DISTRIBUTION OF SEMI-CLAUSE CONSTRUCTIONS IN ACTS OF PARLIAMENT VS. APPELLATE JUDGMENTS

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Abstract: The paper presents the findings obtained by comparative syntactic analysis of four types of semi-clause constructions (present participial, gerundial, infinitival and past participial) in two corpora of British legal English, i.e. Acts of Parliament and appellate judgments. The analysis focuses on differences in the employment of the respective types of semi-clauses across the two corpora (both quantitative differences and differences in their syntactic functions) and on their functional interpretation. The quantitative findings of analysis revealed that the mean number of semi-clauses per sentence is significantly higher in the corpus of Acts of Parliament as compared to the corpus of appellate judgments (2,97 and 1,58 respectively), which contributes to a higher level of sentence condensation of the genre of Acts of Parliament. Comparison of syntactic functions conveyed by the respective types of semi-clauses across the two corpora confirmed a significant predominance of semi-clauses with nominal syntactic functions in the corpus of Acts of Parliament. Corpus findings also suggest that the employment of the analyzed constructions contributes to stylistic qualities of the legal genres under analysis, such as a higher level of precision and unambiguity of meaning in the corpus of Acts of Parliament and a less rigid and formal style of appellate judgments.
Key words: semi-clause construction, present participle, past participle, infinitive, gerund, legal English, sentence condenser, secondary predication

DISTRIBÚCIA POLOVETNÝCH KONŠTRUKCIÍ V ZÁKONOCH A V ROZSUDKOCH ODVOLACIEHO SÚDU

Abstrakt: Obsahom príspevku je interpretácia výsledkov syntaktickej analýzy štyroch typov polovetných konštrukcií, ktorých jadrom je menný tvar slovesný (particípium prítomné, gerundium, infinitív a particípium minulé) v dvoch žánroch britskej právnej angličtiny, v zákonoch a v rozsudkoch odvolacieho súdu. Analýza sa zameriavala na rozdiely vo výskyte polovetných konštrukcií v skúmaných žánroch (kvantitatívne rozdiely a rozdiely v syntaktických funkciách, ktoré tieto polovetné konštrukcie vo vete plnia) a na ich významovú interpretáciu. Kvantitatívna analýza polovetných konštrukcií v skúmaných žánroch odhalila, že priemerý počet polovetných konštrukcií vo vete je v zákonoch podstatne vyšší v porovnaní s priemerným počtom polovetných konštrukcií vo vete v rozsudkoch (2,97 a 1,58), čo zvyšuje úroveň kondenzácie vetnej stavby zákonov. Porovnanie syntaktických funkcií skúmaných polovetných konštrukcií v oboch žánroch potvrdilo vyšší výskyt polovetných konštrukcií s nominálnymi syntaktickými funkciami v zákonoch. Výskyt polovetných konštrukcií v právnej angličtine prispieva aj k charakteristickým vlastnostiam oboch žánrov, ako je väčšia jednoznačnosť a presnosť vyjadrovania v zákonoch a väčšia štylistická uvoľnenosť v rozsudkoch.
Kľúčové slová: polovetná konštrukcia, particípium prítomné, particípium minulé, gerundium, infinitív, právna angličtina, vetný kondenzátor, sekundárna predikácia

DYSTRYBUCJA KONSTRUKCJI TYPU *SEMI-CLAUSE*
W AKTACH PARLAMENTU I WYROKACH APELACYJNYCH

Abstrakt: W artykule zaprezentowano wyniki syntaktycznej analizy porównawczej czterech typów konstrukcji typu *semi-clause* w dwóch korpusach, składających się z tekstów napisanych w angielskim języku prawa odmiany brytyjskiej, tj. aktach parlamentu oraz wyrokach apelacyjnych. Autorka skupiła się na różnicach w zastosowaniu poszczególnych typów tych konstrukcji w obu korpusach (zarówno różnicach ilościowych jak i różnicach w ich funkcjach syntaktycznych) oraz na ich interpretacji funkcjonalnej. Wyniki ilościowe przeprowadzonej analizy dowodzą, że średnia liczba tych konstrukcji w zdaniu jest znacznie wyższa w korpusie składającym się z aktów parlamentu niż w korpusie, na który składają się wyroki apelacyjne (odpowiednio 2,97 i 1,58). Porównanie funkcji syntaktycznych poszczególnych ich typów w obu korpusach pozwala potwierdzić znaczną przewagę konstrukcji z funkcją nominalną w korpusie aktów parlamentu. Zastosowanie analizowanych konstrukcji ma wpływ na stylistykę badanych tekstów prawnych, które odznaczają się większą precyzją i jednoznacznością w korpusie składającym się z aktów parlamentu i mniej formalnym stylem wyroków apelacyjnych.
Słowa kluczowe: konstrukcje typu semi-clause, imiesłów czynny, imiesłów bierny, bezokolicznik, gerundium, angielski język prawniczy, angielski język prawny

