

Università di Cagliari



Corso di Laurea in Lingue e Comunicazione

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DISCOURSE LEVEL

Sentence Connectivity

Larger than the sentence text

We arrived at the shop just as the butcher was clearing away. As a result the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones, and the little puppies liked the scraps.

SENTENCE LEVEL

Sentence

the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones, and the little puppies liked the scraps.

CLAUSE LEVEL

Clause

the big dogs enjoyed their unexpected bones

PHRASE LEVEL

Phrase

their unexpected bones

WORD LEVEL

Word

un- expect -ed

THE SENTENCE



**IT MUST CONTAIN ONE OR MORE CLAUSES
(PROPOSIZIONE):**

I (S) quickly (A) shut (V) the door

I (S) quickly (A) shut (V) the door
(INDEPENDENT CLAUSE)

before the dog could come in
(DEPENDENT or SUBORDINATE CLAUSE).

CLAUSES

THE CLAUSE (PROPOSIZIONE) constitutes the main structure of a sentence.

IT IS A UNIT composed by the 5 syntactic elements, i.e. S, V, O, C and A

(Subject, Verb, Object, Complement and Adverbial)

IT USUALLY CONTAINS MORE THAN ONE ELEMENT BUT MUST ALWAYS CONTAIN A VERB.

SUBJECT, VERB AND OBJECT ARE THE USUAL COMPONENTS OF A CLAUSE.

My father gave me this watch;
John was listening to his radio.

Multiple Sentences

As we mentioned earlier, sentences which contain only one clause are called simple sentences.

Multiple sentences can be analysed into more than one clause and are the majority in formal writing.

Multiple sentences are of two broad kinds: compound and complex

Multiple Sentences

A COMPOUND OR COORDINATING SENTENCES
CONSIST OF MORE FINITE CLAUSES LINKED
TOGETHER BY A CO-ORDINATING CONJUNCTION
(AND, OR, BUT):

He has quarrelled with the chairman, and has resigned;

The baby was crying but his mother wasn't listening.

Complex Sentences

A COMPLEX SENTENCE CONTAINS TWO OR MORE FINITE CLAUSES LINKED TOGETHER SO THAT ONE CLAUSE IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE OTHER:

Grammatical S.: It is late (simple independent sentence)

Ungrammatical S.: Because it is late
(subordinate or dependent clause)

Grammatical: I am going home because it is late
(complex sentence: independent with subordinate).

A sentence which contains a subordinate clause is called a complex sentence.

COMPLEX SENTENCES - Markers of subordination

There are **two main indicators** that a clause is subordinate:

1. The presence of a subordinating conjunction:

James left the office because he was tired.

If you need my help, just call me.

While I was waiting for the bus, I read a whole book.

2. The form of the verb phrase:

If the verb is **non-finite** the clause in which it occurs is a subordinate clause:

To pass your exams, you must study. Deprived of oxygen, plants will quickly die. The man stood still, saying nothing.

(Ex. 4.1 p. 119 Nelson)

Subordinate clause types

The main subordinate clause types are:

- Adjunct or Adverbial clauses.
- Relative clauses.
- Nominal (relative) clauses.
- Comparative clauses.
- That-clauses.
- Non-finite clauses.

Subordinate clause types



Adjunct or Adverbial clauses (also called circumstantial clauses).

They modify the main clause by adding new information about time, place and mood.

They are subordinate clauses that function as adjunct in sentence structure.

Subordinate clause types

Adjunct or Adverbial clauses.

They are introduced by a range of subordinating conjunctions, such as:

- **When, as soon as, until, to** **INTRODUCE TIME CONCEPTS**;
- **Because, as, since, to** **INTRODUCE CAUSALITY**;
- **In order to, so that to** **INTRODUCE PURPOSE**;
- **Although, despite, in spite of to** **INTRODUCE CONCESSION**;
- **So....that to** **INTRODUCE CONSEQUENCE**;
- **If, as long as, provided that to** **INTRODUCE A HYPOTHESIS**

Subordinate clause types

The meanings of adjunct clauses.

As elements in sentence structure, subordinate clauses most commonly function as ADJUNCTS or ADVERBIALS .

Condition:

I'll be home early *if (provided/unless..) I can catch the early bus*

Concession:

He paid for the meal, *although (even though/while) he can't really afford it.*

Result/Consequence:

The house was flooded, *so we had to sleep at my mom's*

Subordinate clause types

The meanings of adjunct clauses.

Purpose:

In order to (to) clean the area, the police ordered everybody out.
You should write down the information, *so you won't forget it*.

