slap in the face.*

9) *Torn by remorse, horror, and despair, I beheld those I loved spend vain sorrow upon the graves.* (Mary Shelly: *"Frankenstein"*)

   - *(as/while I was) Torn by remorse, horror, and despair, I beheld those I loved spend vain sorrow upon the graves.*

10) *My conscience thus quieted, I thanked Mr. Brown, and, for the present, withdrew.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"The Professor"*)

   - *(as/when) my conscience (had) thus (been) quieted, I thanked Mr. Brown, and, for the present, withdrew.*

   - *(as/because) my conscience (had) thus (been) quieted, I thanked Mr. Brown, and, for the present, withdrew.*

In 10, as can be seen, the *as/when* reading applies quite compellingly, even without recourse to outside-the-sentence context. Then again, bringing such context to bear solidly verifies such reading.

The abovementioned mapped out a simple model for analysis and use for the reduced elements falling outside the main SVO structure of the main clause. In the following, certain related adverbials are illustrated that seem to be derived, in essence, from participial adverbials in their elliptical and reduced nature. These do not deploy a participial element (obviously derived from verbs), but mostly have

adjectival elements at their heart. Looking at them in that light seems to be a smoother and simpler way to understand the way in which such adverbials, participial or otherwise, accompany main clauses to form clause complexes.

6. Elliptical Nonparticipial Adverbial

The following puts forward another class of nonfinite adverbial elements outside and accompanying the main clause. These seem to be derived, in essence, from the two groups of participial adverbials looked at above in their elliptical and reduced nature. They do not deploy a participial element (i.e., verb), but at their heart lies an adjective/adjective phrase mostly. These are visibly seen to be in much less frequent use than their participial counterparts in prose fiction text, although this study did not embark on bringing out their frequency. Let's begin with an invented example:

- *I knocked on John's door, happy to have found some new hope.*

Along the same lines as the above, for instructional and enlightening purposes, this can be rephrased in similar ways (using either dependent clause markers of *while/as* or *because/as*), rendering the teaching/learning of these elements more consistently facilitated:

- *I knocked on John's door, (while/as I was) happy to have found some new hope.*
- *I knocked on John's door, (because/as I was) happy to have found some new hope.*

It seems that, with these adjectival patterns of the nonfinite, it is similarly difficult to determine, with some measure of finality, which reading (*while* or *because*) to supply; even with contextual parameters deeply engaged with, the process of contextual enrichment that would point to an unequivocal reading of *as/while* or *as/because* seems difficult, both of which appearing to carry sufficient grounds of being appropriate in their respective angles. In other words, as can be seen in examples 11 and 12, taken from the genre of the English novel, both readings can very well apply, although in 13, the reading of *as/while* is convincingly fitting. As discussed above, this might be what literature-text is organized around; some necessary indeterminacy and ambiguity as part and parcel of its semiotic phylogenesis and logogenesis (Halliday & Matthiessen, 1999). Phylogenesis refers to the evolutionary character of the system as a whole. Logogenesis designates the ongoing unfolding of text and how it happens to create meaning.

11) *I wiped my tears and hushed my sobs, fearful lest any sign of violent grief might waken a preternatural voice to comfort me.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"Jane Eyre"*)

- *I wiped my tears and hushed my sobs, (while/as I was) fearful lest any sign of violent grief might waken a preternatural voice to comfort me.*
- *I wiped my tears and hushed my sobs, (because/as I was) fearful lest any sign of violent grief might waken a preternatural voice to comfort me.*

12) *Once, Aunt Petunia, tired of Harry coming back from the barbers looking as though he hadn't been at all, had taken a pair of kitchen scissors and cut his hair so short he was almost bald except for his bangs.* (J. K. Rowling: *"The Sorcerer's Stone"*)

- *Once, Aunt Petunia, (while/as she was) tired of Harry coming back from the barbers looking as though he hadn't been at all, had taken a pair of kitchen scissors and cut his hair so short he was almost bald except for his bangs.*
- *Once, Aunt Petunia, (because/as she was) tired of Harry coming back from the barbers looking as though he hadn't been at all, had taken a pair of kitchen scissors and cut his hair so short he was almost bald except for his bangs.*

