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**VERBLESS CONSTRUCTIONS IN ENGLISH –  
SYNTACTIC FUNCTION, SEMANTIC ROLE AND  
FREQUENCY**

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**Plzeň 2013**

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*V Plzni dne 25. dubna 2013*

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Marie Šimáková

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## ABSTRACT

Šimáková, Marie. University of West Bohemia. April, 2013. Verbless Constructions in English – Syntactic Function, Semantic Role and Frequency.

Supervisor: PhDr. Jarmila Petrlíková, Ph.D.

This undergraduate thesis deals with verbless constructions in English, it brings the view of the frequency of individual structures, the syntactic functions and semantic roles. The work consists of theoretical background and the analysis of excerpts. First, theoretical background focuses on individual structures, which are subordinate verbless clauses, independent verbless clauses and ellipsis. It also discusses the problem of differentiation between independent verbless clauses and ellipsis, because differences of these structures are sometimes unambiguous. But the main difference is that the independent verbless clause is unable to complete, so it can be used independently unlike ellipsis. Subsequently, there are syntactic functions and their semantic roles.

The work also contains the analysis of 321 individual excerpts which come from two books, both written by Oscar Wilde. The results exposes that the most frequent structure of all is independent verbless clause, which occurs in 58% of excerpts. As for the presence of the subject, the analysis of subordinate verbless clauses confirms that absolute clauses are rare in English. The structures with covert subject occur in 96%, in some cases the subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause or the subject can be general. The analysis also demonstrates that the most frequent semantic roles are exclamation, statement, inquiry, evaluation and disbelief. The results are provided in nine diagrams and they are expressed by both the percentage and the exact number.

*Keywords:* verbless constructions, independent or subordinate verbless clause, structural or contextual ellipsis, covert or overt subject, semantic roles, analysis

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This work deals with verbless constructions in English. It focuses on the frequency of occurrence, syntactic functions and semantic roles. The topic was chosen, because the structures lacking the verb element seems to be interesting from the structural point of view. Although the verbless constructions are consider as rarely used, especially by non-native speakers, these structures occur frequently as the way of avoidance of redundancy.

The first part, theoretical background briefly summarizes differences between the individual constructions, their syntactic functions and semantic roles. The works also contains the analysis of 321 individual excerpts of verbless constructions. The results of the analysis will show the frequency of independent verbless clauses, subordinate verbless clauses. As for the ellipsis the analysis will explore the frequency of contextual or structural ellipsis. The analysis of subordinate verbless clauses will expose what is the most frequent syntactic function and whether the subject of these structures is mostly covert, it means whether it confirms that absolute clauses are rare in English. Semantic role of individual excerpts is other point of analysis, it will provide which semantic roles are the mostly used ones.

Finally, there is a description of all chapters. The chapter *Theoretical background* brings the basic information about verbless constructions. First, the form of verbless constructions is discussed, it deals with the distinguishing of verbless clauses and it also shows the differences between types of ellipsis. The other aspect is its syntactic function, mainly the apposition is discussed from different point of views. Subsequently it follows with the aspect of semantic roles of verbless constructions.

The third chapter *The Method of Research* briefly provides the basic information about the research. It discusses the chosen sources of excerpts and it also explains the aspects of the analysis. The fourth chapter is *The Analysis* of 321 individual excerpts and this chapter also includes the results which are provided in nine diagrams with both the percentage and the exact number. *The conclusions* brings the summary of the whole research and the other possible areas for the further research. The whole thesis ends with *The Summary in Czech*.



## 2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Verbless constructions in general

Phrasal structures or sentence structures where the finite verb is omitted are considered to be verbless constructions. These structures without verbal element can occur in various syntactic functions and also appear in different semantic roles. There are many classifications of verbless constructions in literature.

### 2.2 Structural point of view

#### 2.2.1 Verbless clause

Verbless clauses are one of the most common verbless structures. Verbless clause is generally defined as a clause missing a verbal element and often also missing subject. They are included to clauses, because “they function in ways which make them equivalent to finite and non-finite clauses, and because they can be analysed in terms of one or more clause elements” (Leech, Svartvik, 1989, p. 214). The missing form of the verb *be* is usually possible to anticipate from the context just as the subject, when it is also omitted (for example, Whether right or wrong, he always comes off worst in argument). In case that the subject is present, (such as, There he stood, a tray in each hand) only the verb is recovered (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, pp. 287-288).

Quirk, Greenbaum (1986) classified the verbless clause into the two types on the basis of having a subordinator (such as, We can meet again tomorrow, if necessary.) or not having a subordinator (for example, He looked remarkably well, his skin clear and smooth.) (p. 996)

Dušková (2006) distinguishes between verbless sentence without subject and verbless sentence with subject. The verbless sentence without subject can be considered a clause, because of its predicative function expressed nominally. The verbless clause with subject consists of subject and predicate part, which is expressed nominally (such as, A most reliable secretary, Charles.) This kind of clauses are rare in English just as in the Czech language (Dušková, 2006, pp. 387-389).

#### 2.2.1.1 Verbless clause versus ellipsis

There are many points of view how to differentiate verbless clauses without subject and ellipsis. According to Dušková (2006) it is possible to distinguish major sentence with subject and predicate and minor sentence consisting of verbless structures. Another aspect is that subjectless clause is impossible to complete unlike ellipsis. It means that these verbless structures are complete and usable independently. But the boundary between these

two is fluent and it can be difficultly distinguishable (for example, No mistake. Charming couple!) (Dušková, 1999, p. 172).

### **2.2.2 Ellipsis**

Ellipses are considered to be arguable. The authors differ in attitudes to classification of ellipsis. There are many types of them in the literature, but some of them do not occur as verbless constructions. Ellipsis are generally described as grammatical omission. According to Broughton (1990) and Quirk, Greenbaum (1990) ellipsis are used to avoid redundancy, needless repetition. Quirk, Greenbaum (1986) defines Verbatim recoverability to distinguish ellipsis from other kinds of omission. It means that “word(s) whose meaning is understood or implied must be recoverable” (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 884). Dušková (2006) also considers this aspect fundamental for distinguishing between ellipsis and verbless sentences without subject.

#### **2.2.2.1 The classification of ellipsis**

Dušková (1999) distinguishes between ellipsis dependent on linguistic context and ellipsis not dependent on linguistic context. Ellipsis not dependent on linguistic context are usually constituted by the only subject, by the initial words of a sentence or frequently as the subject omitting auxiliary verb (such as, Anything wrong?) (Dušková, 1999, pp. 170,171). These are mostly typical for informal conversation. Dušková (1999) also adds that “the omission of the initial element(s) may be due to subaudibility rather than to ellipsis” (p. 171). In dialogue it is common to find ellipsis dependent on linguistic context (Dušková, 1999). These structures respond, question or comment another speaker’s sentence. It is easily possible to reconstruct these clauses to the full form according to a preceding sentence (for example, Who sent you? – The manager.) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p.848).

According to Broughton (1990) it is possible to define weak forms of ellipsis including cultural, situational and structural ellipsis; and strong form or textual ellipsis when it is necessary to recover missing words from the text. Quirk, Greenbaum (1990) add that situational ellipsis are usually initial and they are connected with the omission in interrogative sentence (for example, In trouble?) (p. 256). Structural ellipsis relates to written language and they require knowledge of grammatical structure (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, p. 257).

Ellipsis of a clause include the omission of the whole clause, for example, wh-interrogative clause can be reduced to only the wh-word (such as, Yes, but when?) (Quirk,

Greenbaum, 1990, p. 260) or negative wh-question with why (such as, Why not?) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, p. 260).

