NOMINAL AND ADVERBIAL CLAUSES IN MALTESE[1]

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Abstract

The article considers two types of subordinate sentences: nominal (complement) clauses and adverbial clauses. It touches upon the difference between a nominal clause with an explicit verb and a clause lacking an explicit verb (a predicate/copular sentence, also known as a nominal (non-verbal) sentence), before going on to explore declarative and question-word interrogative nominal clauses, yes-no interrogative and alternative interrogative nominal clauses as well as headless relative clauses. Adverbial clauses are next considered, starting with a look at simple and compound adverbial conjunctions. Various types of clauses are discussed: adverbial clauses of time, manner, purpose, result and cause/reason. The study goes on to look at conditional adverbial clauses, concessive clauses, alternative concessive adverbial clauses, comparative and equative adverbial clauses. The article concludes with a look at adverbial clauses which are rendered non-finite through nominalisation.

Dan l-artiklu jagħti ħarsa lejn żewġ tipi ta' sentenzi subordinati: sentenzi subordinati nominali kumplamentari u sentenzi subordinati avverbjali. Jibda billi jittratta fuq fuq id-differenza bejn sentenza subordinata li tinkludi verb u sentenza subordinata bla verb (sentenza kopulari jew predikattiva, magħrufa wkoll bħala sentenza nominali). Imbagħad jifli sentenzi subordinati nominali dikjarattivi, sentenzi interrogattivi b'espressjoni interrogattiva, mistoqsijiet li jitolbu t-tweġiba iva jew le, mistoqsijiet alternattivi u sentenzi subordinati aġġettivali mingħajr ras. Jeżamina wkoll sentenzi subordinati avverbjali billi qabelxejn jagħti ħarsa lejn konġunzjonijiet avverbjali sempliċi u komposti. Jistudja tipi differenti ta' sentenzi subordinati avverbjali: ta' żmien, ta' manjiera, ta' skop, ta' riżultat u ta' kawża jew raġuni. Imbagħad ikompli billi jqis sentenzi subordinati avverbjali kondizzjonali, sentenzi konċessivi, sentenzi konċessivi alternattivi, sentenzi komparattivi u sentenzi avverbjali ekwattivi. Jagħlaq b'diskussjoni fuq sentenzi subordinati avverbjali li jsiru mhux finiti permezz tan-nominalizzazzjoni.

1. Nominal clauses

To date not much is known, within the field of Maltese syntax, about subordinate clauses. While Camilleri (this volume) treats relative clauses, the present study deals, if only in a preliminary way, with nominal (complement) clauses and adverbial clauses. A subordinate sentence (or clause) is called "nominal" when it serves the function of a noun phrase within a matrix sentence. In Maltese, such (subordinate) nominal clauses are usually introduced with the subordinating conjunction *li* which also introduces (subordinate) adjectival (i.e relative) clauses. This subordinate status is also borne out by the intonation contour over the clause in question: the native speaker intuits that it is not a (syntactically) complete structure (cf the description of the intonation contour of the nominal clause in example 2 below).

In what follows, I distinguish a subordinate nominal clause from nominal sentences (cf Borg 1987-88 for different types of nominal sentences in Maltese) which, however, can also be subordinate. A nominal sentence, such as example (1), has a subject (*dan*) and a predicate (*inaċċettabbli*) in which there is no verb and yet its intonation contour marks it as complete.

(1)   *Dan*   *in-aċċettabbli.*
      this.SGM   un-acceptable
      'This is unacceptable.'

Completeness in declarative Maltese sentences is often marked by an intonation contour that shows the final stressed syllable - *inaċċet**tab**bli* - to have a falling intonation. This is often followed by a rise in the following unstressed syllable - *inaċċettabb**li*** (Azzopardi-Alexander, personal communication).

For reasons not entirely as yet specified, a small range of expressions may appear between the subject and the predicate, depending on the type of nominal sentence involved. One such expression is a form of the independent pronoun used with copular function. In the case of (1), the form is the third person singular masculine pronoun *huwa* or *hu*, thus, *Dan huwa/hu in-aċċettabbli.*

A nominal clause, as indicated, is typically introduced by the subordinating conjunction *li* "that":

(2)   *Li*   *t-idħaq*   *f'-din*   *is-sitwazzjoni,*
     that   2-laugh.IPFV.SG   in-this.SGF   DEF-situation
     in-aċċettabbli.
     un-acceptable
     'That you should laugh in this situation is unacceptable.'

In this example it occupies the position of subject of the (main) sentence in which it occurs, substituting for the demonstrative pronoun *dan* (the subject of the sentence in 1). The incomplete and, therefore, subordinate status of the nominal clause is marked by a rising intonation on the last stressed syllable – *sitwazz**jo**ni*

- that continues till the end of the word. This gives the listener the expectation of a continuation which will be marked by a falling intonation on the final unstressed syllable of that element (in the main clause) that completes it and, possibly a rise on the unstressed syllable as in (1) (Azzopardi-Alexander, personal communication).

It is to be noted also that a subordinate nominal clause may itself be a nominal, as opposed to a verbal, sentence. Compare example (3) with (4):

(3) *Oħt-u*   *(hija)*   *s-segretarja.*
     sister-his   (COP.SGF)   DEF-secretary
     'His sister is the secretary.'

(4) *Li*   *oħt-u*   *(hija)*   *s-segretarja*   *(huwa)*
     that   sister-his   (COP.SGF)   DEF-secretary   (COP.3SGM)
     in-aċċettabbli.
     un-acceptable
     'It is unacceptable that his sister is the secretary.'

1.1 Declarative nominal clauses

A nominal clause can also occur as the object of a (verbal) sentence:

(5) *Id-difiża*   *argument-at*   *li*   *l-imputat*
     DEF-defence   argue.PFV-3SGF   that   DEF-accused
     tfixkel   *f-it-tapit.*
     trip up.PFV.3SGM   in-DEF-carpet
     'The defence argued that the accused tripped up on the carpet.'

Let us go back to nominal clauses in subject position: we have already seen a nominal clause as subject of a nominal sentence (examples 1 and 3): however when it comes to a nominal clause as subject of a verbal sentence, it seems that the subordinating conjunction *li* has to be expanded to *Il-fatt li...* "The fact that..." (but cf discussion of left dislocation in example (13) below).

(6) *Il-fatt*   *li*   *għed-t-l-u,*   *qawwie-l-u*
     DEF-fact   that   say.PFV-1SG-OM-him   strengthen.PFV.3SGM-OM-him

     qalb-u.
     heart-his

     'The fact that I told him served to encourage him.'

The nominal clause *li għedtlu* is an argument of *Il-fatt* so that the subject of (6) is *Il-fatt li għedtlu*.

Although one can also have *Il-fatt li* introducing the subject nominal clause of the nominal sentence in (2), it is not clear why its use should be felt to be more required in the case of the subject of a verbal sentence like (6).

There are a number of verbs which typically take a (often contiguous) subordinate nominal clause for object: *qal* "he said", *ħolom* "he dreamed", *stqarr* "he declared", *emmen* "he believed", *argumenta* "he argued", etc. The nominalisation corresponding to each of these verbs can also take a following contiguous subordinate nominal clause. One could argue that the transitivity of the verb is preserved in the nominalisation: this would make the nominal clause an argument (object) of the nominalised verb. Examples (7) and (8) illustrate an instance of this:

(7) *Stqarr-et*   *li*   *ma*   *t-af*   *xejn.*
     state.PFV-3SGF   that   NEG   3F-know.IPFV.SG   nothing

     'She declared that she did not know anything.'