13) *He outstripped Waddy, applied for the hand of the fine girl, and led her off triumphant.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"The Professor"*)

- *He outstripped Waddy, applied for the hand of the fine girl, and led her off (while/as he was) triumphant.*

7. Elliptical Subordinate Adverbial

There is another group of elliptical adverbials that may, interestingly, accompany a verbal, adjectival, adverbial, or nominal element but retain the dependency marker as a trace left from the dependent/nonfinite clause/adverbial. Consider these provisional examples:

- *Once inside the classroom, I saw with relief that my table was still empty.*
- *When sad, I always read a book.*
- *Once completed, the project will be of far-reaching use.*
- *When eighteen, he looked a lot like his father.*

- *When typing, take care that you observe correct spelling.*

In these simple hypotactic clause complexes, the underlined elements are adverbial phrases on the surface only. They are, in fact, reduced (i.e., elliptical) adverbial clauses that possess a structure along the following lines if, to use Thompson's (2004) term, we unpack it, that is, come out with a more unmarked and straightforward version of it that could be said to underlie it in a stratified spirit. Here, as with the above, it is argued that this process of rank-shifting (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) is what lies at the heart of such elliptical adverbial structures. In each case above, following the dependency adverbial marker, a cohesively relevant pronoun and a permutation of the auxiliary *to be* was elliptically left out, reconstructed below:

- *Once (I was) inside the classroom, . . .;*
- *When (I am) sad, . . .;*
- *Once (it is) completed, . . .;*
- *When (he was) eighteen, . . .;*
- *When (you are) typing, . . .;*

Here are a few actually occurring sentences from some novels:

14) *All three of them started to laugh, and once started, it was difficult to stop.* (J. K. Rowling: *"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows"*)

    - *All three of them started to laugh, and once (it was) started, it was difficult to stop.*

15) *The furniture, once appropriated to the lower apartments, had from time to time been removed here.* (Charlotte Bronte: *"Jane Eyre"*)

    - *The furniture, once (it was) appropriated to the lower apartments, had from time to time been removed here.*

16) *I had often, when at home, thought it hard to remain during my youth cooped up in one place.* (Mary Shelly: *"Frankenstein"*)

    - *I had often, when (I was) at home, thought it hard to remain during my youth cooped up in one place.*

17) *The list she drew up when only fourteen—I remember thinking it did her judgment so much credit, that I preserved it sometime; and I dare say she may have made out a very good list now.* (Jane Austen: "Emma")

- *The list she drew up when (she was) only fourteen—I remember thinking it did her judgment so much credit, that I preserved it sometime; and I dare say she may have made out a very good list now.*

18) *He seemed then about to make his bow, when taking the paper from the table.* (Jane Austen: *"Emma"*)

- *He seemed then about to make his bow, when (he was) taking the paper from the table.*

8. An Example of Other Types of Elliptical Adverbials

There are other groups of elliptical adverbials that do not fit into the above categories but do constitute useful patterns for reading, interpreting, and reflecting on texts and also producing similar academically solid texts when it comes to writing. An example of these is elliptical adverbial accompanied and marked by *with* in some cases and omitting it in others. In the following example, *with* marks the present participial as elliptical adverbial:

- *I knocked on John's door, with my problems leaving me no moment of peace.*

This sentence, when reconstructed with the insertion of all the missing elements, can be rephrased nonelliptically (i.e., a normal sequence of a main clause followed by a dependent/hypotactic clause):

- *I knocked on John's door, (while/as) my problems (left me/were leaving) me no moment of peace.*
- *I knocked on John's door, (because/as) my problems (left me/were leaving) me no moment of peace.*

Note that, interestingly enough, there is again ambiguity between the senses of *as/because* or *as/while*. In the following example, *with* marks the past participial as elliptical adverbial:

- *I knocked on John's door, with my problems pressed into an unmanageable ball of misery.*

This sentence, when reconstructed with the insertion of all the missing elements, can be rephrased nonelliptically (i.e., a normal sequence of a main clause followed by a dependent/hypotactic clause):

- *I knocked on John's door, (while/as) my problems (had been) pressed into an unmanageable ball of misery.*

- *I knocked on John's door, (because/as) my problems (had been) pressed into an unmanageable ball of misery.*