Into ellipsis is possible to include yes-no question and a response. According to Biber, Conrad (2002) this kind of elliptical questions is not asking for information (for example, You alright?) (p. 251). Response to yes-no question can be unambiguous (such as, Did you write it down? – No.) or it can be ambiguous (for example, Do you play bridge? – Very badly. / Occasionally. / Enthusiastically.) (Dušková, 2006, pp.312,313). Echo questions occurs in a complementary function, it follows preceding speech. It can also appear in elliptical form (for instance, It can take four hours. – How long?) (Dušková, 2006, pp. 326, 327). Dušková (2006) adds interrogative sentences lacking a verbal element to elliptical forms. These are in fact contextual ellipsis, because they are realized by an interrogative word only and a preceding sentence is necessary (for example, He's gone out of town. – Where?). Even answers (such as, How far is it? – About ten miles.) are also elliptical (p. 328). Leech, Svartvik (1989) classify interrogative sentence lacking verbal element as a short question and adds that it can be used as a response to statements (p. 114). Furthermore, there are interrogative sentences with expressed subject and predicative (for instance, Can she never be quiet? – She quiet?), the predication is expressed nominally (Dušková, 2006, p. 329).

In fiction and advertising primarily appear fragmentary elliptical sentences (such as, Janet felt uncomfortable. Yes, very uncomfortable.) and the sentence fragments denoting emphasis (for example, He was drunk. And penniless.) which are the result of a punctuation (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 849).

## **2.3 Functional point of view**

### **2.3.1 Apposition**

Another function occurring as verbless structure can be considered the apposition. Mathesius (1975) includes the apposition in verbless clauses in the semiclausal function. It means that the apposition is “a verbless predicative clause with weakened independence” (Mathesius, 1975, p. 90). According to Dušková (2006) the apposition is classified as an obligatory clause element. The units in the apposition cooperate and they are in the same syntactic function. In the function of verbless construction usually occurs non-restrictive apposition which can be expressed as equivalence between the both units (such as, Frank, the coach of our team). It can also be considered as a verbless clause without subject (for example, It was extremely silly, that remark of hers.) (Dušková, 2006, pp. 503,504). Quirk, Greenbaum (1986) define the apposition as a relation between noun phrases identical in reference. With the respect to verbless structures is possible to specify full apposition which follows conditions that the units of the apposition can be used separately with no effect on the sentence, the units are in the same syntactic function and they have to be co referential (for example, A neighbour, Fred Brick, is on the telephone.) (ppp. 1300, 1301, 1302).

### **2.3.2 Adjective**

Adjectives can also function as the realization of verbless construction (for example, Unhappy with the result, she returned to work.), in some cases they can be replaced by adverbial (such as, Nervously, the man opened the letter.), but the meaning can be little changed (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 425). The contingent adjective clause is an elliptical structure which express the conditions for what is said in the superordinate clause (for example, When fit, the Labrador is an excellent retriever.), it omits form of the verb be or the subordinator (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 427).

### **2.3.3 Adverbial**

In the function of verbless construction frequently occur adverbials, especially those having a peripheral relation in the sentence. In these abbreviated structures the adverbial occurs often in the role of style disjunct (such as, Very seriously, do you intend to resign?), or it can be expressed by prepositional phrase (for instance, In short, he is a mad but happy.) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, pp. 615, 616). Content disjunct (for example, Naturally, my husband expected me home by then.) represents the comment on the content, it is a structure often realized by adverb phrase and prepositional phrase (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, p. 183). Wide orientation subjunct relating to the whole sentence is

typically placed initially and it is usually expressed by adverb phrase (for instance, Architecturally, the plans represent a magnificent conception.). Narrow orientation subjunct relates to a particular part of a predication (Intentionally, they said nothing to him about the fire.) and can also be verbless (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, pp. 176, 177).

#### **2.3.4 Irregular sentence**

Another type of construction without a verbal element can be irregular sentences which can be realized as an independent clause in a compound sentence (such as, Of course, and so is Daniel.) or (Please God, there hasn't been an accident.) which is used as a part of sentence (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 839). In conversation frequently occur irregular wh-questions (for instance, How about another kiss?) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 840).

#### **2.3.5 Block language**

“Block language appears (especially in writing) in such functions as labels, titles, newspaper headlines, headings, notices, and advertisement” (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, p. 245). These structures usually need no verb, the block language is often realized by irregular sentences, nouns or noun phrases (for instance, Entrance) (p. 245). It can also be included in personal letters, postcards or diaries (Weather marvellous.) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 846).

#### **2.3.6 Formulaic expressions**

Formulaic expressions are often irregular and they are used for stereotyped communication (for example, Cheers!). “Only in a very limited way can they be analysed into clause elements” (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 852).

#### **2.3.7 Interjections**

Finally, interjections are emotive words, some of them with phonological features, which are not a unit of syntactic relations (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 853). Dušková (2006) explains that the inclusion of interjections to verbless clauses is questionable, because not all interjections contain the predicative function. Only the equivalents of imperative have the predicative function (for example, Hush!). But interjections are not possible to complete, that is why they can be considered as verbless clause (for instance, Good heavens!) (p. 378).

## **2.4 Semantic roles of English verbless constructions**

### **2.4.1 Semantics in general**

Yule (2010) defines semantics as “the study of the meaning of words, phrases and sentences” (p. 112). It is focused on objective and general meaning and it tries to avoid subjective and local meaning.

Communication, spoken or written, is always in a social context. The context represents our own or someone else’s experience of life and world, so that is “the doings and happenings in which we are involved or which affect us“ (Downing, Locke, 2006 , p. 27). Due to this it is possible to distinguish various semantic roles.

### **2.4.2 Semantic roles of verbless constructions**

#### **2.4.2.1 *Semantic roles of verbless clauses***

Verbless clauses occur in various kinds of semantic role, these are different in spoken and written language. According to Dušková (2006) verbless clauses without subject in spoken language can appear as indicatives or exclamations (for example, Goal! or Charming girl!) (p. 380). It can also express qualification (such as, An excellent idea!) (p. 380), requests (for instance, Help!) (p.380), wish including greetings or birthday greetings, contact-establishing vocative (for example, Nurse! or Darling!) (p. 380) or speaker’s scorning attitude (such as, You and your statistics!) (p. 380). In written language verbless clauses without subject together with block language express signs or instructions, prohibitions, it is used in newspaper headlines and advertising. In literature it function as stylistic form of description, in academic language these can occur as names of chapters or as picture descriptions (Dušková, 2006, p. 386).

Verbless sentences with subject occur in roles such as stylistic forms in fiction, proverbs (for example, Like father, like son.) (p. 388), it can also appear as headlines or advertisements, and exclamation (such as More fool me!) (p. 388) (Dušková, 2006, p. 388, 389).

#### **2.4.2.2 *Semantic roles of apposition***

Appositions occur in various types in English. Semantically it is possible to distinguish explanatory, classificatory and attributive apposition. Explanatory apposition is an added expression with narrower meaning (for example, The third man, Mr. Charles Wylde, remained silent all the time.) (Mathesius, 1975, p. 90). A special case of explanation apposition is additional explanation, which is separated as other sentence (such as, He remained silent all the time, Mr. Charles Wylde.) (Mathesius, 1975, p. 91). Enumerative apposition can also be included to explanatory kind of apposition. Mathesius

(1975) consider the classificatory apposition as the most frequent apposition used in English. The classificatory apposition “adds to the basic element an expression of broader meaning under which the basic element is thus subsumed” (Mathesius, 1975, p. 91). This kind of apposition can also be juxtaposed to a whole sentence. Sentence-qualifying apposition is more common in English than in Czech, where it is usually expressed by a whole clause. The last semantic category of the apposition is the attributive apposition, where the expression is attributed to the basic element (for instance, He produced a splendid diamond ring, value two hundred pounds, and offered it to her.) (Mathesius, 1975, p. 92).