(8) *L-istqarrija*   *li*   *ma*   *t-af*   *xejn*
     DEF-statement   that   NEG   3F-know.IPFV.SG   nothing

     ma   *emmin-ha*   *ħadd.*
     NEG   believe.PFV-3SGM   nobody

     'Nobody believed her statement that she did not know anything.'

Now there are other nouns which are not verbal nouns and they can also take a following subordinate nominal clause, as in:

(9) | *Ix-xniegħa* | *li* | *ġgarraf* | | *il-ħajt* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DEF-rumour | that | was.destroyed.PFV.3SGM | | DEF-wall |
| *ħassb-et* | *lil* | *kulħadd.* | | |
| worry.PFV-3SGF | OM | all | | |

'Everybody was worried at the rumour that the wall had collapsed.'

It would seem that in a case such as example (9), the following nominal clause can also be analysed as being an argument of the subject noun phrase (as in the case also of examples (6) and (8)).

Since the subordinating conjunction *li* introduces both nominal and adjectival clauses, the question arises as to how one can distinguish between the two types in this context, following a noun phrase.

One solution is to have recourse to the presence of implicit or explicit co-referentiality between the noun phrase and the following clause, necessarily present in the case of an adjectival clause. Thus, in (10) the subject of the subordinate clause is co-referential with the subject of the main clause, clearly making the subordinate clause an adjectival one.

(10) | *Ix-xniegħa* | *li* | *ħassb-et* | *lil* | *kulħadd* | *hija* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DEF-rumour | that | worry.PFV-3SGF | OM | everyone | COP.3SGF |
| *falz-a.* | | | | | |
| false-SGF | | | | | |

'The rumour which had everybody worried is false.'

On the other hand no element of the subordinate clause in (9) *li ġgarraf il-ħajt* is co-referential with the subject of the main sentence: in this case we clearly have a nominal, not an adjectival, clause.

Still one can have a subordinate clause with one of its arguments co-referential with an argument in the main clause, while still being a nominal, not an adjectival, clause, as in

(11) | *Ulied-u* | *qal-u* | *li* | *se* | *j-itilq-u.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| children-his | say.PFV-3PL | that | FUT | 3-leave.IPFV-PL |

'His children said that they would be leaving.'

6

Here the subject of the main clause and that of the subordinate clause are co-referential, but the subordinate clause is clearly a nominal one (the subordinate clause does not occur in a noun phrase and does not have a noun to modify). It therefore seems that there is also a semantic principle involved: the nominal clause "spells out" the intended content of the noun or verb it is complement to or object of. In (9) the nominal clause gives the "content" of the noun: what the rumour is about, and in (11) the nominal clause spells out the intended content of the verb of saying. In contrast, the adjectival clause in (10) simply characterises the rumour mentioned in a particular way.

A nominal clause can, in addition, be in apposition to an object noun phrase as in example (12):

(12)　*Semgħu-ha*　　　　　　*din*　　　　*ix-xniegħa,*　　*li*
　　　hear.PFV.3PL-3SGF　　　　this.SGF　　DEF-rumour　　that
　　　arrest-aw　　　*li-s-suspettat.*
　　　arrest.PFV-3PL　　OM-DEF-suspect
　　　'They heard this rumour, namely, that they had arrested the suspect.'

We can also have left dislocation of the nominal clause in apposition with what one might regard as a resumptive subject expression, the singular masculine demonstrative pronoun *dan* "this":

(13)　*Li*　　　*ġġarraf*　　　　　　　　*il-ħajt,*　　*dan*
　　　that　　destroyed.PFV.3SGM　　　　DEF-wall　　this.SGM
　　　ħasseb　　　　*lil*　　　*kulħadd.*
　　　worry.PFV.3SG　　OM　　everyone
　　　'That the wall had collapsed was what had everybody worried.'
　　　(Literally, 'That the wall had collapsed, that worried everybody')

However this type of construction does not come across as very natural.

A nominal clause may also occur as complement to an adjective (14) or as complement to a preposition (15):

(14) *It-tfal*   *imdejq-in*   *li*   *tilef*   *it-tim*
       DEF-children   sad-PL   that   lose.PFV.3M   DEF-team

       tagħ-hom.
       of-3PL

       'The children are sad because their team lost.'

(15) *Wara*   *li*   *kiel*   *kemm*   *felaħ,*
       after   that   eat.PFV.3SG   how.much   can.PFV.3SGM

       qabad   *u*   *telaq.*
       get.up.PFV.3SGM   and   leave.PFV.3SGM

       'After stuffing himself, he just got up and left.'

A nominal clause can also occur as complement to an adverb:

(16) *Aktarx*   *(li)*   *se*   *j-siefer*   *dalwaqt.*
       probably   (that)   FUT   3M-travel.IPFV.SG   soon

       'He's probably soon going abroad.'

In the case of example (16) the subordinator *li* is optional. In general, one may note that the order of the nominal clause relative to the expression it is complement to, seems restricted to the position following such an expression. Deviations from this order are quite marked and require certain structural adjustments as seen in the case of left dislocation in example (13).

1.2 Question-word question nominal clauses

An interrogative question-word nominal clause may occur as the subject of the sentence as in examples (17) and (18):

(17) *Fejn*   *is-siefer*   *j-iddepend-i*   *mil-l-gost-i*
       where   2-travel.IPFV.SG   3M-depend.IPFV-SG   from-DEF-taste-PL

       tiegħek.
       of-2SG

       'The choice of places you want to visit abroad depends on your tastes.'

(18) *Kif*   *in-ġib-u*   *ruħ-na*   *j-influwenz-a*
      how   1-bring.IPFV-PL   soul-1PL   3M-influence.IPFV-SG

      r-relazzjoni   *tagħ-na*   *ma-l-oħr-ajn.*
      DEF-relation   of-1PL   with-DEF-other-PL

      'The way we behave has a bearing on our relationship with others.'

It may also occur as the object of the sentence as in examples
(19, 20) and as the predicate of a nominal sentence (21, 22):

(19) *Ma*   *n-ista-x*   *n-ifhem*   *x'*
      NEG   1-can.IPFV.SG-NEG   1-understand.IPFV.SG   what

      ġab-ek   *hawn.*
      bring.PFV.3SGM-2SG   here

      'I cannot understand what brought you here.'

(20) *Ħi-ja*   *saqsie-ni*   *fejn*   *marr-et/*
      brother-1SG   ask.PFV.3SGM-1SG   where   go.PFV-3SGF/

      kif   *waqaj-t/*   *kemm*   *infaq-t/*   *meta*
      how   fall.PFV-1SG/   how.much   spend.PFV-1SG/   when

      se   *j-iġ-i.*
      FUT   3M-come.IPFV-SG

      'My brother asked me where she went to/how I fell/how much I spent/when will he be
      coming.'

(21) *Il-kwistjoni*   *koll-ha*   *hi*   *x'*   *se*   *n-agħmel*
      DEF-question   all-SGF   COP.3SGF   what   FUT   1-do.IPFV.SG

      bi-h.
      with-3SGM

      'The whole point is what should I do with him.'

