

Chapter 8 Non-finite clauses 1. The present participle clause, as in (18) and (19), and the to-infinitive clause, as in (20) and (21), are the most versatile in function. (13) "I want he to go. If the subject of the non-finite clause is not a pronoun, the accusative or objective case on this subject is of course not visible, as (14) shows: (14) She couldn't bear to see [Edward suffering]. The non-finite verb suffering in (14) can also be a verbal noun, as in (15a), and then the subject has genitive case, namely his or Edward's, rather than the accusative him or Edward. In (14), suffering is a verb but in (15a) it is a noun because it is preceded by a possessive. Note that you could replace the possessive by an article, as in (15b): (15) She couldn't bear to see [his/Edward's suffering]. b. She couldn't bear to see [the suffering of him/Edward]. Prescriptive grammarians object to (12) and (14), and prefer (15), known as gerund. We will come back to gerunds as a special topic. I like to think of present participles as a hybrid category, in between nouns and verbs, and prefer to avoid the term gerund. As we saw in the previous chapter, finite embedded clauses, as in (16a), can become independent from the main clause by leaving the complementizer that out, as in (16b). A non-finite clause, as in (17a) can be the object inside another clause but, on its own, as in (17b), it is not a complete sentence: (16) a. I know that he left]. b. He left. (17) I want [him to go]. b. "Him to go. We'll now turn to the functions of the non-finite clauses, 2. Non-finite clauses There are three kinds of non-finite clauses, namely those whose verb groups contain infinitives, or present participles, or past participles. The infinitival clause with to frequently has a for as complementizer, as in (4), or an in order, as in (5), that connects the infinitival clause to the main clause: (4) I expected [for him to be scared ... 1 (from the catsite.com) (5) [In order to understand the legislative process), it is necessary first of all to know something about the nature of the lawmaking body itself. Conclusion Chapter 7 deals with finite embedded and coordinated clauses, i.e. those sentences or clauses that contain finite verbs. (from an Alabama Senate document) As we'll see when we draw the Verb Group for the non-finite clause, to will be put inside this Verb Group since it is similar to a modal. Apart from infinitives, there are two other kinds of non-finite Verb Groups, usually referred to as participles. In addition, the verb in non-finite clauses displays no person or number marking, as is shown by the ungrammaticality of walks in (10): (10) [For him to walks in the Superstitions] is nice. Past participle clauses, as in (7), are more restricted in that they usually function as adverbials and bare infinitives are mostly objects of certain verbs. I think the functions of non-finites are not difficult but, just as a review, see if you can identify the functions of the clauses in (1) to (9). 5 Table 8.1 lists the different kinds of finite and non-finite clauses, with examples, their complementizers, and in how many functions they are used. Embedded clauses Function Example C (2) that, because, etc broad Finite sometimes: for, as in (4); in order, as in (5) (1) infinitive Non-Finite broad (3) no bare-infinitive narrow broad (6) present participle while, after, before past participle when, where (7) narrow In Chapter 10, finite and non-finite clauses will be shown to function inside phrases as well. The present chapter deals with non-finite sentences (or clauses), i.e. those that contain only non-finite verbs. 1. Table 8.1.