#### **2.4.2.3 *Semantic roles of adjectival clauses***

Adjectival clauses can semantically function as exclamation (for example, Excellent!), these structures are not dependent on previous context (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 428). Irregular wh-questions expressed by adjective are typically used as directives or inquiries (for instance, How about your parents?), irregular verbless sentences usually express an exclamatory wish (for example, Oh for a drink!) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, ppp. 840, 841, 842). It can also express approval or disapproval (such as, Dirty place!), command or request (for example, Patience!) and offer or invitation (for instance, My apartment?) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1985, p. 850). Dušková (2006) includes verbless adjectival clauses between verbless clauses without subject (for example, Interesting.), which function as qualification (Dušková, 2006, p. 381).

#### **2.4.2.4 *Semantic roles of adverbials***

Adverbials occur in a wide range of semantic roles. Independent adverbial clauses usually appear in the function of response to yes/no question (such as, All right.) or it can express command (for instance, Off with him!) (Dušková, 2006, p. 382). According to Quirk, Greenbaum (1990) time and space both can be expressed by adjunct (for example, I go to the theatre as often as possible.) (p. 167). The semantic role of respect (for example, Weatherwise, the outlook is dismal.) is expressed by wide orientated subjunct (p. 177), narrow orientated subjunct can occur in the function of manner and volition. Content disjunct relates to certainty (In essence, the judge called her evidence in question.) and evaluation (Wisely, Mrs Jensen consulted her lawyer.), these adverbials are considered dependent (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1990, p. 183).

#### **2.4.2.5 *Semantic roles of other expressions***

Formulaic expressions occur in many semantic functions. They can function as Greetings (for example, Hello), Reaction signals (such as, Absolutely or Certainly not),

Toasts (such as, Good health), Alarm calls (Fire!), Apologies and their responses, Expletives (such as, Good Heavens) and Miscellaneous exclamations (for example, Shame) (Quirk, Greenbaum, 1986, p. 852). The main communicative function of interjections is expressing emotions. It can includes surprise, satisfaction, excitement, pleasure or pain (Leech, Svartvik, 1991, p. 118). Short elliptical questions are used for the purpose of getting information, they are used in spontaneous conversation and can also express disbelief. Elliptical responses function in the role of expressing interest, surprise, pleasure or regret (Leech, Svartvik, 1989, p.114).



### **3 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

This chapter clarifies the methods of the research. Two books were chosen as a source of examples, both written by Oscar Wilde. These books were chosen because of the language, both are written in the British English, so there are no examples in the American English. The examples of verbless constructions were selected and these obtained sentences were analyzed. There are 321 examples in the analysis, some of them consist of more than one part, that is the reason why the total number is different from the final number in analysis, which is 295.

The first discussed aspect is the structure itself. The structures are distinguished to ellipsis, subordinate verbless clauses and independent verbless clauses. In case of subordinate verbless clauses it is focused on the syntactic function, the explicitness of the subject and the semantic roles. From the structural point of view, ellipsis are distinguished to contextual and structural, the semantic roles are covered too. Finally, the analysis of independent verbless clauses is focused on the syntactic function and their semantic roles.

## 4 THE ANALYSIS

### 4.1 The Analysis of the Individual Excerpts

- (1) *My dear fellow, why?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 12) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical wh-question, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my dear fellow*, semantic role – inquiry
- (2) *Too much of yourself in it!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 12) – structural ellipsis lacking the form of verb be, semantic role - statement
- (3) [a] *Except*, [b] *of course*, [a] *in the Church*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 12) – [a] independent verbless clause, adverb expressing place; [b] verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - certainty
- (4) *But why not?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 13) – contextual ellipsis, negative form of wh-question, *but* is used to emphasize the contrary, semantic role - inquiry
- (5) *With an evening coat and a white tie, as you told me once, anybody, even a stockbroker, can gain a reputation for being civilised.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 15) – subordinate verbless clause, subject complement, adverb expressing manner
- (6) *Poor Lady Brandon!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 16) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (7) *How horribly unjust of you!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 16) - independent verbless clause expressing evaluation
- (8) *I choose my friends for their good looks, [a] my acquaintances for their good characters, [b] and my enemies for their good intellects.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 16) – [a], [b] - subordinate verbless clauses, the subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, subject complements *my friends*, *my acquaintances*, *my enemies* postmodified by prepositional phrase, semantic role - reason

(9) *And much less than a friend.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 17) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(10) *A sort of brother, I suppose?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 17) – subordinate verbless clause, the missing verb *be*, covert subject, subject complement expressing assumption

(11) ***Oh, brothers!*** *I don't care for brothers.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 17) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(12) *How often do you see him?* - ***Every day.*** (Wilde, 1944, p. 17) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response to wh-question realized by adverbial, semantic role – frequency

(13) *How extraordinary!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 17) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(14) ***In the wild struggle for existence,*** *we want to have something that endures, and so we fill our minds with rubbish and facts, in the silly hope of keeping our place.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 19) – subordinate verbless clause, syntactic function – adverbial, covert subject, semantic role – statement

(15) *Why?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 20) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical wh-question, semantic role - inquiry

(16) *No.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 20) – contextual ellipsis, negative elliptical response expressing denial

(17) *This is Lord Henry Wotton, [a] **Dorian,** [b] **an old Oxford friend of mine.*** (Wilde, 1944, p. 22) – [a] vocative, the addressee is conveyed by his name *Dorian*; [b] subordinate verbless clause, full, non-restrictive apposition, covert subject, semantic role – explanation

(18) *“That is very horrid to her, **and not very nice to me,**” answered Dorian, laughing.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 22) - subordinate verbless clause, subject complement, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, semantic role - explanation

(19) *Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely-curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 22) – subordinate verbless clause, syntactic function - adverbial, covert subject *he*, the missing verb *have*, semantic role – manner

(20) *But what about my man at the Orleans?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 25) – independent verbless clause, wh-question expressing inquiry

(21) *All influence is immoral – immoral from the scientific point of view.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 24) – subordinate verbless clause, subject complement, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, semantic role - explanation

(22) *How clear, and vivid, and cruel!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 25) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(23) *With his subtle smile, Lord Henry watched him.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 25) – subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role - manner

(24) *Why?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 27) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical wh-question, semantic role – inquiry

(25) *Youth! Youth!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 28) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(26) *Always!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 28) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - frequency

(27) *It was certainly a wonderful work of art, and a wonderful likeness as well.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 29) – subordinate verbless clause, subject complement, the missing verb *be*, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, semantic role - evaluation

(28) *This morning!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 32) – independent verbless clause realized by adverbial expressing time

(29) *Before which Dorian?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 32) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical wh-question expressing inquiry

(30) *Before either.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 32) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role - statement

(31) *How wonderful, Basil!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 33) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *Basil*, semantic role - evaluation

(32) *“Very well,” said Hallward.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 33) – contextual ellipsis, adverbial, semantic role - evaluation

(33) *Certainly.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 33) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role – certainty

(34) *What I want is information; [a] **not useful information**, [b] **of course**; [a] **useless information**.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 35) - [a] subordinate verbless clauses, subject complement, the missing verb *be*, the subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, semantic role – ironic statement; [b] subordinate verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role – certainty