Such a clause can also occur in apposition to a subject noun
phrase (22) or in apposition to an object noun phrase (23).

(22) *Il-punt*   *kruċjali,*   *x'*   *se*   *n-agħml-u*   *bi-h,*
      DEF-point   crucial   what   FUT   1-do.IPFV-PL   with-3SGM

      għad-u   *qed*   *j-inkweta-na.*
      still-3SGM   PROG   3-worry.IPFV.SG-1PL

      'The crucial point, what we are to do with him, is still bothering us.'

(23) *M'* *għand-ek-x* *idea* *kemm* *n-ieħu*
  NEG at-2SG-NEG idea how.much 1-take.IPFV.SG

  paċenzja *bi-h.*
  patience with-3SGM

  'You have no idea how patient I am with him.'

Question-word nominal clauses may occur also as a complement to an adjective, as in examples (24) and (25):

(24) *M'* *inie-x* *ċert* *x'* *se* *j-agħmel.*
  NEG 1SG-NEG certain what FUT 3M-do.IPFV.SG

  'I'm not sure what he intends on doing.'

(25) *Int-om* *żgur-i* *kemm* *se* *j-iġ-u*
  2-PL certain-PL how.much FUT 3-come.IPFV-PL

  mistedn-in?
  guest-PL

  'Do you know for sure how many guests are coming?'

They may also occur as a complement to a preposition as in examples (26) and (27):

(26) *Ma* *ftehem-nie-x* *fuq* *min* *se* *n-istiedn-u.*
  NEG agree.PFV-1PL-NEG on who FUT 1-invite.IPFV-PL

  'We have not agreed about whom to invite.'

(27) *Id-dubju* *dwar* *x'* *għamel* *b-il-flus*
  DEF-doubt about what do.PFV.3SGM with-DEF-money

  se *j-ibqa'* *magħ-na.*
  FUT 3M-remain.IPFV.SG with-1PL

  'Our doubt about what he did with the money will linger on.'

1.3 Yes-no interrogative nominal clauses

Yes-no interrogative nominal clauses can occur as the object of a sentence:

(28) *Saqsie-ni*   *(jekk)*   *Pietru*   *kellim-x*   *lil*
      ask.PFV.3SGM-1SG   (if)   Peter   talk.PFV.3SGM-NEG   OM

      ħu-h.
      brother-3SGM

      'He asked me whether Peter had spoken to his brother.'

Note in this nominal clause the optional presence of the complementizer *jekk* 'if, whether' together with the non-negative suffix on the verb[2] (cf Lucas: this volume). We can also have an object yes-no clause which is a nominal (rather than a verbal) sentence:

(29) *Saqsie-ni*   *(jekk)*   *l-arloġġ*   *hu-x*
      ask.PFV.3SGM-1SG   (if)   DEF-clock   COP.3SGM-NEG

      (qiegħed)   *fuq*   *il-mejda.*
      (located.3SGM)   on   DEF-table

      'He asked me whether the clock was on the table.'

Once again the complementiser *jekk* is optional and there is also the obligatory presence of the element *hux* (with copular function and non-negative suffix -*x*). The locative present participle is optional. In some dialects the present participle *qigħedx* (with non-negative suffix –*x*) could occur instead of *hux*.

A yes-no clause can also occur as the subject of the sentence (30a)[3] and in apposition to a subject noun phrase (30b):

(30a) *Jekk*   *t-ista-x*   *t-iġi*   *jew*   *le*
       if   2-can.IPFV.SG-NEG   2-come.IPFV.SG   or   no

       ma   *j-interessa-ni-x.*
       NEG   3M-concern.IPFV.SG-1SG-NEG

       'Whether you can come or not is of no concern to me.'

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2   For convenience, this non-negative suffix is still glossed as 'neg' in the illustrative sentences

3   Example kindly provided by Ray Fabri

(30b) *Il-kwistjoni*   *jekk*   *Pietru*   *kellim-x*   *lil*
DEF-question   if   Peter   talk.PFV.3SGM-NEG   OM

ħu-h   *qed*   *t-inkweta-na.*
brother-3SGM   PROG   3F-worry.IPFV.SG-1PL

'The question whether Peter did talk to his brother is troubling us.'

Note that in this case it is barely possible to omit the complementizer *jekk*.

Such a nominal clause can also occur as the predicate of a nominal sentence:

(31)   *Jekk*   *Pietru*   *kellim-x*   *lil*   *ħu-h*   *hija*
if   Peter   talk.PFV.3SGM-NEG   OM   brother-3SGM   COP.SGF

possibbiltà   *reali.*
possibility   real

'Whether Peter talked to his brother is a distinct possibility.'

In this sentence, the subject noun phrase is *possibbiltà reali* following, rather than preceding, the predicate, and the copular expression is singular feminine, agreeing with it. Also, as in the case of example (30), the complementizer *jekk* is obligatory.

A yes-no nominal clause can also occur in apposition to an object noun phrase (*d-dubju*), although a case could also be made for treating the clause as its complement:

(32)   *Semmie-l-i*   *d-dubju*   *(jekk)*   *Pietru*
mention.PFV.3SGM-TO-1SG   DEF-doubt   (if)   Peter

kien-x   *kellem*   *lil*   *ħu-h.*
be.PFV.3SGM-NEG   talk.pfv.3sgm   OM   brother-3SGM

'He mentioned the doubt whether Peter had talked to his brother.'

We can also have such clauses occurring as a complement to a predicative adjective (33) or as a complement to a preposition (34).

(33)   *M'*   *aħnie-x*   *żgur-i*   *(jekk)*   *għamilnie-x*   *sew.*
NEG   1.PL-NEG   certain-PL   (if)   do.PFV.1PL-NEG   right

'We are not sure whether we acted correctly.'

(34) *Ma*   *qbilnie-x*   *dwar*   *jekk*   *għandnie-x*
    NEG   agree.PFV.1PL-NEG   about   if   should.PFV.1PL-NEG
    n-itilq-u.
    1-leave.IPFV-PL
    'We did not agree about whether we should leave.'

Once again note that in example (34) the complementizer *jekk* is obligatory.

1.4 Alternative interrogative nominal clauses

Alternative interrogative nominal clauses can occur as the object of a sentence:

(35) *Saqsie-ni*   *(jekk)*   *n-ixtieq-x*   *n-itlaq*
    ask.PFV.3SGM-1SG   (if)   1-wish.IPFV.SG-NEG   1-leave.IPFV.SG
    jew   *n-ibqa'.*
    or   1-remain.IPFV.SG
    'He asked me whether I wanted to go or leave.'

As in the case of yes-no interrogative nominal clauses, note the optionality of the complementizer *jekk* 'if, whether', and the non-negative suffix on the verb.

Such clauses can also be a nominal rather than a verbal sentence as in example (36) (cf example 29):

(36) *Saqsie-ni*   *(jekk)*   *l-arloġġ*   *hu-x*
    ask.PFV.3SGM-1SG   (if)   DEF-clock   COP.3SGM-NEG
    (qiegħed)   *fuq*   *il-mejda*   *jew*   *fuq*
    (located.3SGM)   on   DEF-table   or   on
    il-gradenza.
    DEF-chest.of.drawers
    'He asked me whether the clock was on the table or on the chest of drawers.'