Reason:

I was an hour late at work *because (since/as) I missed the bus*.

Time:

I'll talk to her *while (when/before) I'm cooking*.

Ex. 4.5 p. 120 Nelson

Subordinate clause types

Relative clauses.

They are introduced by one of the relative pronouns, *that*, *who*, *which* or *whose*.

They give additional information about one of the elements of the main clause.

They can be **RESTRICTIVE**, when the information that they give is essential:

«He likes stories that come from other countries».

NON RESTRICTIVE giving non essential information (they are **IMBEDDED**, and normally contained in between commas):

«The man, who lives on the second floor, is single»

I met the man who lives on the second floor

Subordinate clause types

Relative clauses.

In some cases, the relative pronoun may be omitted, leaving a ZERO relative clause:

«The film I am watching is boring».

REDUCED RELATIVE CLAUSES:

Cities *built recently* are usually ugly;

The train *arriving at platform One* is the Oxford train.

Subordinate clause types

Nominal (Relative) clauses.

They occupy the position of the subject or of the object in the main clause and can be of two types:

1. THAT-clauses introduced by the subordinating conjunction that:

Everyone knows that smoking is dangerous (object)

That he had left was clear to everyone (subject).

2. Nominal relative clauses introduced by the relative or interrogative pronouns):

What I thought was right (subject).

I wonder when he will arrive (object).

Whoever wins the most votes will be president. (subject)

She showed me how to cook pizza. (object – direct obj.)

Subordinate clause types

Nominal (Relative) clauses.

DO NOT CONFUSE

The subordinating conjunction THAT
With the relative pronoun THAT

The relative pronoun can be substituted by *which*

The book that (which) I am reading is fascinating

I know that he likes you.

Subordinate clause types

Comparative clauses.

They are introduced by:

a) than

COMPARISON IN A GRADABLE ADJ. OR ADVERB

John is younger than I am.

That boat travels faster than I'd expect

Food is more expensive than it used to be.

b) **as (TO EXPRESS EQUIVALENCE)**

We took as many pictures as we could.

Subordinate clause types

Non finite clauses.

They give extra information about the main or independent clause. They appear in the infinitive or base form, in the gerund or -ing form, and in the past participle or -ed form:

Leaving home can be very traumatic (subject clause);

To give up smoking now would be such a pity (S);

Published in 1998, it soon became a best-seller (postponed subject)

Subordinate clause types

Clauses as sentence elements.

As we have seen before, subordinate clauses may also have the following functions:

1. Subject:

- ing clause, to-clause: *Leaving home can be very stressful; To go now would be a pity*
- Nominal relative clause: *What you need is a long holiday;*
- That-clause: *That he told you the truth is really a good thing.*

2. Direct object:

- ing clause, to-clause, ed-clause: He offered *to drive me to work*;
I enjoy *playing tennis*
- Nominal relative clause: *We don't know what will happen;*
- That-clause: *She knows that he told her the truth.*

Subordinate clause types

Clauses as sentence elements.

As we have seen before, subordinate clauses may also have the following functions:

3. Subject complement:

- **-ing clause, to-clause:** The main thing is finding enough information; Her job is to hire new staff.

- **Nominal relative clause:** This is what I've been trying to tell you;

- **That-clause:** The only reason is that I cannot find it.

Subordinate clause types

Peripheral clauses.

Subordinate clauses which are grammatically unintegrated in the sentences that contain them:

1. Comment clauses, to express the speaker's attitude:

I suppose, I guess, I imagine, I'm afraid, I reckon, I'm sorry to say, I must admit....

2. Reporting clauses and direct speech.

"I don't agree with the Job's Act", *said Andrea*.

Indirect speech: *Andrea said he did not agree with the Job's Act.*

Reporting clauses are often extended by the use of adjuncts.

"The music is too loud", *said my mother angrily*

Subordinate clause types

Peripheral clauses.

3. Tag questions. Typical of spoken discourse they are used to seek agreement with what has been said.

It's cold, isn't it? Marco has never worked in Bali, has he?

4. Parentheticals. A complete s. inserted parenthetically into another sentence. In written discourse they are enclosed in brackets or dashes.

The range of products – most carmakers have only 5 – is our distinctive feature.

5. Sentential relative clauses. Introduced by the relative pronoun *which*, used to add a concept..

Marco doesn't want to see Sarah, which I can understand.

SENTENCES AND CLAUSES



For the whole lesson

cfr. Nelson 97-118;

Pinnavaia 60-66,

The Cambridge Encyclopedia, ch.16 (217-221)