(35) *The poor chap was killed in a duel at spa, **a few months after the marriage**.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 35) – subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, syntactic function - adverbial of time

(36) *At Aunt Agatha’s.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 37) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical noun phrase, semantic role – place

(37) ***From a psychological point of view**, how interesting he was!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 38) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function - adverbial, semantic role – explanation

(38) *Was it not Plato, **that artist in thought**, who had first analysed it?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 38) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, semantic role - explanation

(39) *“**Late as usual, Harry**, “ cried his aunt, shaking her head at him.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 38) - structural ellipsis lacking the form of verb *be* and subject *you*, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - statement

(40) *“**How dreadful!**” exclaimed Lady Agatha.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 39) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation

(41) *“**American novels**,“ answered Lord Henry helping himself to some quail.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 39) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - statement

(42) *Really!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 40) – independent verbless clause, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role – excitement

(43) *Yes, Mr. Erskine, **an absolutely reasonable people**.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 40) – contextual ellipsis, semantic role - evaluation

(44) *“**Terribly grave**,“ echoed Lady Agatha.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 41) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - evaluation

(45) *“**A delightful theory!**” she exclaimed.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 42) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(46) *“**A dangerous theory!**” came from Sir Thomas’s tight lips.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 41) - independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(47) *Tuesday?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 42) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(48) *Very bad indeed.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 43) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role - evaluation

(49) [a] *One afternoon, a month later, Dorian Gray was reclining in a luxurious arm-chair,* [b] *in the little library of Lord Henry's house in Mayfair.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 44) – [a] subordinate verbless clause, adverbial expressing time; [b] subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, adverbial, semantic role - place

(50) *It was, in its way, a very charming room,* [a] *with its high-panelled wainscoting of olive-stained oak,* [b] *its cream-coloured frieze and ceiling of raised plaster-work,* [c] *and its brick-dust felt carpet strewn with silk long-fringed Persian rugs.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 44) – [a], [b], [c] - subordinate verbless clauses, non-restrictive appositions, semantic role - explanation

(51) *Why, Harry?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 46) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical wh-question, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - inquiry

(52) *“With an actress,”* said Dorian Gray, *blushing.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 46) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role – statement

(53) *About three weeks.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 47) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing time

(54) *Well, one evening about seven o'clock,* I determined to go out in search of some adventure. (Wilde, 1944, p. 47) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, adverbial, semantic role – time

(55) *Faithfulness is to the emotional life what consistency is to the life of the intellect – simply a confession of failures.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 48) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, the missing verb *be*, subject is co-referential with the subject *faithfulness* of superordinate clause, semantic role - explanation

(56) *Faithfulness!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 48) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation

(57) *But Juliet!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 48) – independent verbless clause, semantic role – exclamation

(58) *But an actress!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 49) – independent verbless, semantic role - exclamation

(59) *People like you – **the willful sunbeams of life** – don't commit crimes, Dorian.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 49) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, semantic role – comparison

(60) *The third night.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 50) – independent verbless clause expressing time

(61) *My dear Harry, why?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 51) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my dear Harry*, semantic role – inquiry

(62) *Sibyl?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 51) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(63) *Never.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 52) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response realized by adverbial expressing time

(64) *All right.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 52) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression expressing agreement

(65) *She is bound to him for three years – **at least for two years and eight months** – from the present time.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 52) – subordinate verbless clause, partial apposition expressing specification

(66) *What an hour!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 52) – independent verbless clause, semantic role – disbelief

(67) *There was no doubt that curiosity had much to do with, **curiosity and the desire for new experiences**; yet it was not a simple but rather a very complex passion.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 55) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, semantic role – specification



(68) *Foolish child! foolish child!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 56) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation

(69) *Why not, mother?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 58) – contextual ellipsis, negative wh-question, semantic role – disbelief

(70) *“Society!” muttered the lad.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 58) – contextual ellipsis, semantic role - statement

(71) *“Oh, Jim!” said Sibyl, laughing, “how unkind of you!”* (Wilde, 1944, p. 58) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - disbelief

(72) *“Nonsense, Jim,” she whispered, stroking the sleeve of his coat.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 58) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - evaluation

(73) *“Quite ready, James,” she answered, keeping her eyes on her work.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 58) – structural ellipsis, covert subject and the form of verb *be*, semantic role – statement

(74) *What about that?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 59) – independent verbless clause, wh-question expressing inquiry

(75) *“Nothing,” he answered.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 59) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing statement

(76) *“My child! my child!” cried Mrs. Vane, looking up to the ceiling in search of an imaginary gallery.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 60) – independent verbless clause, semantic role – exclamation

(77) *His mother!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 61) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

- (78) *“Who?” said Jim Vane.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 62) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry
- (79) *And he?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 63) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical question expressing inquiry
- (80) *For ever, too!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 63) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role - time
- (81) *Nothing about politics, I hope?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 66) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject *it*, the missing verb *be*, object, semantic role - wish
- (82) *Impossible!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 66) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief
- (83) *To whom?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 66) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry
- (84) *To some little actress or other.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 66) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing statement
- (85) *Quite serious, Basil.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 67) – contextual ellipsis, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – statement
- (86) *Why not?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 67) – contextual ellipsis, negative wh-question, semantic role – disbelief
- (87) *But Sibyl!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 68) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation
- (88) [a] *Except*, [b] *of course*, [a] *in middle-class life.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 69) – [a] independent verbless clause, adverbial expressing place; [b] subordinate verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - certainty

(89) *Oh, [a] your theories about life, your theories about love, your theories about pleasure. [b] All your theories, in fact, Harry.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 70) – [a] three independent verbless clauses expressing ironic statement; [b] independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – statement

(90) *These common, rough people, with their coarse faces and brutal gestures, become quite different when she is on the stage.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 73) – subordinate verbless clause, syntactic function – adverbial of manner

(91) *A quarter of an hour afterwards, amidst an extraordinary turmoil of applause, Sibyl Vane stepped on to the stage.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 74) – subordinate verbless clauses, covert subjects, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role – time

(92) *A faint blush, like the shadow of a rose in a mirror of silver, came to her cheeks as she glanced at the crowded, enthusiastic house.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 74) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role - comparison

(93) *Charming! charming!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 74) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(94) *Good heavens, my dear boy, don't look so tragic!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 76) – subordinate verbless clause, formulaic expression expressing exclamation, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my dear boy*

(95) *“Horribly!” he answered, gazing at her in amazement – “horribly!”* (Wilde, 1944, p. 76) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(96) *The girl was standing there alone, with a look of triumph on her face.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 76) – subordinate verbless clause, adverbial, semantic role – manner

(97) *You came – oh, my beautiful love! – and you freed my soul from prison.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 77) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition expressing exclamation

(98) *My love! my love!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 77) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(99) *What are you now? A **third-rate actress with a pretty face.*** (Wilde, 1944, p. 78) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing scornful evaluation

(100) *But the picture?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 81) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(101) *Cruelty!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 81) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(102) *Poor child!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 82) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(103) ***“How horrible!”** he murmured to himself, and he walked across to the window and opened it.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 82) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(104) *They contained the usual collection of cards, **invitations to dinner, tickets for private views, programmes of charity concerts, and the like,** that are showered on fashionable young men every morning during the season.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 83) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, covert object, semantic role - enumeration

(105) *Too cold for Monsieur?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 84) – structural ellipsis, question, semantic role – inquiry