Note once more the obligatory copular element in (36) with the non-negative suffix.

An alternative nominal clause can occur as subject of the sentence (37a)[4], and in apposition to a subject noun phrase (37b):

(37a) *Jekk* *mar*   *jew* *ma* *mar-x*
  if go.PFV.3SGM or NEG go.PFV.3SGM-NEG
  ma *j-interessani-x.*
  NEG 3M-concern.IPFV.SG-1SG-NEG
  'Whether he went or not is no concern of mine.'

(37b) *Il-mistoqsija* *jekk* *n-ixtieq-x* *n-itlaq*
  DEF-question if 1-wish.IPFV.SG-NEG 1-leave.IPFV.SG
  jew *n-ibqa',*   *ikkonfond-iet-u.*
  or 1-remain.IPFV.SG   confuse.PFV-3SGF-3SGM
  'The question whether I want to leave or stay confused him.'

An alternative nominal clause can also occur as the predicate of a nominal sentence:

(38) *Il-mistoqsija* *hi*   *jekk* *n-ixtieq-x*
  DEF-question COP.3SGF   if 1-wish.IPFV.SG-NEG
  n-itlaq *jew* *n-ibqa'.*
  1-leave.IPFV.SG or 1-remain.IPFV.SG
  'The question is whether I would like to leave or stay.'

Sentence (39) exemplifies an alternative nominal clause in apposition to an object noun phrase:

(39) *Semmie-l-i*   *d-dubju* *(jekk)* *Pietru*
  mention.PFV.3SGM-TO-1SG DEF-doubt (if) Peter
  kien-x   *kellem* *lil* *ħu-h* *jew* *le.*
  be.PFV.3SGM-NEG talk.PFV.3SGM OM brother-3SGM or no
  'He mentioned the doubt whether Peter had talked to his brother or not.'

In example (40) the alternative nominal clause occurs as a complement to an adjective and in example (41) it occurs as complement to a preposition.

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4 Example kindly provided by Ray Fabri

(40) *M'*   *aħnie-x*   *żgur-i*   *(jekk)*   *kellnie-x*
      NEG   1.PL-NEG   certain-PL   (if)   have.PFV.1PL-NEG

      tort   *jew*   *raġun.*
      guilt   or   right
      'We are not sure whether we were right or wrong.'

(41) *Ma*   *qbil-nie-x*   *dwar*   *jekk*   *għand-nie-x*
      NEG   agree.PFV-1PL-NEG   about   if   at-1PL-NEG

      n-itilq-u   *jew*   *n-oqogħd-u.*
      1-leave.IPFV-PL   or   1-stay.IPFV-PL
      'We did not agree about whether we should leave or stay.'

1.5 Headless relative clauses

There is a class of clauses which seem to imply an antecedent noun phrase, which however is not realised, making them "headless". An alternative term would be "nominal relative clause" (Quirk et al, 1985: 1056). Compare examples (42) and (43) in which the clause *Min jikkommetti reat* can be substituted for the (subject) noun phrase *Il-kriminal*.

(42) *Il-kriminal*   *i-rid*   *i-ħallas*   *ta'*
      DEF-criminal   3M-want.IPFV.SG.   3M-pay.IPFV.SG   of
      għemil-u.
      deed-3SGM
      'The criminal should pay for his deeds.'

(43) *Min*   *j-ikkommett-i*   *reat*   *i-rid*
      who   3M-commit.IPFV-SG   crime   3M-want.IPFV.SG
      i-ħallas   *ta'*   *għemil-u.*
      3M-pay.IPFV.SG   of   action-3SGM
      'Whoever commits a crime has to pay for his deeds.'

A more complex example is the following:

(44) *T-af*   *li*   *x'*   *qal-l-i*   *koll-u*
      2-know.IPFV.SG   that   what   say.PFV.3SGM-TO-1SG   all-3SGM
      nsej-t-u?
      forget.PFV-1SG-3SGM
      'Do you know that I have forgotten all that he told me?'

15

This complex sentence clearly involves one main clause *Taf* and two subordinate clauses *li kollu nsejtu* and *x'qalli*. The clause *x'qalli* is the object of the verb *nsejtu* in the second subordinate clause, which in turn is the object of the main verb *taf*. The clause *x'qalli* can be easily substituted by a noun phrase such as *il-fatt* "the fact". At the same time an antecedent noun phrase such as *dak (li qalli)* "that (which he told me)" seems to be implied.

2. Adverbial clauses

Adverbial clauses serve the function of an adverb or adverbial phrase. Characteristically they are introduced by adverbial conjunctions and typically express circumstantial information about the proposition encoded by the main sentence. In example (45) the adverbial clause of purpose, introduced by the adverbial conjunction *biex* "in order to", gives the motivation for the situation encoded by the main sentence:

(45) *Oħt-u   marr-et   f-il-kju   biex   ma*
     sister-3SGM   go.PFV-3SGF   in-DEF-queue   to   NEG
     t-ibqa-x   l-aħhar.
     3F-remain.IPFV.SG-NEG   DEF-last
     'His sister queued up so as not to remain last.'

Adverbial clauses may follow the main sentence as in (45) or precede it as in (46), depending on the communicative effect the speaker wants to convey:

(46) *Biex   ma   t-ibqa-x   l-aħhar,   oħt-u*
     to   NEG   3F-remain.IPFV.SG-NEG   DEF-last   sister-3SGM
     marr-et   fi-l-kju.
     go.PFV-3SGF   in-DEF-queue
     'So as not to remain last, his sister queued up.'

Such clauses may even occur between the subject of the main sentence and its predicate:

(47) *Oħt-u,*   *biex*   *ma*   *t-ibqa-x*   *l-aħħar,*

      sister-3SGM   to   NEG   3F-remain.IPFV.SG-NEG   DEF-last

      marr-et   *fi-l-kju.*

      go.PFV-3SGF   in-DEF-queue

      'His sister, not to remain last, queued up.'

2.1 Adverbial conjunctions

Adverbial conjunctions which figure in the following examples may be simple, e.g. *biex* "in order to" in examples (45-47), *meta* "when", *kif* "how", and others. Adverbial conjunctions may also be compound: *billi* "because, since", *malli* "as soon as" and *talli* "because of" combine a preposition with the element *li* and are conventionally written as one word (but see also the point made below in section **2.12 Non-finite adverbial clauses**, following example 94). Other compound expressions are *minħabba li* "because", *waqt li* "during, while", *wara li* "after that", *tant li* "so much so that", *fil-ħin li* "at the moment that" and *kull darba li* "every time that". Although in spontaneous speech there does not seem to be a pause between this *li* and the preceding expression, nonetheless in these cases, *li* is written as a separate word.

Still other conjunctions combine various elements: *skont kif*, "how" (literally, "according-to how"), *hekk kif* "just as" (literally, "so how"), *bil-mod kif* "according to" (literally, "in-the-way how"), *biex b'hekk* "so that" (literally, "in-order with so"), *kull x'ħin* "every time that" (literally "every what time"), *daqs kemm* "as much as" (literally "as-much how-much").

