

## CHAPTER 33.

## Nexus.

## 33. 1. Predication.

After dealing with various kinds of junction we shall now consider the other kind of syntactic combination, nexus. While junction is regularly symbolized by a collocation of figures: 21 good boy, 12 fee simple, 11 King Edward, 2-1 picture-gallery, 2 + 1 blackberry, 1-1 boy messenger, etc., the most characteristic symbol for a nexus is the presence of one or generally two or more of the initials: S V he drank, S V P he became happy, S V O he had a drink, S V O<sup>r</sup>(S<sub>2</sub>P) that made him happy, etc. Wherever we have S, V, O, O, P, I, G, X, or Y, a nexus is either denoted or implied.

What, then, is the essential difference between junction and nexus? Instead of the latter term many scholars use the word *predication* and then define this as the linguistic expression of a judgment. But though this definition is found over and over again in works on logic and grammar, I think it should be avoided, as it is true of one kind of predication only, which, though it plays the greatest part in treatises on logic, is far from covering the majority of those sentences that occur in everyday conversations—and these should be the staple stock of linguistics. It would probably be best in linguistics to avoid the word predication altogether on account of its traditional connexion with logical theories. In grammar we should, not of course forget our logic, but steer clear of everything that may hamper our comprehension of language as it is actually used; this is why I have coined the new term *nexus* with its exclusive application to grammar. This has the additional advantage that *nexus* is applicable to a combination like *him happy* in *made him happy*, *thought him happy*, which cannot, perhaps, be called a predication and does not form a complete sentence.

cf: Otto Jespersen, Analytic Syntax, Copenhagen,  
Munksgaard, 1937