Introduction

In their seminal work *Investigating English Style* (1969), Crystal and Davy consider frequent employment of clausal constructions headed by non-finite verb forms to be one of the central syntactic and stylistic characteristics of legal English: "Much of the special flavour of legal English, generally, results from a fondness for using non-finite clauses, which in many other varieties would probably be replaced by finite clauses"(Crystal and Davy 1969, 205). The high proportional share of non-finite clauses in various genres of legal English has instigated the interest of many linguists who aimed their research at various aspects of the employment of non-finite clauses in this register. The research was generally concerned with a specific type of constructions headed by non-finite verb forms in selected legal genres (e.g. -ing forms in Acts of Parliament and law reports were studied by Janigová, 2008; -ing participles and -ed participles in prescriptive legal genres were studied by Williams, 2007; supplementive clauses in resolutions were studied by Dontcheva-Navratilova, 2005), etc. Similarly, the research was frequently limited to a specific characteristics of the employment of non-finite clauses in legal English (e.g. complexity and types of embedding of non-finite clauses in Acts of Parliament were studied by Hiltunen, 1984; non-finite clauses functioning as complements in Philippine Civil Code were studied by Gocheco, 2011).

This paper differs from the above-mentioned approaches in two respects. Firstly, it offers a comparative analysis of four types of structures headed by non-finite verb forms, i.e. present participial, gerundial, infinitival and past participial semi-clauses. Secondly, the conceptual framework for analysis is based on the notion of semi-clause construction as defined by linguists from the Prague linguistic school. The material under analysis consists of two corpora of British legal English of comparable length (each comprising approximately 36 000 words), namely Acts of Parliament and Appellate Judgments.

The aim of the present paper is twofold. Firstly, it aims to provide an account of the actual occurrence of the analysed semi-clause constructions in their respective syntactic functions in the selected corpora and secondly, it aims at identifying ambiguities stemming from their potential syntactic interpretations.

Conceptual framework and the method of analysis

Most syntactic analyses of legal English use the term non-finte clause and apply this term only to structures analyzable into clause elements, such as subject, verb and object. This analysis employs the term semi-clause construction (SCC for short) with the aim to include in the analysis a wider range of constructions headed by non-finite verb forms[1]. In accordance with this approach, all SCCs containing secondary predication and thus contributing to sentence condensation are included in the analysis. Secondary predication is used here to refer to the underlying structure of SCCs and is defined as "the capacity [of nominal forms of the verb] to create semi-clause constructions corresponding to dependent clauses." (Dušková 1988, 569).

The following sentence illustrates the method of clausal analysis and the main types and functions of SCCs included in the analysis.

Example 1. The applied method of clausal analysis.

$_{NP:S}$ (The /$_{377PTP:Prem}$ **modified**/ condition) may require [$_{335\ I:Od}$ the person on whom it is imposed **to apply** $_{NP:Od}$ (amounts /$_{378PTP:Postm}$ **paid** to it as result of this section/ $_{PP:Adv-time}$ (in {$_{208GER:CompPrep}$ **making** good any shortfall in the property available} $_{PP:Adv-purpose}$ (for {$_{209GER:CompPrep}$ **meeting** the expenses of the postal administration})].

Boundaries of semi-clauses are indicated by brackets: infinitival SCCs are enclosed by square brackets [], past participial SCCs are enclosed by slashes / /, present participial SCCs are enclosed by angle brackets < > and gerundial SCCs are enclosed by curly brackets{}. The type of SCC is also indicated by a corresponding abbreviation (INF, GER, PRP and PTP), preceded by a number indicating the position of the analysed semi-clause in the text from which it was extracted. The abbreviation is followed by a colon and an abbreviation of the syntactic function conveyed by the semi-clause. The structurally higher units in which semi-clauses are embedded are indicated by round brackets and a corresponding abbreviation of the type of phrase and its syntactic function, e.g.: $_{NP:S}$( ), $_{PP:Adv-purpose}$( )[2, 3].

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[1] The notion of semi-clause construction was introduced by the linguists working within the Prague syntactic tradition. According to Mathesius, the main defining characteristics of semi-clauses is their status of "transitory structures" between a clause and a clause element: "semi-sentence constructions…are not sentences in the proper sense and neither have they become mere sentence elements…Like the predicate they express relations which are being linguistically shaped, but in such a way that does not result in the formation of a sentence." (cited in Dušková 2003, 143).