2.2 Adverbial clauses of time

Different conjunctions give different time specifications. Thus *meta* "when" and *x'ħin* "when" (literally, "what time") indicate

a moment in time expressed in the adverbial clause generally contemporary with the time expressed in the main clause:

(48) *Sakkar*   *il-bieb*   *meta*   *t-oħroġ.*
lock.PFV.2SG   DEF-door   when   2-go.out.IPFV.SG
'Lock the door when you go out.'

(49) *Sellm-it-l-u*   *x'ħin*   *ra-t-u.*
greet.PFV-3SGF-to-3SGM   what-time   see.PFV-3SGF-3SGM
'She greeted him when she saw him.'

The conjunctions *fil-ħin li* "when, at the time that, at the very moment that", *malli* "as soon as" and *kif/hekk kif* (in this context) "as soon as, exactly when" also express contemporaneity, but with the added notion of immediacy:

(50) *Inħb-ej-na*   *kif*   *ra-j-nie-h*   *ġej.*
hide.PFV-PL-1PL   how   see.PFV-PL-1PL-3SGM   coming.SGM
'We hid as soon as we saw him approaching.'

(51) *Ħarb-et*   *malli*   *ra-t-na.*
escape.PFV-3SGF   as.soon.as   see.PFV-3SGF-1PL
'She escaped as soon as she saw us.'

Kull x'ħin/meta, kull darb-a li "every time that" express a moment of time in the subordinate clause distributively commensurate with the corresponding moment in the main clause:

(52) *N-olqot*   *minkb-i*   *kull*   *darb-a*   *li*
1-hit.IPFV.SG   elbow-1SG   every   time-SGF   that
n-idħol   *f'di-l-karozza*.
1-enter.IPFV.SG   in-this.SGF-DEF-car
'I graze my elbow every time I get into this car.'

The conjunction *qabel ma* expresses a time posterior to that expressed in the main clause, while *wara li* expresses a time anterior to that in the main clause:

(53) | *Leħq-et* | *telq-et* | | *qabel* | *ma* | *sellm-il-ha.* |
| reach.PFV-3SGF | leave.PFV-3SGF | | before | NEG | greet.PFV.3SGM-to-3SGF |

'She had already left before he managed to salute her.'

(54) | *Iffirma* | *l-kuntratt* | | *wara* | *li* | *qra-h* |
sign.PFV.3SGM	DEF-contract		after	that	read.PFV.3SGM-3SGM
koll-u.					
all-3SGM					

'He signed the contract after reading it in full.'

In contrast, in the case of the conjunction *waqt li*, the time expressed in the main clause is embedded within that expressed by the adverbial clause:

(55) | *Ħabbat* | | *il-bieb* | *waqt* | *li* |
knock.PFV.3SGM		DEF-door	during	that
kien	*qed*	*j-iekol.*		
be.PFV.3SGM	PROG	3M-eat.IPFV.SG		

'There was a knock at the door while he was eating.'

In the case of the conjunctions *sakemm/sa ma*, the time expressed in the adverbial clause marks the boundary of the expiry of the time expressed in the main clause:

(56) | *Se* | *n-żomm-l-ok* | | *post* | *sakemm* | *t-asal.* |
| FUT | 1-keep.IPFV.SG-TO-2SG | | place | until | 2-arrive.IPFV.SG |

'I'll keep you a place till you arrive.'

Conversely, with the conjunction *(sa) (minn) mindu*, the time expressed in the adverbial clause expresses the starting point of the time expressed by the main clause:

(57) | *Had-et* | *ħsieb-u* | | *sa* | *minn* | *mindu* |
take.PFV-3SGF	thought-3SGM		to	from	since
kien	*tarbija.*				
be.PFV.3SGM	baby				

'She took care of him from the time he had been a baby.'

2.3 Adverbial clauses of manner

An adverbial clause of manner is typically introduced by the conjunction *kif* "how":

(58) *Ħawwel*   *is-siġr-a*   *kif*   *urie-h*
     plant.PFV.3SGM   DEF-tree-SGF   as   show.PFV.3SGM-3SGM
     il-ġardinar.
     DEF-gardener
     'He planted the tree just as the gardener showed him how to.'

Skont kif "according to how" and *bil-mod kif* "in the way that" are two possible elaborations of the same conjunction with equivalent meaning. The element *hekk* "so" in the compound conjunction *hekk kif* "exactly as", however, introduces the idea of a more precise manner in the adverbial clause, (*hekk* "so" stresses the congruence of what is expressed in the main clause with the manner indicated in the subordinate clause):

(59) *Waħħal*   *il-bolla*   *hekk*   *kif*   *qall-u*
     stick.PFV.3SGM   DEF-stamp   so   as   say.PFV.3SGM-3SGM
     j-agħmel   *ta-l-posta.*
     3M-do.IPFV.SG   of-DEF-post
     'He stuck the stamp just as the clerk at the post office told him how to.'

Note also that in this case the adverbial clause can only follow the main clause.

2.4 Adverbial clauses of purpose

The conjunction *biex* "in order to", as seen in example (45) above, introduces a purpose clause which gives the motivation for the situation encoded by the main sentence. There is also the compound conjunction *biex b'hekk* "so that in this way" which, as in the case of *hekk kif* (example 59), introduces an idea of preciseness and deliberateness:

(60) | *Qata'* | *l-biljett* | *biex* | *b'* | *hekk* | *i-kun* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| cut.PFV.3SGM | DEF-ticket | to | with | so | 3M-be.IPFV.SG |

j-ista'	*j-itlaq*	*għal*	*Ruma*	*l-lejl-a*	*stess*.
3M-can.IPFV.SG	3M-leave.IPFV.SG	for	Rome	DEF-night-F	EMPHASIS

'He has bought his ticket so he can leave for Rome this very evening.'

Note that in this case too, the adverbial clause can only follow the main clause.

2.5 Adverbial clauses of result

There are clear instances when the same conjunction *biex* introduces an adverbial clause indicating result:

(61) | *Għej-a* | *wisq* | *biex* | *j-erġa'* |
|---|---|---|---|
| get.tired.PFV-3SGM | too.much | to | 3M-repeat.IPFV.3SG |

j-ikkompet-i.
3M-compete.IPFV-SG

'He got too tired to be able to compete again.'

For result clauses one typically finds the composite expression *tant...li* "so much...that", each element of which introduces a clause as in example (62):

(62) | *It-tfal* | *tant* | *mexx-ej-nie-hom* |
|---|---|---|
| DEF-children | so.much | cause.to.walk.PFV-1PL-3PL |

li	*f-l-aħħar*	*għej-ew*.
that	in-DEF-last	get.tired.PFV-3PL

'We made the children walk so much that at last they got tired.'

Going by the semantics, the result clause is clearly the one introduced by the conjunction *li*. The rest of the complex sentence *It-tfal tant mexxejniehom* is a transitive sentence with a topicalised object *It-tfal* (cf Borg, Albert and Azzopardi Alexander 2009). This should be the main clause, except that if we go by the intonation over it, we get the contour associated with incompleteness. For the purposes of this article, I am considering it as the main clause.