(106) ***“Yes, of course,”** answered Lord Henry, sinking into a chair, and slowly pulling off his yellow gloves.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, response expressing agreement

(107) *A very charming artistic basis for ethics, Dorian!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - evaluation

(108) *Something dreadful about marriage.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – contextual ellipsis expressing statement

(109) *Your wife! Dorian!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation

(110) *Your letter?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(111) [a] *Dead!* [b] *Sibyl dead!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 86) – [a] independent verbless clause expressing disbelief; [b] structural ellipsis with overt subject *Sibyl*, the missing verb *be*, semantic role - disbelief

(112) *My God! my God!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 88) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - exclamation

(113) *That awful memory of woman!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 89) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(114) *Oh, the obvious consolation.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 90) – structural ellipsis, covert subject *it*, the missing verb *be*, semantic role - statement

(115) *What then?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 91) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry

(116) *Noiselessly, and with silver feet, the shadows crept in from the garden.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 91) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role – manner

- (117) *Poor Sibyl!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 92) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (118) *A wonderful tragic figure?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 92) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry
- (119) *The pity of it! the pity of it!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 93) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (120) *Somewhere in the Euston Road, isn't it?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 94) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical noun phrase expressing place
- (121) *Poor woman!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 94) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (122) *And her only child, too!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 94) – independent verbless clause expressing statement
- (123) *Good heavens!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 95) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role – exclamation
- (124) *They are good husbands, or faithful wives, or something tedious.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 95) – subordinate verbless clauses, subject complements, subject is co-referential with the subject *they* from superordinate clause, semantic role - evaluation
- (125) *How like a sympathetic person!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 96) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - evaluation
- (126) [a] *Too strong!* [b] *Surely not, my dear fellow?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 97) – [a] structural ellipsis, semantic role – evaluation; [b] structural ellipsis missing the verb *be* and subject, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my dear fellow*, semantic role - statement

- (127) *Dorian!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 98) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (128) *Never.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 100) – independent verbless clause, adverbial expressing time
- (129) *Impossible!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 101) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief
- (130) *Poor Basil!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 101) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (131) *“The old schoolroom, Mr. Dorian?” she exclaimed.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 102) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – exclamation
- (132) *Now it was to hide something that had a corruption of its own, worse than the corruption of death itself – something that would breed horrors and yet would never die.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 103) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – apposition, semantic role – evaluation
- (133) *Oh, anywhere.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 106) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing place
- (134) *In black fantastic shapes, dumb shadows crawl into the corners of the room, and crouch there.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 106) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role - manner
- (135) *It was on the ninth of November, the eve of his own thirty-eight birthday, as he often remembered afterwards.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 124) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition, covert subject, the missing verb *be*, semantic role - explanation

(136) [a] *Dorian!* [b] *What an extraordinary piece of luck!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 124) – [a] independent verbless clause, semantic role – exclamation; [b] independent verbless clause expressing disbelief

(137) *In this fog, my dear Basil?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 124) – independent verbless clause, question, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my dear Basil*, semantic role - disbelief

(138) **“Half an hour!”** *he murmured.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 126) – independent verbless clause expressing time

(139) ***But you, Dorian, with your pure, bright, innocent face, and your marvelous untroubled youth*** – *I can't believe anything against you.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 126) – two subordinate verbless clauses, overt subject *you*, syntactic function – subject complement, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – positive evaluation

(140) *What about the young Duke of Perth?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 127) – independent verbless clause, wh-question expressing inquiry

(141) *Good heavens!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 130) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - exclamation

(142) *His own picture!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 131) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - exclamation

(143) [a] *Good God, Dorian,* [b] *what a lesson!* [c] *what an awful lesson!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 132) – [a] independent verbless clause, formulaic expression expressing exclamation, the addressee is conveyed by vocative; [b] independent verbless clause expressing evaluation; [c] independent verbless clause semantic role – strong evaluation

(144) *My God!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 132) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - exclamation

(145) **“Ten minutes past two, sir,”** *answered the man, looking at the clock and blinking.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 135) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing time



(146) *Ten minutes past two?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 135) – structural ellipsis, rhetorical question, semantic role - disbelief

(147) *How horribly late!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 135) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(148) *Mr. Hallward, sir.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 135) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *sir*, semantic role - disbelief

(149) **“That awful thing, a woman’s memory!”** as Lord Henry had once said. (Wilde, 1944, p. 137) – absolute verbless clause with overt subject *a woman’s memory*, the missing verb *be*, subject complement *that awful thing*, semantic role – statement

(150) *They had been great friends once, [a] five years before - [b] almost inseparable, indeed.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 138) - [a] subordinate verbless clause, syntactic function – adverbial expressing time; [b] subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject *they* of the superordinate clause, syntactic function – subject complement, semantic role – statement

(151) *Murder!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 141) - independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(152) [a] **Your life?** [b] **Good heavens! what a life is that!** (Wilde, 1944, p. 144) - [a] independent verbless clause, rhetorical question expressing exclamation; [b] independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - exclamation

(153) *But her third husband, Lord Henry!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 148) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *Lord Henry*, semantic role – exclamation

(154) *Certainly, Lady Narborough.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 148) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - certainty

(155) *Four husbands!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 148) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - disbelief

(156) “*With their ages, Lady Narborough?*” asked Dorian. (Wilde, 1944, p. 150) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - disbelief

(157) *Oh, yes, Harry.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 151) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - agreement

(158) *All right, Dorian.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 151) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – statement

(159) *He hesitated for some moments, **with a strangely immobile smile upon his face.*** (Wilde, 1944, p. 151) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role - manner

(160) “*Somewhere about here, sir, ain’t it?*” he asked huskily through the trap. (Wilde, 1944, p. 155) – independent verbless clause, question, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *sir*, semantic role - place

(161) “*You here, Adrian?*” muttered Dorian. (Wilde, 1944, p. 156) – structural ellipsis, question lacking form of verb *be*, overt subject *you*, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - disbelief

(162) *On the wharf?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 157) – contextual ellipsis, question expressing inquiry

(163) *Memory, **like a horrible malady**, was eating his soul away.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 157) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition expressing comparison

(164) *A half-caste, **in ragged turban and a shabby ulster**, grinned a hideous greeting as he thrust a bottle of brandy and two tumblers in front of them.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 157) – subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial of manner

(165) *Money?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 157) – contextual ellipsis, question expressing inquiry

(166) *When that high spirit, **that morning-star of evil**, fell from heaven, it was as a rebel that he fell.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 158) – subordinate verbless clause, non-restrictive apposition expressing explanation

(167) *“**Eighteen years**,” said the man.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 159) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(168) *One minute.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 159) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(169) *You fool!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 160) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(170) *“**Little more than a boy!**” she sneered.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 160) – structural ellipsis lacking the form of verb *be* and subject *he*, subject complement expressing ironical statement

(171) *Before God?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 160) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief

(172) *“**What of art?**” she asked.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause, wh-question expressing inquiry

(173) *Love?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(174) *An illusion.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(175) *Religion?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(176) *The fashionable substitute for Belief.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