[2] For the purposes of the present paper, the above described system of bracketing and labelling was simplified and the only brackets and labells preserved in the examples are those denoting the type, number and syntactic fuction of the SCC being described in the example. The heads of SCCs are in

As indicated by the above bracketing, the sentence in example 1 contains a past participial semi-clausal <u>premodifier</u> of the subject, an infinitival SCC syntactically operating as <u>direct object</u> and containing secondary predication, a past participial semi-clausal <u>postmodifier</u> of direct object and two gerundial SCCs embedded in prepositional phrases and functioning as <u>adverbials</u>.

This approach enables to include in the analysis all the SCCs headed by participles, gerunds and infinitives that function as sentence condensers and consequently to compare the level of sentence condensation and the syntactic functions of the respective types of SCCs across the two corpora.

Corpus characteristics

The corpus of Acts of Parliament (henceforward referred to as AP) consists of Parts I-V of Postal Services Act 2011 (abbreviated as PSA 2011 and comprising 59 pages) and the whole text of Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011 (abbreviated as WNEA 2011, comprising 35 pages). The corpus of appellate judgments (henceforward referred to as AJ) consists of three British appellate judgments issued in 2007 (AJ 1) and 2009 (AJ 2 and AJ 3) and comprising altogether 81 pages.

The general data concerning the analysed corpora are summarized in table 1 below.

Table 1: Distribution of semi-clauses per sentence and per page in the corpora of Acts of Parliament and Appellate Judgments.

AP	AJ
94 pages (36 384 words)	81 pages (36 630 words)
519 sentences	753 sentences
1434 semi-clauses	1194 semi-clauses
nr of semi-clauses per page: 15,26	nr of semi-clauses per page: 14,74
nr of semi-clauses per sentence: 2,97	nr of semi-clauses per sentence: 1,58

Legislation represents a prescriptive legal genre and appellate judgments can be subsumed under the heading *application of law.* According to Maley, "discourse types or genres characteristically organize their content, message, within broadly recognizable structural shapes; that is to say, we can categorize the texts…according to the configuration of the structural elements that they exhibit." (Maley 1994, 18). The present analysis was therefore aimed to reveal whether the employment of SCCs in the analyzed texts contributes to "precision, unambiguity and clarity of the legislative discourse" (Bhatia 1993, 117) and "a more relaxed stylistic norm of judicial decisons" (Tomášek 1998, 28).

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boldface font. The sources of the sentences cited as examples are indicated by abbreviations of title of the document from which they were extracted and by page number.

[3] The list of all abbreviations used in the article is provided at the end of the paper.

Discussion and Results

Overview of distribution of SCCs in the analyzed corpora
The general quantitative findings about the distribution of the four types of SCCs in the analysed texts are provided in table 2 below.

Table 2. Distribution of SCCs across the analyzed corpora of legal English.

		AP: 519 sentences		AJ: 753 sentences		
		PSA 2011: 362 sent.	**WNEA 2011: 157 sent.**	**AJ 1: 166 sent.**	**AJ 2: 260 sent.**	**AJ 3 : 327 sent.**
1	**Present Participial Semi-Clauses:**	174	65	33	39	110
2	*Nr.of PRP semi-clauses per sentence:*	*0,48*	*0,41*	*0,19*	*0,15*	*0,33*
3		*total: 239 (0,46/sent.)*		*total: 176 (0,23/sent.)*		
4	**Gerundial Semi-Clauses:**	220	85	78	81	79
5	*Nr. of GER semi-clauses per sentence:*	*0,60*	*0,54*	*0,46*	*0,31*	*0,24*
6		*total: 305 (0,58/sent.)*		*total: 238 (0,31/sent.)*		
7	**Infinitival Semi-Clauses:**	289	85	105	126	252
8	*Nr. of INF semi-clauses per sentence:*	*0,80*	*0,54*	*0,63*	*0,48*	*0,77*
9		*total: 374 (0,72/sent.)*		*total: 483 (0,64/sent.)*		
10	**Past Participial Semi-Clauses:**	426	127	49	70	133
11	*Nr. of PTP semi-clauses per sentence:*	*1,17*	*0,80*	*0,29*	*0,26*	*0,40*
12		*total: 553 (1,06/sent.)*		*total: 252 (0,33 /sent.)*		
	Total nr. of semi-clauses:	**1434 (2,76/sentence)**		**1194 (1,58/sentence)**		