The following brings out examples from the text of some novels that use this adverbial pattern:

19) *My mother drove me to the airport with the windows rolled down.* (Stephanie Meyer: *"Twilight"*)

- *My mother drove me to the airport (while/as) the windows (had been) rolled down.*

20) *The hallway was large, dimly lit, and sumptuously decorated, with a magnificent carpet covering most of the stone floor.* (J. K. Rowling: *"Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows"*)

- *The hallway was large, dimly lit, and sumptuously decorated, (while/as) a magnificent carpet (covered/was covering) most of the stone floor.*

One instance in which *with* could be said to have been elided before the noun phrase can be seen in the following:

- *He hurried out from behind the bar, rushed toward Harry and seized his hand, tears in his eyes.* (J. K. Rowling: *"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone"*)

This clause complex could be read, when reconstructed using *with*, as in:

- *He hurried out from behind the bar, rushed toward Harry and seized his hand, with tears in his eyes.*

This clause complex would, then, fit into the same *with* pattern of the adverbial and, when reconstructed with the insertion of all the missing elements, can be rephrased nonelliptically along either of the following lines:

- *He hurried out from behind the bar, rushed toward Harry and seized his hand, (while) tears (were) in his eyes.*

- *He hurried out from behind the bar, rushed toward Harry and seized his hand, (while there were) tears in his eyes.*

9. Conclusions and Comments

This study maps out a simple and accessible model for nonfinite adverbial clauses that have a participial element and nonfinite adverbial phrases that do not carry a participial (i.e., verbal) element in them but have another like an adjective. Unpacking these patterns (i.e., reconstructing their agnates and inserting back into

the nonfinite clause the elided elements) inspires the term the present researcher used here to refer to these patterns as elliptical adverbials, for the sake of reducing too much technicality and complexity and referring to seemingly diverse sentential patterns that operate in essentially the same ways, as expounded above. My own teaching, over many years, of advanced and demanding texts to advanced groups of students has been markedly effective using this same model of thinking in its different guises. It renders the teaching/learning of these elements more consistently facilitated. Before closing, the comments this study intends to make are laid out again, one final time, followed by some implications.

- **Comment 1:**

In the case of nonfinite adverbial phrases with an adjective, the process lying at the heart of these nonfinite adverbial phrases that are originally adverbial clauses is rank-shifting; one can assume that the type of unpacking undertaken here whose aim was simplification and instruction is inspired and made inherently possible by the availability of the process of rank-shifting itself (Halliday, 1994; Thompson, 1994). Rank-shifting allows something that is originally a clausal element (with participants and a process type) to be expressed in the form of a phrase (one rank lower).

- **Comment 2:**

In the elliptical adverbials discussed here, the two senses conveyed are argued to be either along the lines of *as/because* or those of *as/while*. There are cases where both interpretations apply, even without pragmatic recourse to syntagmatic contextual parameters. This might be what literature-text is organized around: necessary indeterminacy and ambiguity as an integral part of its semiosis. This principle of literary discourse manifests itself par excellence in the case of sentences such as the above, where, it seems, both senses can apply without one amenable to cancelation. Looked at from a systemic, Hallidayan perspective, such semiotic phenomena are, in fact, instances of metaphor, where there is stratal tension between the semantics and the lexicogrammar, semantic compounding, and some transference of meaning (Ravelli, 1999), among a number of other features. But arguing that the simultaneous interpretations typical of systemic-functional readings and the case of grammatical metaphor apply to our discussion here requires an entirely different treatment in its own right.

- **Comment 3:**

The patterns discussed here could be viewed as not just clausal devices used in the genre of fiction, in general, but also as figures of speech in literary text, especially in prose fiction. Kienpointner (2011) argues for a perspective on figures of speech that differs from the ancient deviation view in which the so-called