- (177) *How unreasonable of her!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 163) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief
- (178) [a] *Often.* [b] *Too often.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 164) - [a] independent verbless clause expressing frequency; [b] independent verbless clause intensified by *too* also expressing frequency
- (179) *What?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 165) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry
- (180) *Who?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 165) - contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry
- (181) **“Lady Narborough,”** *he whispered.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 165) – independent verbless clause expressing ironical statement
- (182) *Romanticists!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 165) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation
- (183) *In the Parthian manner?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 165) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry
- (184) *How ghastly the mere memory of the scene!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 168) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation
- (185) *Not very good, Dorian.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 168) – contextual ellipsis expressing negative evaluation
- (186) [a] ***Suddenly from a lumpy tussock of old grass,*** [b] ***some twenty yards in front of them,*** [c] ***with black-tipped ears erect,*** *and long hinder limbs throwing it forward, started a hare.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 168) - [a] subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial expressing place; [b] subordinate verbless clause, covert subject, syntactic function – adverbial expressing place; [c] subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause, the missing verb *have*, syntactic function – adverbial, semantic role – explanation

(187) *“What a nonsense, Dorian!”* laughed his companion, and as the hare bounded into the thicket he fired. (Wilde, 1944, p. 169) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - exclamation

(188) *Good heavens!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 169) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - exclamation

(189) *What nonsense!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 171) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(190) *How curious!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 171) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(191) *“How horrid of you, Harry!”* cried the Duchess. (Wilde, 1944, p. 171) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - evaluation

(192) *Disillusion.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 172) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing statement

(193) *Only in public.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 172) – independent verbless clause, adverbial expressing place

(194) *“The button from your foil,”* he answered. (Wilde, 1944, p. 172) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing statement

(195) [a] *Upstairs*, [b] *in his own room*, Dorian Gray was lying on a sofa, [c] *with terror in every tingling fibre of his body.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 172) - [a] subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of the superordinate clause, syntactic function - adverbial expressing place; [b] subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of the superordinate clause, syntactic function – adverbial expressing place; [c] subordinate verbless clause, subject is co-referential with the subject of the superordinate clause, syntactic function – adverbial expressing manner

(196) [a] *A decent-looking man, sir*, [b] *but rough-like*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 173) – [a] structural ellipsis, the missing verb *be* and subject *he*, semantic role – evaluation; [b] structural ellipsis the missing verb *be* and subject *he*, semantic role – evaluation

(197) *The Home Farm!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 173) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(198) *Quick!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 173) – independent verbless clause, adverbial expressing manner

(199) *In the country, Harry*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 175) - contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing place, the addressee is conveyed by vocative

(200) **“Culture and corruption,”** *echoed Dorian*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 175) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(201) **From a moral point of view**, *I cannot say that I think much of your great renunciation*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 176) – subordinate verbless clause, syntactic function - adverbial, semantic role – explanation

(202) *Poor Victoria!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 176) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(203) *What a pity!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 176) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(204) *Certainly*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 182) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression expressing conviction

(205) *Very well*. (Wilde, 1944, p. 182) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression expressing evaluation

(206) *His beauty had been to him but a mask, his youth but a mockery.* (Wilde, 1944, p. 184) – structural ellipsis realized by subordinate clause, the missing verb *be*, semantic role – statement

(207) *A new life!* (Wilde, 1944, p. 184) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(208) *His sin?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 185) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(209) *Vanity?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 185) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(210) *Curiosity?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 185) - independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(211) *Hypocrisy?* (Wilde, 1944, p. 185) - independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(212) *Mr. Ernest Worthing.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 5) – contextual ellipsis, semantic role - introduction

(213) *Oh, pleasure, pleasure!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 5) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(214) *Oh, neighbours, neighbours.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(215) *Perfectly horrid!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(216) *Yes, of course.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - certainty

- (217) *How perfectly delightful!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – independent verbless clause, semantic role – evaluation
- (218) *Why all these cups?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – independent verbless clause, wh-question, semantic role - inquiry
- (219) *Why cucumber sandwiches?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) - independent verbless clause, wh-question, semantic role - inquiry
- (220) *Why such reckless extravagance in one so young?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – structural ellipsis, elliptical wh-question missing the verb *be*, expressing inquiry
- (221) *Oh! merely Aunt Augusta and Gwendolen.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 6) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing statement
- (222) *Your consent!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 8) – independent verbless clause expressing request
- (223) *Your aunt!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 9) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief
- (224) *Banburyist?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 11) – independent verbless clause, question expressing disbelief
- (225) *Lady Bracknell and Miss Fairfax.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 14) – independent verbless clause expressing introduction
- (226) *Certainly, Aunt Augusta.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 15) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - certainty
- (227) *Good heavens! Lane!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 15) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - exclamation
- (228) *No cucumbers!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 15) – contextual ellipsis expressing disbelief



(229) *Passionately!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 18) – contextual ellipsis expressing evaluation

(230) *Married, Mr. Worthing?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 19) – structural ellipsis, elliptical question missing the verb *be* and subject *you*, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - inquiry

(231) *Gwendolen!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 19) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - exclamation

(232) *In the carriage, Gwendolen!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 21) – contextual ellipsis, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - command

(233) *Twenty-nine.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 21) – contextual ellipsis, response expressing statement

(234) *In land, or in investments?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 22) – independent verbless clause, question expressing inquiry

(235) *A country house!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 22) – contextual ellipsis expressing exclamation

(236) *How many bedrooms?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 22) – contextual ellipsis, wh-question expressing inquiry

(237) *What number in Belgrave Square?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 23) – independent verbless clause, wh-question missing the verb *be* and subject, semantic role - inquiry

(238) *The unfashionable side.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 23) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(239) *In a hand-bag.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 24) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing statement

(240) *A hand-bag?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 24) – independent verbless clause, question expressing disbelief

(241) *Yes, Lady Bracknell.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 24) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – statement

(242) *Me, sir!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 25) – structural ellipsis, elliptical response expressing statement

(243) *Good morning!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 25) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role - greeting

(244) *The fools?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 26) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical question expressing inquiry

(245) *Oh! about the clever people, of course.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 26) – contextual ellipsis, response, formulaic expression, semantic role - certainty

(246) *What fools!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 26) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(247) *What about your brother?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 27) – independent verbless clause, wh-question, semantic role - inquiry

(248) *What about the profligate Ernest?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 27) - independent verbless clause, wh-question, semantic role – inquiry

(249) *Nothing!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 28) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response expressing statement

(250) *Gwendolen, upon my word.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 29) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - statement

(251) *My own darling!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 29) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *my own darling*, semantic role - exclamation

(252) *Dear Gwendolen!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 29) — independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *dear Gwendolen*, semantic role – exclamation

(253) *Till Monday.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 30) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - time

(254) *A glass of sherry, Lane.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 30) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – wish

(255) *Alas! no.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 34) – independent verbless clause, interjection, semantic role - exclamation

(256) *Horrid Political Economy!* – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(257) *Horrid Geography!* - independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(258) *Horrid, horrid German!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 35) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(259) *About my what?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 37) – independent verbless clause, wh-question expressing disbelief

(260) *My brother.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 40) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(261) *More shameful debts and extravagance?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – independent verbless clause expressing inquiry

(262) *Dead!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief

(263) *Your brother Ernest dead?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – structural ellipsis, elliptical question missing the verb *be*, semantic role – disbelief

(264) *Quite dead.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role - statement

(265) *What a lesson for him!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(266) *Very sad indeed.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 41) – contextual ellipsis, semantic role – statement

(267) *In Paris!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 42) – independent verbless clause, semantic role - place

(268) *Immersion!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 43) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(269) *My child! my child!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 44) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(270) *Your brother Ernest.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 44) – independent verbless clause expressing statement

(271) *What nonsense!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 44) – independent verbless clause expressing evaluation

(272) *Never, never, never!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 45) – contextual ellipsis, semantic role – exclamation