As demonstrated by table 2, the overall number of SCCs in the corpus of AP is higher than the overall number of SCCs in the corpus of AJ, the difference amounting to 240 SCCs in favour of AP (1434 in AP vs. 1194 in AJ). The table also shows that for gerundial and present participial SCCs, not only higher incidence was detected in the corpus of AP (see lines 3 and 6 of table 2) but their average distribution per sentence in the individual texts of this genre is also higher and very stable across the texts of this

genre (see line 2 and 5). On the other hand, gerundial and present participial SCCs in the corpus of AJ are not only less numerous than their counterparts in AP but in addition, the mean number of these SCCs per sentence varies from text to text. Such a distribution of SCCs across and within the analysed corpora could serve as the ground for the assertion that gerundial and present participial SCCs can be viewed as typical sentence condensers in the corpus of AP.

As can be seen in table 2, infinitival and past participial SCCs in the analysed corpora also exhibit significant differences in terms of their distribution. Infinitival SCCs are by far more numerous (by 109 SCCs) in the corpus of AJ. Moreover, the mean number of these SCCs per sentence in individual texts of this genre was also proved to be very stable (see line 8 of table 2). On the other hand, in the corpus of AP, infinitival SCCs exhibit the greatest quantitative differences in their average distribution per sentence in the individual texts (see line 8 of table 2).

Past participial SCCs in AP outnumber past participial SCCs in AJ more than twofold. The distribution of these SCCs per sentence is likewise much higher in the corpus of AP, where they represent the most frequent type of condensers (see line 12 of table 2).

The following sections present a more detailed comparison of the employment of the respective types of SCCs across the analyzed corpora. Since the analysis was also concerned with the assessment of unambiguity of syntactic interpretation of the employed SCCs, discussion will be centered around selected syntactic functions of SCCs that may present difficulties from this point of view.

Present participial SCCs in the analysed corpora
Distribution of syntactic functions performed by present participial semi-clauses in the analysed corpora is illustrated in table 3 below:

Table 3. Syntactic functions of pres. part. SCCs in the corpora of AP and AJ.
(delimitation of syntactic functions adopted from Dušková, 1988).

Syntactic function of present participial SCC:	AP: Nr (%)	AJ: Nr (%)
Premodifier:	**49 (20,50%)**	**36 (20,45%)**
Postmodifier:	**167 (69,80%)**	**78 (44,32%)**
Prepositional subject complement:	**12 (5,02%)**	**4 (2,27%)**
Prepositional object complement:	**0 (0%)**	**3 (1,70%)**
Adverbial:	**11 (4,60%)**	**55 (31,25%)**
Adv. of time:	**2:** *when*	**5:** *while,when*
Adv. of result:	**0**	**1:** *thereby*
Adv. of reason:	**0**	**0**
Adv. of concession:	**0**	**2:** *even if,*
Adv. of concession and condition	**1:***whether..or*	*while*
Suppementive clauses:	**7**	**0**
		47
Total nr. of Present Participial SCCs:	**239 (100%)**	**176 (100%)**

As table 3 shows, the prevailing syntactic function of present participial SCCs in the corpus of AP is postmodification in noun phrases. On the other hand, the corpus of AJ contained more occurrences of adverbial and supplementive present participial SCCs than the corpus of AP. The most frequent syntactic functions of present participial SCCs thus correspond to the stylistic qualities of the analyzed genres: semi-clausal postmodifiers in AP contribute to the precision of the genre by adding details about the head noun while supplementive clauses[4] can be perceived as a marker of stylistic looseness of AJ.

The most frequently occurring type of syntactic indeterminacy was detected in the corpus of AJ. In several cases, there arose a slight ambiguity concerning the interpretation of the syntactic function of a present participial SCC as exemplified below:

Example 2. Case of syntactic indeterminacy in AJ.
> After all, the officer may himself have given evidence for the Crown in a criminal trial and he spends his working life $_{PP:MannerAdj-means/instr.}$(with other police officers $<_{52PRP:Postm}$ **fighting** crime>). (AJ 1, p.16).

The above present participial SCC displays ambiguity in the sense that it could function either as a postmodifier in the noun phrase *other police officers* or it may have an adverbial reading, functioning as a subjectless supplementive clause conveying temporal relation or relation of manner.

Another difference in the employment of present participial SCCs across the analysed corpora was detected in the group of adverbial SCCs. The corpus of AJ contained several dangling or unattached present participial SCCs defined as clauses with an implied subject which is not identical with the subject of the finite verb of the matrix clause (Dušková, 1988, p. 585)[5].