Another conjunction expressing result is *tant kemm* "so much", but in this case the element *li* is omitted before the subordinate clause:

(63) | *Tant* | *kemm* | *mexx-ej-nie-hom,* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| so.much | how.much | cause.to.walk.PFV-1PL-3PL | | |
| *it-tfal* | *f-l-aħħar* | *għej-ew.* | | |
| DEF-children | in-DEF-last | get.tired.PFV-3PL | | |
| 'We made them walk so much, the children at last got tired.' | | | | |

Whereas the relative order of the main clause followed by the adverbial clause is fixed in (62), in (63) it is not.

It is also interesting to note that in some cases of coordination, the second conjoined sentence can express result:

(64) | *Waqa'* | *u* | *kiser* | *sieq-u.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| fall.PFV.3SGM | and | break.PFV.3SGM | foot-3SGM |
| 'He fell and broke a leg.' | | | |

The specific temporal succession of the two situations identified by the two conjoined sentences is fixed by their relative order, signifying the latter as the result of the former.

2.6 Adverbial clauses of cause (or reason)

The conjunction *għax* "because" typically introduces an adverbial clause of reason:

(65) | *Ħareġ* | *kmieni* | *għax* | *kell-u* | *ħafna* | *x'* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| leave.PFV.3SGM | early | because | have.PFV-3SGM | much | what |
| *j-agħmel.* | | | | | |
| 3M-do.IPFV.SG | | | | | |
| 'He left early because he was very busy.' | | | | | |

Other conjunctions introducing clauses of reason are *billi* "since", *ġaladarba* "once that/given that", *minħabba li* "because of".

22

Yet another conjunction relevant in this context is *sakemm*, literally "until" but in this context, "as long as":

(66) *Sakemm*   *ma*   *t-imlie-x*   *il-formula,*   *ma*
     until   NEG   2-fill.IPFV.SG-NEG   DEF-form   NEG
     t-iħ-u-x   *is-sussidju.*
     2-take.IPFV.SG-NEG   DEF-subsidy
     'As long as you do not complete the form, you will not receive the subsidy.'

The subordinate clause can be interpreted as referring to a particular achievement to take place at a given moment, but it can also be interpreted as the (critical) reason or cause making possible the realisation of the situation identified by the main clause.

2.7 Conditional adverbial clauses

Traditionally a distinction is made between the expression of "real" (realis) and "unreal" (irrealis) conditions, and we can also find this formally marked in Maltese to a certain extent. Typically the conjunction introducing a real condition is *jekk* "if", as in the following example:

(67) *Jekk*   *t-agħmel*   *ix-xita,*   *il-ħamrija*
     if   3F-do.IPFV.SG   DEF-rain   DEF-soil
     t-irtab.
     3F-become.soft.IPFV.SG
     'If it rains, the soil will become soft.'

The conjunction *kieku* "if" typically introduces an unreal condition:

(68) *Kieku*   *għaml-et*   *ix-xita,*   *il-ħamrija*
     if   do.PFV-3SGF   DEF-rain   DEF-soil
     kien-et   *t-irtab.*
     be.PFV-3SGF   3F-become.soft.IPFV.SG
     'Had it rained, the soil would have become soft.'

While for some speakers it is possible to have *kieku* for *jekk* in example (67), *jekk* instead of *kieku* in example (68) is not possible.

The occurrence of *kieku* to introduce a real condition sounds even more plausible if *kieku*, in addition, also introduces the main clause, thereby possibly underlining the conditionality involved:

(69) *Kieku* *t-agħmel*   *ix-xita,* *kieku* *l-ħamrija*
   if   3F-do.IPFV.SG DEF-rain if(then) DEF-soil
   t-irtab.
   3F-become.soft.IPFV.SG
   'If only it had to rain, the soil would become soft.'

The conditionality of the subordinate clause can be somewhat emphasised through the use of the conjunction *dment li* "as long as" instead:

(70) *Dment* *li*   *t-agħmel*   *ix-xita,* *il-ħamrija*
   while that 3F-do.IPFV.SG DEF-rain DEF-soil
   t-irtab.
   3F-become.soft.IPFV.SG
   'As long as it rains, the soil will become soft.'

A condition can be further emphasised and highlighted through the use of *ukoll* "also" or *anki* "even" preceding the conjunction *jekk*:

(71) *Ukoll/anki* *jekk* *omm* *t-insa*   *t-tarbija*
   also/even if   mother 3F-forget.IPFV.SG DEF-baby
   ta' *ġuf-ha,*   *jiena* *ma* *n-insie-k-x.*
   of womb-3SGF 1SG NEG 1-forget.IPFV.SG-2SG-NEG
   'Even if a mother were to forget the child of her womb, I will not forget you.'

And a further grade of emphasis can be achieved by adding the qualifier *xorta* in the main clause:

(72) *Ukoll/anki*   *jekk*   *omm*   *t-insa*   *t-tarbija*   *ta'*
      also/even   if   mother   3F-forget.IPFV.SG DEF-baby   of

      ġuf-ha,   *jiena*   *xorta*   *ma*   *n-insie-k-x.*
      womb-3SGF   1SG   same   NEG   1-forget.IPFV.SG-2SG-NEG

      'Even if a mother were to forget the child of her womb, even then I will not forget you.'

An equivalent effect can be had inserting *ukoll* instead of *xorta* in the main clause, but this usage sounds somewhat archaic:

(73) *Ukoll/anki*   *jekk*   *omm*   *t-insa*   *t-tarbija*   *ta'*
      also/even   if   mother   3F-forget.IPFV.SG DEF-baby   of

      ġuf-ha,   *ukoll*   *jiena*   *ma*   *n-insie-k-x.*
      womb-3SGF   also   1SG   NEG   1-forget.IPFV.SG-2SG-NEG

      'Even if a mother were to forget the child of her womb, just the same, I will not forget you.'

Note that *ukoll* can only be inserted in the main clause if it also introduces the conditional clause. The 'unreality' of the condition can be reinforced by having *li* precede *kieku* (compare 74 with 68):

(74) *Li*   *kieku*   *għaml-et*   *ix-xita,*   *il-ħamrija*
      that   if   do.PFV-3SGM   DEF-rain   DEF-soil

      kien-et   *t-irtab.*
      be.PFV-3SGF   3F-become.soft.IPFV.SG

      'If only it had rained, the soil would have become soft.'

It is to be noted that there are certain restrictions on the choice of tense in both the main and the subordinate clause. Thus the real conditions (67) and (69-73) have an imperfect verb, expressing a time subsequent to the expression of the condition. Correspondingly, the main clause also has an imperfect verb, expressing a time following that of the condition. The real condition can also have future time reference:

(75) *Jekk*   *se*   *t-issuppervja,*   *mhux*   *se*   *n-kellm-ek.*
      if   FUT   2-sulk.IPFV.SG   NEG   FUT   1-speak.IPFV.SG-2SG

      'If you are going to sulk, I will not talk to you.'

However, the unreal conditions in (68) and (74) have a perfect verb with past time reference and the main clause also has past time reference subsequent to that expressed by the condition.

2.8 Concessive adverbial clauses

The conditional clauses we have been considering, in relation to their main clause, follow the schema: *'if x, then y'*. Concessive clauses exemplify the schema *'x, but (not) y'*, that is, there is an opposition between *x* and *y* which can also be expressed by the negation of *y*. Typically such clauses are introduced by *minkejja li*, *għalkemm* or *allavolja*:

(76) | *Minkejja* | *li* | *għaml-et* | *ix-xita,* | *il-ħamrija* |
| although | that | do.PFV-3SGF | DEF-rain | DEF-soil |

ma   *rtab-it-x.*
NEG   become.soft.PFV-3SGF-NEG

'Although it rained, the soil did not become soft.'