(273) *His luggage?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 46) – independent verbless clause, question, semantic role - inquiry

(274) *Yes, sir.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 46) – contextual ellipsis, elliptical response, semantic role - agreement

(275) *Three portmanteaus, a dressing-case, two hat-boxes, and a large luncheon-basket.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 46) – independent verbless clause expressing enumeration

(276) *You silly boy!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 50) – independent verbless clause expressing exclamation

(277) *You dear romantic boy!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 52) – structural ellipsis, overt subject *you*, the missing verb *be*, subject complement *dear romantic boy*, semantic role - evaluation

(278) *With pleasure!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 55) – independent verbless clause, adverbial, semantic role – manner

(279) *Your guardian?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 56) – independent verbless clause, question, semantic role – inquiry

(280) *How secretive of him!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 56) – independent verbless clause, semantic role – exclamation

(281) *Cake or bread and butter?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 60) – independent verbless clause, alternative question, semantic role - inquiry

(282) *Ernest! My own Ernest!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 61) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – exclamation

(283) *Darling!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 61) – independent verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative *darling*, semantic role – exclamation

(284) *To dear little Cecily!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 61) – independent verbless clause expressing disbelief

(285) *Of course not!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 61) – independent verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role – certainty

(286) [a] *To what young lady?* [b] *Good heavens!* [c] *Gwendolen!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 62) -  
[a] independent verbless clause, question, semantic role – inquiry; [b] independent  
verbless clause, formulaic expression, semantic role – exclamation; [c] independent  
verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role - exclamation

(287) *My poor wounded Cecily!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 63) – independent verbless clause,  
semantic role – exclamation

(288) *An admirable idea!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 63) – independent verbless clause, semantic  
role – evaluation

(289) *What effrontery!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 68) – independent verbless clause, semantic role  
– exclamation

(290) *A most distasteful one.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 68) – independent verbless clause,  
semantic role – statement

(291) *Certainly not.* (Wilde, 2006, p. 68) – independent verbless clause, formulaic  
expression, semantic role – certainty

(292) *How extremely kind of you, Lady Bracknell!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 73) – independent  
verbless clause, the addressee is conveyed by vocative, semantic role – exclamation

(293) [a] *Untruthful!* [b] *My nephew Algernon?* [c] *Impossible!* (Wilde, 2006, p. 76) -  
[a] independent verbless clause, semantic role – exclamation; [b] independent verbless  
clause, question, semantic role – disbelief; [c] structural ellipsis, the missing verb *be*  
and subject *it*, semantic role – exclamation

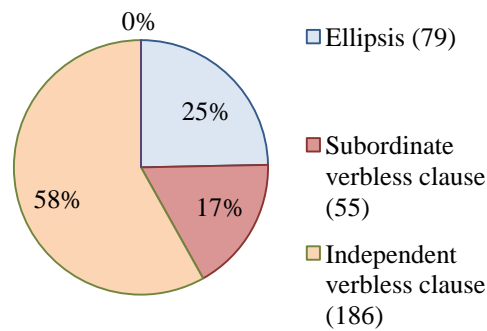
(294) *At their age?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 78) – independent verbless clause, question,  
semantic role – disbelief

(295) *What railway station?* (Wilde, 2006, p. 81) – independent verbless clause, wh-  
question, semantic role – inquiry

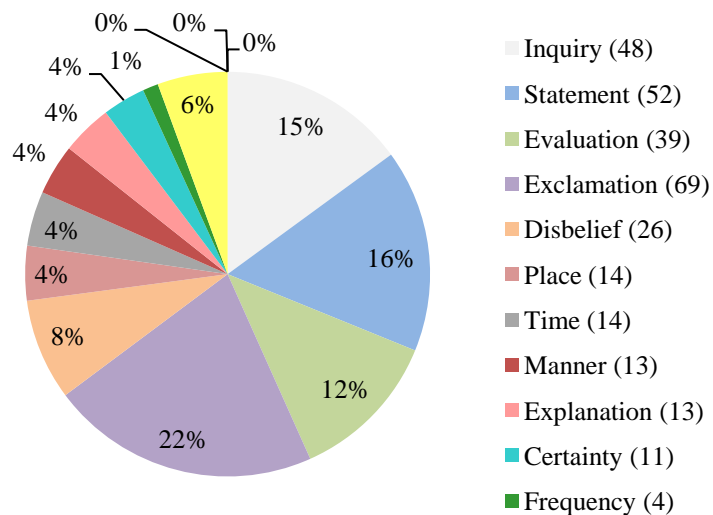
## 4.2 Results of analysis

This chapter summarizes the results of the analysis in diagrams. The first two diagrams deal with the occurrence of verbless constructions in English and with the most frequent semantic roles. The other two diagrams relate to ellipsis; they provide the occurrence of contextual and structural ellipsis and their semantic roles. Subordinate verbless clause are summarized in three diagrams; the first one deals with the syntactic function of subordinate verbless clauses, the second one provides the occurrence of covert, overt or co-referential subject and the last one deals with the semantic roles. The last two diagrams deal with independent verbless clauses; with syntactic functions and the semantic roles too.

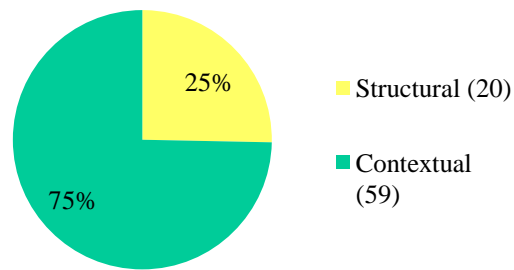
**The occurrence of verbless structures**



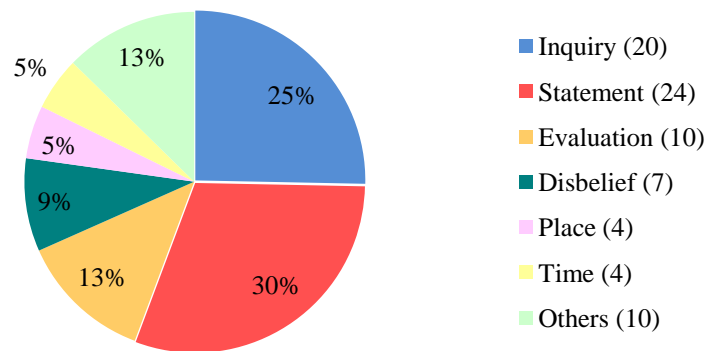
**The occurrence of the individual types of semantic roles**