Example 3. Dangling present participial SCC in AJ.
> $<_{58PRP:Adv-means/time.}$ **Adopting** the stance of the fair-minded observer>, the law would hold that such a person should be discharged from sitting on the jury. (AJ 1, p. 18)

The subject of the above semi-clause is logically *I* (the author) but syntactically, according to the normal attachment rule, it should be *the law*.

The semantic relation between the matrix clause and the adverbial semi-clause is pivotal for understanding the meaning of the sentence. However, as shown below, the

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[4] The term supplementive clause is used by Quirk et al (1985) and by Biber et al (1999) to refer to optional adverbial present participial and past participial clauses that are not introduced by a subordinator and that implicitly convey either a particular semantic relation that has to be inferred from the text or several overlapping semantic relations. Such semantic relations can be sometimes very difficult to infer.

[5] Quirk et al. list several types of sentences in which compliance with the attachment rule is unobjectionable (e.g. when the implied subject is the whole of the matrix clause or the indefinite pronoun or when the clause is a style disjunct). However, the corpus of AJ contained several instances in which the violation of this rule generates sentences with absurd interpretations exemplified above.

analysed texts contain numerous instances of present participial supplementive clauses implying versatile semantic relation to the matrix clause due to absence of a conjunctive element between them. In the overall number of adverbial present participial SCCs in AP (11), supplementive clauses constitute 7 instances, i.e. 63,6%. In the corpus of AJ, supplementive clauses represent 47 instances, i.e. 85,5% in the overall number of adverbial present participial clauses (55). While the inference of the implied semantic relation in this type of sentences in the corpus of AP did not pose any difficulties, the corpus of AJ contained several sentences in which the semantic relation conveyed by the supplementive clause was so vague that it was difficult to determine and classify:

Example 4. Supplementive SCC in the corpus of AJ.

Although the section 20(1) duty would appear to be triggered, $<_{31PRP:Adv\text{-}time/result}$ **taking** into account the child's wishes>, the local authority might judge him competent to look after himself and provide support, including help with accommodation, without making him a looked after child. (AJ 2, p. 15-16)

In the above example, the present participial clause could indicate temporal semantic relation, semantic relation of manner or even that of result.

Another type of indeterminacy detected in the corpus of AJ involves the difficulty of determining sytactic function of certain present participial clauses in sentence-final position as adverbial supplementive or as postmodifying clauses.

Example 5. Case of syntactic indeterminacy in AJ.

This letter was passed to defending counsel, who sought to challenge Mr McKay-Smith, $<_{13PRP:Adv\text{-}time/means}$ **contending** that the court should not only do what is right but should be seen to have done what is right>. (AJ 1, p. 3)

The present participial clause above could be interpreted either as an optional adverbial supplementive clause indicating temporal relation or relation of means (...sought to challange Mr. McKay- Smith *while/by* contending that...) or as a postmodifier of Od (...sought to challenge Mr. McKay-Smith *who* contended that....). In the corpus of AP, the unambiguous interpretation of the semantic relations conveyed by adverbial clauses was achieved either by present participial SCCs introduced by a conjunction or by gerundial SCCs embedded in prepositional phrases. The main conditioning factor for the employment of these constructions in AP is precision of semantic meaning.

Gerundial SCCs in the analysed corpora

Table 4 below shows that gerundial SCCs are by far more numerous in the corpus of AP than in the corpus of AJ (the difference is 67 clauses in favour of the corpus of AP). Since gerundial SCCs function as complements of prepositions or convey nominal syntactic functions in a sentence (subject, object, subject complement and object complement), their higher incidence in the corpus of AP can be seen as a proof of a higher degree of nominality of this genre.

Table 4. Syntactic functions of gerundial SCCs in the corpora of AP and AJ (delimitation of syntactic functions adopted from Dušková, 1988).

Syntactic function of Gerundial SCC:	AP: Nr (%)	AJ: Nr (%)
Subject:	**4 (1,31%)**	**3 (1,26%)**
Extraposed subject:	**-**	**1 (0,42%)**
Direct Object:	**9 (2,95%)**	**16 (6,72%)**
Prepositional object:	**46 (15,08%)**	**65 (27,31%)**
Premodifier:	**50 (16,39%)**	**9 (3,78%)**
Postmodifier:	**64 (20,98%)**	**61 (25,63%)**
Complement of adjective:	**3 (0,98%)**	**11(4,62%)**
Apposition:	**1(0,33%)**	**4 (1,68%)**
Adverbial:	**128 (42,96%)**	**68 (28,57)**
Adv. of time:	*54*	*28*
Adv. of means:	*3*	*15*
Adv. of purpose:	*58*	*5*
Adv. of result:	*1*	*-*
Adv. of reason:	*2*	*6*
Adv. of accompanying circumstances:	*9*	*9*
Adv. of respect:	*1*	*5*
Total nr. of Gerundial Semi-clauses:	**305 (100%)**	**238 (100%)**

The most frequent gerundial SCCs in the corpus of AP were gerundial SCCs embedded in prepositional phrases with adverbial functions, which enhances the unambiguous interpretability of adverbial relations as well as the level of condensation of in this genre (see examples 6-10 below).

