

NELSON GOERING

Gothic

Morphosyntactic Structures – Part 4: Clausal Syntax



Roadmap

- Coordination
- Absolutes
- Relative clauses
- Infinitives

Coordination



Coordination

- *jah* is the most common and general coordinator
- coordinates clauses and phrases
- enclitic *-uh*, *V-h* (< PIE **-k^we*) is similar, but does not coordinate nouns
ak gagg jah ataugei þuk silban gudjin
'but go and show yourself to the priest'
akei gaggip qipid-uh du sipōnjam is
'but go and say to his disciples'
- A variety of other coordinators available, e.g. contrastive *ak*, *ip*

Participles

- Same-subject coordination often expressed with PTCP + finite verb

jah ga-saihvandands ina sildaleikidēdun

and PFV.see.PTCP.NOM.PL him marvel.PST.PL

‘and having seen him they marveled’

- This usage often follows the Greek closely, and may often be calqued

Absolutes



Dative absolutes

- A temporal subordinate clause may be nominalized
- The verb is a participle, it and its subject typically in the dative
- Often expressed as a prepositional phrase with *at*

jah at lesu ufdaupidamma jah bidjandin uslūknoda himins

and PREP Jesus.DAT baptize.PPP.DAT and pray.PTCP.DAT opened sky

‘and with Jesus having been baptized and praying the sky opened’

= ‘when Jesus had been baptized and was praying, the sky opened’

- Often closely following Greek genitive absolutes, may often be calqued
- But the construction as a whole probably has a Gothic basis

Other absolutes

- One to three nominative absolutes are supposedly attested

jah waurþans dags gatils, ‘a fitting day having occurred’

- The nominative here is unexpected, possibly anomalous
- Accusative absolutes are more secure

ip þuk taujandan armaion ni witi hleidumei þeina,
but you.ACC do.PTCP.ACC alms NEG know.OPT.3SG left.hand.NOM your

hva taujip taihswo þeina
what do.3SG right.hand.NOM your

‘but when you perform alms, your left hand should not know what your right hand does’

- The status of accusative absolutes remains debated

Relative clauses



Relatives

- Standard relativizer is a form of *sa* (demonstrative) + *ei*

gabairhtida þeinata namō mannam þanzei at-gaft mis
revealed.1SG thy name people.DAT.PL REL.ACC.PL gave.2PL me
'I revealed your name to the people whom you gave me'

- Personal pronouns may also be relativized in this way

ik auk im sa smalista apaustaule,
I for am DET smallest apostle.GEN.PL

ikei ni im wairþs ei haitaidau apaustaulus
I.REL NEG am worthy COMP call.PAS.OPT.1SG apostle

'For I am the least of the apostles, I who am not worthy to be called an apostle' (lit. 'that I should be called an apostle')

Relatives and participles

- Participial constructions may serve as nominalized relatives

sa mik andnimands andnimip pana sandjandan mik
he me accept.PTCP accept.3SG DET.ACC.SG send.PTCP.ACC.SG me
'the one accepting me accepts the one sending me'

saei mik andnimip, andnimip pana sandjandan mik
he.REL me accept.3SG accept.3SG DET.ACC.SG send.PTCP.ACC.SG me
'he who accepts me accepts the one sending me'

Infinital structures



Control

- Finite control verbs are often followed by an infinitival complement
- The subject of the control verb may be the subject of the infinitive
þan-uh nū wēnja sandjan
him-and now hope.1SG send.INF
'and I now hope to send him'
- Or the object of the control verb may be the subject of the infinitive
anabaud ahmin þamma unhrainjin us-gaggan
commanded spirit.DAT DET.DAT unclean.DAT out-go.INF
'he commanded the unclean spirit to depart'

Infinitives of purpose

- Purpose may be expressed with an infinitive
- Especially common after verbs of motion
- The subject of the main verb is usually the subject of the infinitive

ni qam gatairan ak usfulljan
NEG came.1SG destroy.INF but fulfil.INF
'I did not come to destroy but to fulfil'

Finite clauses

- For control and purpose clauses, a dependent optative clause may be used
- This typically occurs with switch reference (with a new subject)

wenja ei kunneiþ
hope.1SG COMP know.OPT.2PL
'I hope that you know'

afslaham ina, ei uns wairþai þata arbi
kill.1PL him COMP us.DAT become.OPT.3SG that inheritance
'let's kill him so that the inheritance will come to us'

Accusative plus infinitive

- An entire clause may be predicated to a finite verb
- The subject of predicated clause is accusative, the verb infinitive

hausidēdup ina siukan

hear.PST.2PL him.ACC be.sick.INF

‘you heard him to be sick’ = ‘you heard that he was sick’

- (*ina* is not a direct object of *hausidēdup*)

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Thank you for your attention!

Secondary predication

- Similar constructions can involve secondary predication with adjectives

þuk sēham siukana

you.ACC see.PST.1PL sick.ADJ.ACC.SG

‘we saw you sick’ = ‘we saw that you were sick’