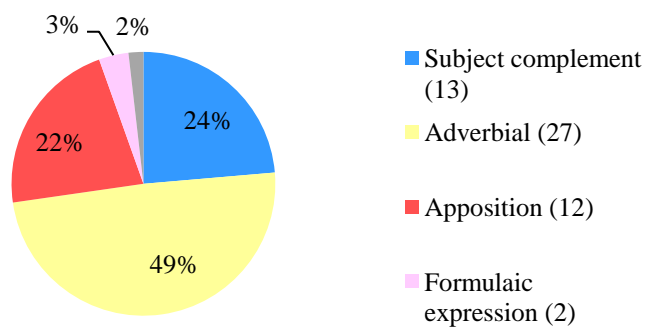
### Types of ellipsis



### Semantic roles of ellipsis

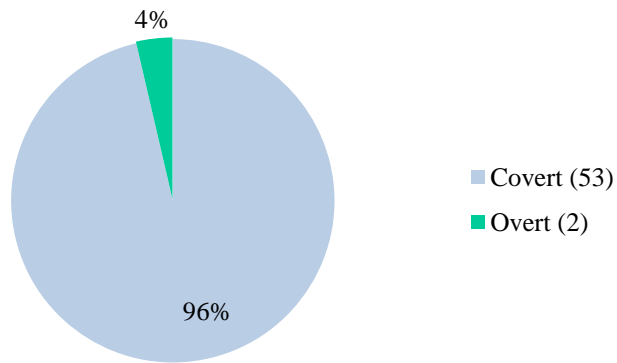


### Syntactic functions of Subordinate verbless clauses

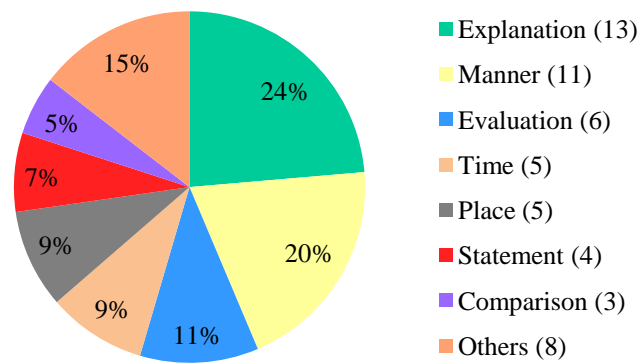




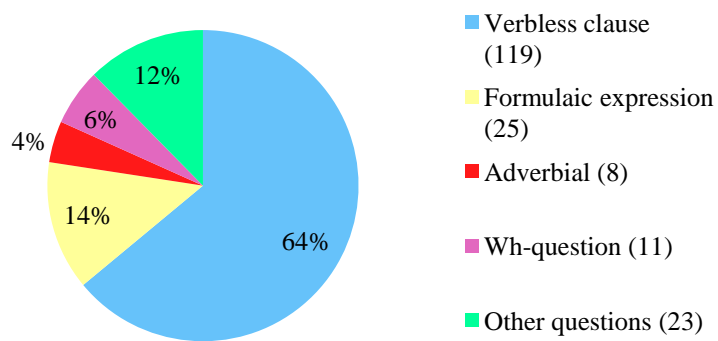
**The occurrence of covert or overt subject in subordinate verbless clause**



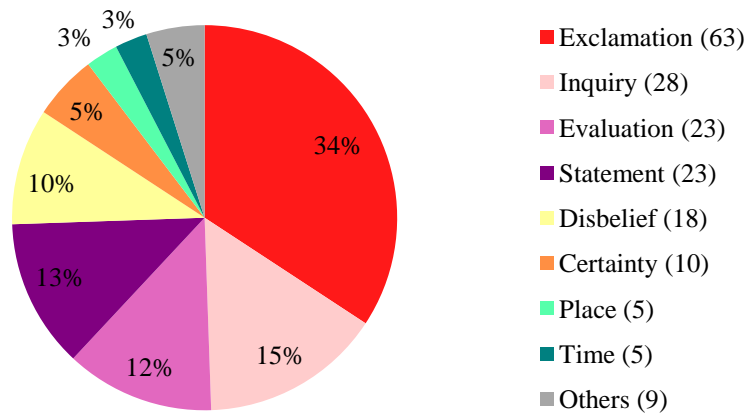
**Semantic roles of subordinate verbless clauses**



**Syntactic function of independent verbless clauses**



### Semantic roles of independent verbless clauses



## 5 THE CONCLUSIONS

This work deals with verbless constructions in English, with their syntactic function and semantic roles. As it was said in the chapter *Theoretical background*, verbless constructions can occur as ellipsis, subordinate verbless clause or independent verbless clause. Sometimes there is no ambiguous border between independent verbless clause and ellipsis. Regarding to frequency, this work deals with the frequency of particular types of verbless constructions.

The analysis brings these results. The most frequent structure out of the total of analysed examples is independent verbless clause. There are 186 independent verbless clauses, 25 of them can be considered formulaic expression, 8 function as adverbial, 11 of them are in the function of wh-question and the remaining 23 examples represents other questions. Regarding semantic roles of independent verbless structures, the most frequent are the exclamations which appear in 63 examples, the inquiries are expressed in 28 examples, evaluation and statement both appear in 23 examples.

Ellipsis occur in 25% of examples. The analysis exposes that contextual ellipsis are more frequent in written language than structural ellipsis. Structural ellipsis appears in 20 examples, it means in 25%. There are 59 examples of contextual ellipsis which occur as elliptical questions reduced to wh-word or short elliptical responses. It is confirmed by semantic roles, the most frequent is inquiry which appear in 25% and statement which is present in 30% of examples.

There are 55 examples of subordinate verbless clauses in the analysis. Nearly half of the examples are used in the syntactic function of adverbial, subject complements are in a quarter of examples and appositions appear in 22% of examples.

The other point of analysis of subordinate verbless clauses is the explicitness of subject. The overt subject appears only in 2 examples, it confirms that the absolute structures are rare in English. According to the analysis, there are 53 structures with covert subject, which is 96%. In 15 examples of them occurs the subject co-referential with the subject of superordinate clause. It shows that the structures with covert subject are more common.

The semantic roles are covered too. Subordinate verbless clauses are frequently used in the semantic role of manner, explanation, evaluation, time and place. These are mostly semantic roles of adverbials, so it confirms the occurrence of adverbials as the most frequent syntactic function of subordinate verbless clause.

In conclusion, there are some other possibilities for the further research of verbless constructions in English. The examples for analysis were chosen from two books, one of them was a fiction and the second one was a play, so the analysis could be done once more to compare the results. Another possibility of the research could be the comparison to the occurrence of verbless constructions in fiction and in academic style with the respect to their syntactic function and semantic roles.

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## SUMMARY IN CZECH

Tato práce pojednává o neslovesných větných konstrukcích v angličtině. Zabývá se jejich základními formami, a to nezávislou neslovesnou větou, vedlejší neslovesnou větou a elipsou. V některých případech je problematické odlišení elipsy a nezávislé neslovesné věty. Tímto aspektem se zabývá teoretická část, která čerpá z odborné literatury, a přináší různé pohledy na rozlišení těchto dvou konstrukcí. Dále se teoretická část zabývá syntaktickými funkcemi, v případě apozice se opět objevují protichůdné názory, zda se jedná o větný člen, nebo jej lze považovat za neslovesnou větu vedlejší. Další část se zabývá sémantickými rolemi neslovesných větných konstrukcí. U jednotlivých syntaktických funkcí jsou popsány sémantické role, které se mohou objevit.

Kromě teoretické části tato práce zahrnuje analýzu 321 příkladů neslovesných větných konstrukcí. Z hlediska četnosti užití se nejčastěji vyskytovala nezávislá neslovesná věta, vyjadřující především zvolání a otázku. Kontextové elipsy výrazně převažují nad elipsami strukturálními. Kontextové elipsy vyskytují ve třech čtvrtinách příkladů elips. Nejfrekventovanějšími sémantickými rolemi byly konstatování a otázka. Vedlejší věty neslovesné se nejčastěji vyskytují ve funkci příslovečného určení a doplněk podmětu. Analýza především potvrdila, že neslovesné věty s vyjádřeným podmětem jsou v angličtině vzácně užívané, výrazně převažují struktury s podmětem nevyjádřeným. Výsledky analýzy jsou přehledně shrnuty v devíti grafech, které obsahují informace o výskytu jednotlivých forem neslovesných konstrukcí i o jejich sémantických rolích. Výsledky jsou vyjádřeny číselně i procentuálně.