There were detected several differences in the employment of gerundial adverbial SCCs in the analysed corpora. While all gerundial SCCs embedded in prepositional phrases in the corpus of AJ had a clearly delimited adverbial function indicated by a single preposition, the corpus of AP contained frequent instances of several adverbial meanings conveyed by a single prepositional phrase:

Example 6: Condensing function of adverbial prepositional phrases in AP.
The second case is where OFCOM consider it appropriate for the number of postal operators designated as universal service providers to be greater than one $_{PP:Adv-purpose/AccompCirc}$ (for, or in connection with, {$_{71G:CompPrep}$ **achieving** the objective of the postal administration}). (PSA 2011, p.21)

Example 7: Condensing function of adverbial prepositional phrases in AP.
For the purposes of this section amounts are applied in making good that shortfall if they are paid $_{PP:Adv-time/purpose}$ (in or towards {$_{214G:CompPrep}$ **discharging** so much of a relevant debt as cannot be met out of the property otherwise available $_{PP:Adv-purpose}$ (for {$_{215G:CompPrep}$ **meeting** relevant debts}) }). (PSA 2011, p. 54)

This frequently occurring phenomenon makes the corpus of AP more economic and condensed since it enables to express several semantic relations by combining a prepositional phrase containing two prepositions with a single gerundial SCC.

Furthermore, in comparison with present participial SCCs with adverbial syntactic functions, especially those attached asyndetically, gerundial SCCs express adverbial semantic relations more accurately, which can be one of the reasons for their more frequent employment in the corpus of AP where precision is of utmost importance. The following examples may serve to illustrate the point:

Example 8: Gerundial SCC in AP.

PP:Adv-time (In { 52GER:CompPrep **performing** their duty under subsection (1) }) OFCOM must have regard to the need for the provision of a universal postal service to be financially sustainable. (PSA 2011, p. 16)

Eample 9: Gerundial SCC in AP.

PP:Adv-time (After {125GER:CompPrep**receiving** the report under subsection (6)}) the Secretary of State must determine what action (if any) the Secretary of State considers ought to be taken by OFCOM to deal with the burden. (PSA 2011, p. 29)

Example 10: Present participial SCC in AJ.

<43PRP:Adv-time/result **Dismissing** the appeal of the first appellant >, the court said (para 47): (AJ 1, p. 12)

While sentence in example 8 clearly conveys a simultaneous temporal relation indicated by the preposition *in* introducing the prepositional phrase in which the gerundial SCC is embedded and sentence in example 9 indicates a temporal sequence relation indicated by the preposition *after*, sentence in example 10 is ambiguous between the simultaneous temporal interpretation, temporal sequence interpretation or possibly even consequence interpretation.

The only type of dangling or unattached SCCs identified in the corpus of AP were gerundial SCCs (44 out of 128 gerundial SCCs were dangling). On the other hand, and in accordance with the stylistic requirements of the genre of AP, these SCCs represent the most unambiguous type of dangling semi-clauses since their subject was always the generic *one* or *I/we* referring to the writers:

Example 11: Dangling Gerundial SCC in AP:

PP:Adv-time (In {27GER:CompPrep **calculating** the value of any liabilities for those purposes}), a provision of the RMPP that limits the amount of its liabilities by reference to the amount of its assets is to be disregarded. (PSA 2011, p. 12)

While the corpus of AP demonstrates a complementary relationship between the compliance with the attachment rule and an overt expression of the semantic relation between the matrix clause and the SCC, the corpus of AJ contained 6 instances of adverbial clauses that were both dangling and supplementive:

Example 12: Dangling and Supplementive SCC in AJ:

What consideration <26PRP:Adv-time/reason **having regard** to his age and understanding> is duly to be given to those wishes and feelings? (AJ 2, p. 14)

This important finding represents another piece of evidence supporting the higher degree of informality and stylistic looseness of the genre of AJ.