Note that the verb in the main clause is negative: the force of the negation in the main clause can be amplified through the use of *xorta* preceding the main verb:

(77) | *Minkejja* | *li* | *għaml-et* | *ix-xita,* | *il-ħamrija* |
| although | that | do.PFV-3SGF | DEF-rain | DEF-soil |

xorta   *ma*   *rtab-it-x.*
same   NEG   become.soft.PFV-3SGF-NEG

'Although it rained, the soil still did not soften.'

Time reference with such clauses is not restricted to the past: the subordinate clause can express a condition obtaining generally as in the following example:

(78) | *Minkejja* | *li* | *t-aħdem* | *ħafna,* | *xorta* | *ma* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| although | that | 3F-work.IPFV.SG | much | same | NEG |

t-faddal-x	*biżżejjed.*
3F-save.up.IPFV.SG-NEG	enough

'Although she works a lot, all the same, she doesn't manage to save up enough.'

It can even have future time reference:

(79) | *Minkejja* | *li* | *se* | *t-itlaq,* | *xorta* | *mhux* | *se* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| although | that | FUT | 2-leave.IPFV.SG | same | NEG | FUT |

t-eħles	*minn-i.*
2-get.rid.of.IPFV.SG	from-1SG

'Although you are leaving, all the same, you will not be getting rid of me.'

As pointed out earlier, one can also have a concessive clause without negation on the main verb:

(80) | *Minkejja* | *li* | *mard-et,* | *xorta* | *baqa'* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| although | that | get.sick.PFV-3SGF | same | remain.PFV.3SGM |

j-ħobb-ha.
3M-love.IPFV.SG-3SGF

'Although she became ill, he still went on loving her.'

2.9 Alternative concessive clauses

The expression *kemm jekk* or *sew jekk* introduces alternatives within this type of concessive clause:

(81) | *Kemm* | *jekk* | *t-iġ-i* | *waħd-ek,* | *(u)* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| how.much | if | 2-come.IPFV-SG | alone-2SG | (and) | |

kemm	*jekk*	*t-iġ-i*	*ma'*	*xi*	*ħaddieħor,*
how.much	if	2-come.IPFV-SG	with	some	one.else

il-bieb	*dejjem*	*miftuħ.*
DEF-door	always	open

'Whether you come on your own or whether you come in somebody else's company, you are always welcome.'

Note the optional occurrence in (81) of the conjunction *u*.

The expression *xorta* can be used in the main clause to highlight the 'concession":

(82)   *Kemm*   *jekk*   *t-iġ-i*   *waħd-ek,*   *(u)*
      how.much   if   2-come.IPFV-SG   alone-2SG   (and)
      kemm   *jekk*   *t-iġ-i*   *ma'*   *xi*
      how.much   if   2-come.IPFV-SG   with   some
      ħaddieħor,   *il-bieb*   *xorta*   *dejjem*   *miftuħ.*
      one.else   DEF-door   same   always   open
      'Whether you come on your own or whether you come in somebody else's company, just the same, you are always welcome.'

Alternative concessive clauses can have a positive main verb as in (81) and (82), but they can also occur with a negative main verb, as in the following example:

(83)   *Kemm*   *jekk*   *t-ixrob*   *u*   *kemm*   *jekk*
      how.much   if   2-drink.IPVF.SG   and   how.much   if
      t-iekol,   *ma*   *t-ista-x*   *t-esaġera.*
      2-eat.IPFV.SG   NEG   2-be.able.IPFV.SG-NEG   2-exagerate.IPFV.SG
      'Whether you drink or whether you eat, you cannot overdo it.'

2.10 Comparative adverbial clauses

A comparative adverbial clause can be introduced by one of a small range of adverbial conjunctions: *iktar* or *iżjed*, both meaning "more", and *inqas* "less", followed by the expression *ma* (homonymous with the negative expression *ma*) which can be characterised as a type of relative conjunction. The main clause is also introduced with a corresponding form, as in the following example, so that the main clause, in addition to the subordinate one, contains a comparative expression (correlative comparative):

(84)   *Iktar*   *ma*   *kiel-u,*   *iktar*   *ħxien-u.*
      more   that   eat.PFV-3PL   more   become.fat.PFV-3PL
      'The more they ate, the fatter they grew.'

Although semantically both clauses have a comparative element ("eating more', "growing fatter", cf the discussion of example 62), the intonation contour associated with incompleteness is clearly present in the case of the first clause which cannot stand on its own. However - as far as the intonation goes - it is possible to imagine the second clause standing on its own. Accordingly, for present purposes, this is treated as the main clause.

Different combinations of these forms are possible: *iktar ma ... iktar..., iktar ma ... inqas ..., iżjed ma ... iżjed ..., iżjed ma ... inqas ..., inqas ma ... inqas ..., inqas ma ... iktar/iżjed ... .* In the case of some of these combinations it is also possible to have the element *ma* following the conjunction within the main clause:

(85)   *Inqas*   *ma*   *tkellm-et,*   *iżjed*   *(ma)*
       less   that   speak.PFV-3SGF   more   (that)
       nkedd-u.
       get.annoyed.PFV-3PL
       'The less she spoke, the more they were annoyed.'

In general, the preferred order is for the adverbial clause to precede the main clause but it is also possible for the main clause to occur before the subordinate one (with an appropriate intonation contour). However there is a further comparative construction in which deciding which is the main clause is also not such a straightforward matter although on different grounds, as in the following example:

(86)   *Iktar*   *milli*   *ma*   *t-għid*   *xejn,*   *iktar*   *li*
       more   than   NEG   2-say.IPFV.SG   nothing   more   that
       t-uża   *l-prudenza.*
       2-use.PFV.SG   DEF-prudence
       'Rather than not saying anything, it's more a question of being prudent.'

The expression *iktar* is now followed by *milli* and the form *ma* preceding the verb *tgħid* is part of the negative construction. Given the intonation contour over the second clause, it is possible

to imagine it standing on its own. However structural elements are missing here, so one has to posit a case of ellipsis, making the element *iktar li tuża l-prudenza* part of the main clause, as in:

(87) | *Iktar* | *milli* | *ma* | *t-għid* | *xejn,* | *iktar* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| more | than | NEG | 2-say.IPFV.SG | nothing | more |
| *(hija* | | *kwistjoni)* | *li* | *t-uża* | *l-prudenza*. |
| (COP.3SGF | | question) | that | 2-use.PFV.SG | DEF-prudence |

'Rather than not saying anything, it's more a question of being prudent.'

The main clause would be a nominal sentence whose predicate is *hija kwistjoni* together with an elided subject, so that *li tuża l-prudenza* would be a complement noun clause to the (elided) predicate noun *kwistjoni*.

2.11 Equative adverbial clauses

The compound conjunction *daqskemm* introduces equative clauses:

(88) | *Għadd-ew* | *mil-l-eżamijiet* | *kollha* | *daqskemm* |
|---|---|---|---|
| pass.PFV-3PL | from-DEF-exams | all | as.much.as |
| *studj-aw*. | | | |
| study.PFV-3PL | | | |

'They studied so much, they passed all their exams.'

