

Temporal Clauses

Latin MILC – W4, HT 2013

February 05, 2013

1 Temporals in the Indicative

Temporal clauses, introduced by conjunctions like *cum*, *postquam*, *ubi*, *simul atque*, are adverbial clauses and further describe the action of the main verb. They generally take the indicative, but under certain circumstances may occur in the subjunctive (see below).

Temporal clauses can express past, present and future actions - while in the past pluperfect and perfect express tense relations, in the future this is done by the future perfect and future simple; for present temporal clauses, the present tense is used.

- (1) At the moment when the enemy was entering the gates of your crushed and ruined city, not one of you so much as heaved a groan.
Cum per portas urbis vestrae oppressae atque afflictae ingrediebatur hostis, nemo tum vestrum ne ingemuit quidem.
- (2) When the Helvetii had ascertained his coming, they sent emissaries to him.
Ubi de eius adventu Helvetii certiores facti sunt, legatos ad eum mittunt.
- (3) *Iugurtha, postquam oppidum Capsam aliosque locos munitos, simul et magnam pecuniam amiserat.*
Iugurtha, after he had fortified the city of Capsa and other places, at the same time had spent a great deal of money.

Expressing a sequence of actions in the past, one of which precedes the other, strictly speaking requires the usage of pluperfect and perfect/imperfect; often, however, classical Latin will avoid the pluperfect and choose the perfect instead.

- (4) *Undecimo die postquam a te discesseram hoc litterularum exaravi egrediens e villa ante lucem.*
On the eleventh day after my departure from you I wrote this little letter as I was leaving the house before dawn.
- (5) Caesar, when he had observed this, drew off his forces to the next hill.
Postquam id animum advertit, copias suas Caesar in proximum collem subduxit.
- (6) But Oppius, after he had accomplished nothing in prayer, clad in fear tried to prepare a hidden dagger, but was hindered by Cotta and Volscius.
At Oppius, postquam orans nihil proficiebat, timide veste tectum pugionem expedire conatus a Cotta Volscioque impeditur.
- (7) As I was wearied with my journey, I determined on staying at home the whole day and doing nothing.
Cum de via languerem, totum diem domu manere et nihil agere decrevi.

Note, however, that in Livy and Tacitus, you will find the subjunctive used in temporal clauses, in accordance with Greek practise, where indefiniteness is expressed.

- (8) *Id fetialis ubi dixisset, hastam immittebat.*
As soon as (=whenever) the priest had said it, he would throw a spear.

2 Temporals in the Subjunctive

As a general rule, temporal clauses will only occur in the subjunctive if they stand in *oratio obliqua*, or when they express more than pure temporal relations.

Dum, for example, will take the subjunctive when meaning ‘as long as’, ‘provided that’ (and thus express a conditional notion). When meaning ‘until’ (also for *donec*, *quoad*) the indicative is used in general, unless a final sense is expressed.

- (9) Let them come then, as long as they don’t interrupt us.
Veniant igitur, dum ne nos interpellent.
- (10) He was in the House of Senate till the moment it was adjourned.
In senatu fuit donec senatus dismissus est.
- (11) Are you waiting till he gives his evidence?
Num expectatis dum testimonium dicat?

Similar things apply to *antequam*, *priusquam*, both of which may just express anteriority, but in the subjunctive have a final or consecutive connotations. Also note that they are best split in two when in the negative, thus e.g. *non prius ... quam*.

- (12) The enemy made a charge before they could recover from the panic.
Priusquam e pavore reciperent animos, impetum fecerunt hostes.
- (13) I will not answer until you are silent.
Non prius respondebo quam tacueris.

3 Assignment

3.1 Translate into Latin

Please translate this as a piece of continuous prose.

I propose to write of the war which the people of Rome waged with Jugurtha, king of the Numidians: first, because it was long, sanguinary and of varying fortune; and secondly, because then for the first time resistance was offered to the insolence of the nobles — the beginning of a struggle which threw everything, human and divine, into confusion, and rose to such a pitch of frenzy that civil discord ended in war and the devastation of Italy. But before actually beginning such a narrative, let me recall a few earlier events, in order that everything may be placed in a better light for our understanding and may be the more clearly revealed.

During the second Punic war, when Hannibal, leader of the Carthaginians, had dealt Italy's power the heaviest blow since the Roman nation attained its full stature, Masinissa, king of Numidia, had become the friend of Publius Scipio, afterwards surnamed Africanus because of his prowess, and performed many illustrious deeds of arms. In return for this, after the defeat of the Carthaginians and the capture of Syphax, whose dominion in Africa was great and extensive, the Roman people gave Masinissa as a free gift all the cities and territories that he had taken in war. Consequently Masinissa was ever our true and loyal friend. But his reign and his life ended together. His son Micipsa then became sole ruler, since his brothers Mastanabal and Gulussa had fallen ill and died. Micipsa begot Adherbal and Hiempsal, and brought up in the palace, in the same manner as his own children, a son of his brother Mastanabal called Jugurtha, whom Masinissa in his will had allowed to remain a commoner because he was the offspring of a concubine.

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Please hand in your assignment by Friday 6pm, either by email to robin.meyer@ling-phil.ox.ac.uk, or by pigeon post to *Robin Meyer, Wolfson College, Linton Rd.*