Infinitival SCCs in the analysed corpora
The analysis revealed both quantitative differences in the employment of infinitival SCCs (374 infinitival SCCs in AP vs 483 infinitival SCCs in AJ) and substantial differences in their syntactic functions. The most common syntactic function of infinitival SCCs in AJ was adverbial function while the corpus of AP contained more infinitival SCCs functioning as postmodifiers and direct objects.

Table 5. Syntactic functions of infinitival SCCs in the corpora of AP and AJ (delimitation of syntactic functions adopted from Dušková, 1988).

Syntactic Function of Infinitival SCC:	AP: Nr. (%)	AJ: Nr. (%)
Subject:	**1** (0,26%)	**0**
Extraposed subject:	**12** (3,47%)	**57** (11,80%)
Direct object:	**146** (39,03%)	**90** (18,63%)
Extraposed direct object:	**2** (0,53%)	**5** (1,03%)
Infinitive in the position of Prepositional object:	**11** (2,94%)	**3** (0,62%)
Complement of adjective:	**15** (4,01%)	**71** (14,70%)
Subject complement:	**30** (8,02%)	**90** (18,63%)
Object complement:	**14** (3,74%)	**7** (1,44%)
Postmodifier:	**106** (28,34%)	**65** (13,45%)
Adverbial:	**37** (9,90%)	**95** (19,67%)
Adv. of aim/intention:	**4**	**18**
Adv. of purpose:	**26**	**60**
Adv. of reason:	**1**	**2**
Adv. of comparison:	**0**	**2**
Adv. of effect:	**5**	**7**
Adv. of extent:	**1**	**6**
Total nr. of Infinitival Semi-clauses:	**374**	**483**

Infinitival <u>postmodifiers</u> in the corpus of AP outnumber infinitival postmodifiers in AJ (106 in AP vs. 65 in AJ). With respect to infinitival postmodification, the main difference between the two corpora lies in the complexity of infinitival postmodification. The corpus of AP contained frequent cases of multiple postmodifying infinitive as well as postmodifying infinitive expressing several contrasting actions or components of the same action (example 13), which increases the condensing capacity of postmodifying infinitive.

Example 13: Multiple infinitival postmodifiers in AP.

> the right [**30INF, 31INF:Postm to subscribe for**, or **acquire**, such securities and any other rights in connection with such securities,] (PSA 2011, p. 8)

Another interesting finding concerns the occurrence of infinitival extraposed subjects in the analyzed corpora. In both corpora, they were located in two types of sentential contexts:

1. the matrix clause contained a modal adjective *possible, necessary, essential, convenient, important* or the noun *duty* and the extraposed subject denoted the activity or state to which the modal adjective refers (example 14)

Example 14: Typical sentential context for infinitival extraposed subjects

> It is impossible, whether desirable or not, [**24 INF:S(ep) to ensure** that jurors have no previous knowledge of the law before they begin [**25 INF:Od to hear** a case]]. (AJ 1, p. 3)

- the matrix clause contained evaluative adjective, e.g. *right, wrong, hard, difficult, relevant, unrealistic, appropriate, practicable and safe, lawful, just and equittable* (example 15).

Example 15: Typical sentential context for infinitival extraposed subjects

> As such they become influenced by the principles and attitudes of the police, and it would be difficult [**36 INF:S(ep)** for them **to bring** to bear those qualities demanding a completely impartial approach to the problems confronting members of a jury]'. (AJ 1, p. 4)

On the other hand, gerundial semi-clausal subjects were never used in such modal or evaluative contexts but rather in neutral and descriptive contexts (matrix clause verbs were *involve*, *include, concern, impose,* and *be*):

Example 16: Typical sentential context for gerundial subjects

> {**6GER:S Conserving** biodiversity} includes – in relation to any species of flora or fauna, {**7GER:Od restoring** or **enhancing** a population of that species} (WNEA 2011, p.1)

However, the small number of infinitival extraposed subjects does not allow to make any generalizations about the typical sentential contexts for gerundial and infinitival subjects in legal English and the issue definitely presents an interesting topic for further research in syntax of legal English.

Past participial SCCs in the analysed corpora

As was the case with infinitival SCCs, past participial SCCs did not pose any difficulties from the point of view of semantic and syntactic ambiguities and therefore the following section presents only a few brief comments on their incidence in the studied corpora. The data in table 6 indicate that in terms of the occurrence of past participial SCCs, the corpus of AP can be considered to be not only more nominal but also more condensed since it

contains more instances of these SCCs per sentence than the corpus of AJ (1,06 in AP vs. 0,43 in AJ).

Table 6. Syntactic functions of past participial SCCs in the corpora of AP and AJ (delimitation of syntactic functions adopted from Dušková, 1988).