Main and subordinate equative clauses may be positive or negative, or they may also be both positive or both negative.

2.12 Non-finite adverbial clauses

Some of the adverbial clauses we have been examining can be made non-finite through nominalisation. Compare the time clause *malli ħarġet il-vara* indicating a particular moment in time in the following example with its nominalisation *mal-ħruġ tal-vara*:

(89) *Bde-w*   *j-ispara-w*   *il-murtali*   *malli*
     begin.PFV-3PL   3-let.off.IPFV-PL   DEF-fireworks   as.soon.as

     ħarġ-et   *il-vara/*   *ma-l-ħruġ*
     come.out.PFV-3SGF   DEF-statue/   with-DEF-coming.out

     ta-l-vara.
     of-DEF-statue

     'They started letting off fireworks the moment the statue was brought out ('came out')/at the appearance ('coming out') of the statue'.

Note that the conjunction *malli* does not figure in the nominalisation which is now the object of the preposition *ma'* "with" (see also the point made below, following example 94).

The clause *waqt li l-maġistrat kien qed jaqra s-sentenza* indicating a certain duration of time in the following example can also be nominalised to *waqt il-qari tas-sentenza (mill-maġistrat)*.

(90) *L-akkużat*   *deher*   *kalm*   *waqt*   *li*   *l-maġistrat*
     DEF-accused   appear.PFV.3SGM   calm   during   that   DEF-magistrate

     kien   *qed*   *j-aqra*   *s-sentenza/*   *waqt*
     be.PFV.3SGM   PROG   3M-read.IPFV.SG   DEF-sentence/   during

     il-qari   *ta-s-sentenza*   *(mil-l-maġistrat).*
     DEF-reading   of-DEF-sentence   (from-DEF-magistrate)

     "The accused seemed calm while the magistrate was reading out the judgement/during the reading out of the judgement (by the magistrate)".

In this case note that the conjunction *waqt li* is reduced to the preposition *waqt* which takes the corresponding nominalisation as its object.

Other possible nominalisations in the case of adverbial clauses of time are the following:

(91) *Żamm-ew-l-ha*   *post*   *sa*   *ma*   *wasl-et/*
     keep.PFV-3PL-to-3SGF   place   till   that   arrive.PFV-3SGF/

     sa-l-wasla   *tagħ-ha.*
     till-DEF-arrival   of-3SGF

     'They kept a place for her till she arrived/until her arrival.'

The nominalisation *l-wasla tagħha,* object of the preposition *sa,* corresponds to the adverbial clause *sa ma waslet*.

(92) | *Ħad-et* | | *ħsieb-u* | | *sa* | *minn* | *mindu* | *twieled/* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
take.PFV-3SGF | | thought-3SGM | | till | from | since | be.born.PFV.3SGM |

sa	*minn*	*twelid-u.*
till	from	birth-3SGM

'She cared for him from the moment he was born/from (the time of his) birth.'

Here the nominalisation *twelidu*, object of the compound preposition *sa minn* corresponds to the adverbial clause *sa minn mindu twieled*.

The following is an example of the nominalisation of an adverbial clause of manner:

(93) | *Dejjem* | *mexa* | | *skont* | *kif* | *rabb-ew-h* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| always | walk.PFV.3SGM | | according | how | bring.up.PFV-3PL-3SGM |

missier-u		*u*	*omm-u/*	*skont*	*it-trobbija*
father-3SGM		and	mother-3SGM/	according	DEF-bringing.up

ta'	*missier-u*	*u*	*omm-u.*
of	father-3SGM	and	mother-3SGM

'He always behaved in accordance with how he was brought up by his father and mother/in accordance with his upbringing by his father and mother.'

Note that the nominalised version loses the conjunction *kif*.

In the following example involving the nominalisation of a clause of reason with the compound conjunction *minħabba li*, note the loss of *li*, as in the case of examples (89) and (90):

(94) | *Wasal-na* | | *tard* | *minħabba* | *li* | *ttardj-a* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| arrive.PFV-1PL | | late | because.of | that | be.late.PFV-3SGM |

l-ajruplan/	*minħabba*	*l-ittardjar*	*ta-l-ajruplan.*
DEF-plane/	because.of	DEF-lateness	of-DEF-plane

'We arrived late because the flight was delayed/because of the delay of the flight.'

In all the cases of nominalisations of adverbial clauses we have seen so far, the conjunction involved was compound, and the process of nominalisation involved the loss of an element in

the conjunction, *li* in (45), (46) and (50), *ma* in (47), *mindu* in (48) and *kif* in (49). It seems these elements are closely bound with the verbal (and finite) status of the clause they introduce. This would explain why they do not figure once the clause is nominalised. Furthermore, in the case of compound conjunctions such as *malli*, *talli*, *filli* it would seem that there is still a synchronic awareness of their composition, since the element *li*, as just seen, is omitted in the nominalised version of the clause.

The situation is different when it comes to the nominalisation of a conditional clause:

(95)   *Jekk*   *t-irbaħ*   *din*   *il-battalja/*
     if   2-win.IPFV.SG   this.SGF   DEF-battle/
     b-ir-rebħa   *ta'*   *din*   *il-battalja,*
     with-DEF-victory   of   this.SGF   DEF-battle
     t-ikkonsolida   *l-pożizzjoni*   *tiegħ-ek.*
     2-consolidate.IPFV.SG   DEF-position   of-2SG
     'If you win this battle/by winning this battle, you will consolidate your position.'

The adverbial clause expresses a 'real' condition introduced by the conjunction *jekk* which is simply omitted in the nominalised version. The nominalisation involves a prepositional phrase with the preposition *bi*.

We can also have the nominalisation of an 'unreal' condition introduced by the conjunction *kieku*:

(96)   *Kieku*   *rbaħ-t*   *din*   *il-battalja/*
     if   win.PFV-2SG   this.SGF   DEF-battle/
     b-ir-rebħa   *ta'*   *din*   *il-battalja,*   *kon-t*
     with-DEF-victory   of   this   DEF-battle   be.PFV-2SG
     t-ikkonsolida   *l-pożizzjoni*   *tiegħ-ek.*
     2-consolidate.IPFV.SG   DEF-position   of-2SG
     'Had you won this battle/by winning this battle, you would have consolidated your position.'

Note that the nominalisation in (96) via a prepositional phrase with *bi* is identical to that in the 'real' condition in (95) and the conjunction *kieku* is simply left out. The 'unreality' of the

condition is brought out through the use of the (remote) past tense in the main clause, whereas in the case of the 'real' condition in (95), the verb in both the subordinate and the main clause is in the imperfect.

3. Conclusion

The study of these two types of subordinate clauses is still in its infancy. One could perhaps regard the clauses studied here as 'canonical' ones, in the sense that most resemble more or less 'well-formed' sentences produced consciously for the purpose of illustration. However much still needs to be done to account for the transition from actual utterances to (abstract) sentence structures.

Abbreviations

1, 2, 3	first, second, third person	M	masculine
COP	copula	NEG	negative
DEF	definite article	OM	object marker
F	feminine	PFV	perfective
FUT	future	PL	plural
GEN	genitive	PROG	progressive
IPFV	imperfective	SG	singular

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