ornamental features of language (e.g., metaphor and metonymy) are considered to be deviations of a supposedly pure form of expression. Kienpointner states that "FSP are not merely ornamental or aesthetic devices" but "inevitably shape our cognition and culture-specific views of reality." Moreover, they are "the output of discourse strategies which we use to select units from linguistic paradigms of different levels (phonetics/phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics) to create texts (in the sense of both written and spoken genres of discourse) which are adequate as far as their communicative purpose in some context is concerned." He goes on to present a typical pragmatic argument against structural typologies by stating that figures of speech "should be considered as linguistic elements having certain communicative functions like clarification, stimulation of interest, aesthetic and cognitive pleasure, modification of the cognitive perspective, intensification or mitigation of emotions etc." These functions could well accrue to the elliptical adverbials discussed here. They could, for instance, be used by prose fiction writers for stimulating interest, for aesthetic and cognitive pleasure (one path to this is simultaneous readings and interpretations in literature, as discussed in the previous comment), modifying and adjusting the cognitive perspective (theme/rheme and old/new information structure change when adverbials are elliptical, hence cognitive adjustment of the reader), and so on.

- **Comment 4:**

It is seen that these elliptical adverbials discussed here evidence a type of parallelism in prose fiction, an overarching term of linguistic stylistics that refers to repetition or parallel use of similar or similar-sounding words, sounds, or constructions. Although the scope of this study did not cover this tendency in the elliptical adverbial towards parallelism, these patterns of the adverbial are, indeed, used in parallel fashion in English fiction text very markedly. What the researcher means by this is that each of the different patterns of the elliptical adverbial outlined above occurs not only by itself, next to a main clause (i.e., the patterns outlined above are all of this type: one main clause - one elliptical adverbial), but it is seen to also occur parallel with other elliptical adverbial types in one and the same sentence and on the right or left of one and the same main clause. In the following example, one nonparticipial adverbial (i.e., *resident*) precedes the main clause; this same main clause is then followed by two participial elliptical adverbials, giving rise to a clause complex containing three different but parallel adverbials and one main clause:

- *<u>Resident</u> a few months now in one Catholic school, now in another, as their parents wandered from land to land, they had picked up some scanty instruction, many bad habits, <u>losing</u> every notion even of the first elements of religion and morals, and <u>acquiring</u> an imbecile indifference to every sentiment that can elevate humanity.*

- *(While/as they were; Because/as they were) Resident a few months now in one Catholic school, now in another, as their parents wandered from land to land, they had picked up some scanty instruction, many bad habits, (while they lost) every notion even of the first elements of religion and morals, and (while they acquired) an imbecile indifference to every sentiment that can elevate humanity.*

The above requiring another treatment in its own right, an argument I intend to make here is echoed by Gutwinski (1976) most lucidly. In the above, I could not possibly have explored the fact that these adverbials are deployed in such a way as to possess both cohesion and parallelism. Similarly, in his discussion of cohesion, Gutwinski argues, in essence, that grammatical parallelism is part of cohesion. Coming close to the main line of argument presented in this study concerning elliptical adverbials, he continues to maintain that in all models of cohesion, ellipsis (i.e., resources for omitting a clause or part of a clause) constitutes a chief component. What touches on our argument here is Gutwinski's inclusion of all connectors into cohesion, whether or not they link clauses within or between sentences. As indicated above, in unpacking the elliptical adverbials and the reconstruction of the clause complex, there was a need to supply a sort of connector (dependent clause markers of *as/because* or *as/while*) back into the clause complex, on every occasion.

From this, one can provisionally conclude that this type of elliptical adverbials as discussed here have, as one of their systemic, realizational motivations, the semantic and stratified force of cohesion at their core, along with other systemic motivations like the ones to do with figures of speech discussed above in comment 3.

10. Implications

There would be quite a number of implications flowing from such attempts as manifested by this study, attempts at bringing to light the operations and mechanisms involved in the construction of the clause complex. For one thing, they could provide researchers, teachers, and syllabus designers with more fine-tuned and well-fashioned insights into the operations beyond the clause and the way clauses are connected, manipulated, and bent towards the achievement of certain readers, textual and discoursal/stylistic effects, not to say demarcating generic lines. Further research into the clause complex and the variation in the molding of the adverbial could be invitingly facilitated and induced through similar research, either within the incredibly vast genre of prose fiction or other genres.

Different parties stand to benefit from this research including advanced EFL students and, of equal importance, teachers of such advanced students and

classrooms, program/syllabus designers and evaluators, linguists, applied linguists, and others would be afforded better and deeper insights into the nature of the clause and the creative verbal play brought off in native speaker corpus by representative groups of native speaker writers.

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