Syntactic Function of Past Participial SCC:	AP: Nr (%)	AJ: Nr (%)
Postmodifier:	365 (69,78%)	193 (77,51%)
Premodifier:	136 (26,0%)	44 (17,67%)
Adverbial:	12 (4,81%)	22 (4,21%)
Adv. of time: Adv. of manner: Adv. of condition: Adv. of concession: Adv. of condition/concession: Adv. of respect:	- 5 5 2 - -	- 13 6 1 1 1
Total nr. of past participial SCCs:	523	249

Adverbial past participial SCCs in AJ represent an important type of adverbial SCCs since they always overtly express semantic relations that are generally implied by present participial SCCs in this corpus. The most frequent semantic types of adverbial past participial SCCs are adverbial clauses of manner (*as...*), condition (*if*) and conditional-concessive clauses (*whether...or*).

However, the most frequent syntactic functions conveyed by past participles in both corpora were premodification and postmodification. The extremely high number of past participial premodifiers in the texts of AP is caused by recurrence of certain noun phrases throughout the text, e.g. the noun phrase *qualifying accrued rights* occurs 39 times in the analysed sections of Postal Services Act. Similarly, the past participial premodifiers *prescribed* and *specified* repeatedly collocate with a number of head nouns in both texts of the corpus of AP. The high incidence of past participial postmodifiers in the corpus of AP is contributed to by frequent occurrence of the postmodifiers *owned by the Crown*, *given by section...* and *concerned*. The frequent recurrence of such expressions again corresponds to the requirement of precision and unambiguity of the genre of AP.

Conclusion

On the basis of syntactic analysis of the studied corpora, it is possible to generalize that SCCs in the corpus of AP exhibit greater precision and unambiguity both in terms of their syntactic interpretation and in terms of their semantic interpretation. In contrast, the corpus of AJ contained several kinds of syntactically indeterminate or ambiguous SCCs.

Semi-clauses in AP outnumber semi-clauses in AJ (1434 in AP vs. 1194 in AJ) and the average number of all types of semi-clauses per sentence is also higher in this corpus. The corpus of AP was proved to be more condensed which was reflected e.g. in the syntactic function of postmodification: it contained more numerous occurrences of

head nouns postmodified by multiple infinitival postmodifiers and more occurrences of both present participial and gerundial postmodifiers. The numbers of sentence condensers in the two corpora thus reveal that sentence condensers in AP are used more frequently, enabling to pack more information into one sentence. However, even if the difference in the numbers of occurrences of sentence condensers between the two corpora is not too great, the average number of condensers per sentence is considerably higher in AP (2,76) than in AJ (1,58), which is a result of the long and self-contained sentences in the genre of AP. Sentence condensation in AP was most frequently increased by two or three co-occurring gerundial SCCs conveying various adverbial meanings in a single sentence whereas in the corpus of AJ, it was most frequently increased by sentences containing multiple infinitival SCCs.

The analysis of dangling and supplementive clauses represents another piece of evidence in support of greater semantic and syntactic ambiguity of semi-clauses in the corpus of AJ and greater stylistic looseness of the texts of judgments. The stylistic motive thus appears to be an important conditioning factor in terms of employment of particular formal types of SCCs in the analysed legal genres.

List of Abbreviations:

AJ – Appellate Judgments
AJ1 – Appellate Judgment 1
AJ2 – Appellate Judgment 2
AJ3 – Appellate Judgment 3
AP – Acts of Parliament
PSA 2011 – Postal Services Act 2011
WNEA 2011 – Wildlife and Natural Environment Act 2011
NP – noun phrase
PP – prepositional phrase
SCC – semi-clause construction
SCCs – semi-clause constructions
Sent. - sentence
Formal categories of SCCs:
$<_{PRP:........}>$ – present participial semi-clause
$[_{INF:.........}]$ – infinitival semi-clause
$/_{PTP:……./}$ – past participial semi-clause
$\{_{GER:……..}\}$ – gerundial semi-clause
Syntactic functions of SCCs:
Adv–AccompCirc – adverbial semi-clause of accompanying circumstances
Adv – manner - adverbial semi– clause of manner
Adv–means – adverbial semi– clause of means
Adv–purpose – adverbial semi-clause of purpose
Adv–reason – adverbial semi-clause of reason
Adv–result – adverbial semi-clause of result
Adv–time – adverbial semi-clause of time
CompPrep – complement of preposition
MannerAdj-means/instr. – manner adjunct of means or instrument

Od – direct object
Postm – postmodifier
Prem - premodifier
S - subject
S(ep) – extraposed subject

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