

CdL in Economia e Gestione Aziendale
CdL in Economia e Finanza

Lingua Inglese

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THE STRUCTURE OF ENGLISH

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SYNTAX is the way in which words are arranged to show relationships of meaning within sentences. It is the study of sentence structure, in other words

Sentences are constructions that can stand on their own as statements or utterances, and have a syntactic structure, generally made of a subject and a predicate.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

1. *She asked for a book*
2. *Come in*
3. *The horse ran away because the train was noisy.*

The sentence is the **largest unit** to which syntactic rules apply.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE WORD ORDER

The English language generally follows a strict word order in the affirmative and interrogative sentences:

AFFIRMATIVE SENTENCES

Subject/Verb/Object (Predicate): SVO

He drives a car

They follow the road

The doctor is coming (translate into Italian)

It is a beautiful day (translate into Italian)

Why? Lack of inflection

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE WORD ORDER

QUESTIONS OR INTERROGATIVE SENTENCES HAVE INVERTED WORD ORDER. THEY MUST ALWAYS CONTAIN AN AUXILIARY VERB.

Verb/Subject/ Object:
ARE THEY HAPPY?

Aux. Verb/S/Verb/ Obj.
DOES HE DRIVE A CAR?
WAS HE TALKING TO YOU?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Sentences (periodo-frase) begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. But...

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Sentences (periodo-frase) begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop.

BUT this traditional definition, which applies only to the written language, is faulty on three accounts.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

1

We have to allow for question marks and exclamation marks as well:

Welcome to the party!
Would you like some tea?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

2

Punctuation is often not used in writing, and yet we still now when a construction is a sentence. Many advertisements, public notices, newspapers headlines and legal documents lack punctuation marks.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

2

Climate targets /
European shipping
emissions in way of
nations meeting Paris
climate targets

Japan / Officials helped
procure wartime sex
slaves, report claims

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

2

**BOOK PUBLIC
NOTICE
ADVERTISEMENT
FOR ANY INDIAN
NEWSPAPER**

**Call Us: 09971799707 or Mail Us
at adinnewspaper@gmail.com**



AdinNewspaper.com

The one-stop newspaper advertising solution

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

3

People disagree about the best way
to punctuate a text.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

3

In particular, some manuals of style say we should never end a sentence before such words as *and* or *but*, and this rule is often taught in schools. Its source lies in the uncontrolled way in which young children use *and* in their early written work, reflecting its frequency in natural conversation.

But there are other manuals which accept that authors often do begin sentences in this way (usually to emphasize a contrast in meaning), and these do not condemn the usage. It is a regular feature to the style of the present author, who finds it on occasion a much more dramatic and rhythmical way of drawing a contrast than to use the various alternatives available. To replace *but* by *however* two sentences above, for example, would be to slow down the movement of the paragraph quite noticeably – in this view an unnecessary change of pace in a piece of text which wishes to make its point quickly and economically.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE WORD ORDER

**for and Macintosh Windows available Hot
Potatoes is**

HOT POTATOES IS AVAILABLE FOR MACINTOSH AND
WINDOWS

went skating Mark and Sally on Saturday

MARK AND SALLY WENT SKATING ON SATURDAY

way cool ice cream eating is to good off a

EATING ICE CREAM IS A GOOD WAY TO COOL OFF

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE WORD ORDER

1. swimming go ? Kelly and I allowed are to

2. the and walked store candy Mary some bought to.

3. ice cream nuts top on like and I chocolate with syrup

▪

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE WORD ORDER

1. swimming go ? Kelly and I allowed are to
Are Kelly and I allowed to go swimming?

2. the and walked store candy Mary some bought to.
Mary walked to the store and bought some candy.

3. ice cream nuts top on like and I chocolate with syrup
.
I like chocolate ice cream with syrups and nuts on top.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

TYPES OF SENTENCES

Major sentences are the most frequent. They can be broken down into a specific and logical pattern of elements: **Subject/Verb/Object**

The stock broker bought many shares for his client.

The price of petrol has been rising.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

TYPES OF SENTENCES

Minor sentences are not constructed in a regular way. They use abnormal patterns which cannot be clearly analysed into a sequence of clause elements, as can major sentences types. There are only a few minor sentence types, but instances of each type are frequently used in everyday conversation and when conversations are represented in fiction. They are also common in certain types of written language, such as notices, headlines, labels, advertisements, subheadings, and other settings where a message is presented as a 'block'.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

TYPES OF SENTENCES

Minor sentences do not follow all the rules of grammar. For example, in a major sentence the verbs can change their persons: *How do you manage?* > *How does he manage?* But the greeting *How do you do?* Is a minor sentence, and we cannot change the person to **How does he do?* Without changing the sense into something quite different. Nor can we change the tense and ask **How did you do?* The sentence has to be learned as a whole, and used as an idiom.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

TYPES OF SENTENCES

Minor sentences

It will be seen from this example that some types of minor sentence look quite complex – so much so that on a first impression they might be thought of to be displaying a major pattern. But in each case there is something ‘odd’ about them.

For example, one type uses an archaic verb form (the subjunctive) to express wishes, as in *God save the Queen!* and *Heaven forbid!*

Another type uses question words idiosyncratically: *How come she’s gone out?*

These are minor sentences because it is not possible to introduce the full range of normal grammatical changes into their structure, to produce such forms as *God Saves the Queen* or *God doesn’t save the Queen*. Only major sentences allow systematic variations of this kind.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

TYPES OF SENTENCES

Minor sentences – some types

- Formulae for stereotyped social situations, such as *Hello, How do you do?, Thanks, and Cheers!*
- Emotional or functional noises (traditionally called interjections), many of which do not follow the normal pronunciation patterns of the language, such as *Eh?, Ugh!, Ow!, Tut tut, and Shhh!*
- Proverbs or pithy sayings, such as *Easy come, easy go* or *Least said, soonest mended.*
- Abbreviated forms, such as the ones used in postcards, instructions, or commentaries, as in *Wish you were here, Mix well, and One lap more.*
- Words and phrases used as exclamations, questions, and commands, such as *Nice day!, Taxi? and All aboard!*

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

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 CLAUSE**).

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

CLAUSES

THE CLAUSE (PROPOSIZIONE) IS A UNIT THAT CAN BE ANALYSED INTO THE ELEMENTS S, V, C, O AND A (Subject, Verb, Complement, Object 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.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

DISCOURSE LEVEL Sentence Connectivity

10 X 1

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 STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

CLAUSE ELEMENTS

5 types of clause elements, each expressing a particular kind of meaning.

The President has nominated Mr. Monti Prime Minister last year

The first element is the **Subject**, which identifies the theme or topic of the clause;

the **Verb** expresses a wide range of meanings: actions, sensations, states of being;

the **Object** identifies who or what has been affected by the action of the verb;

the **Complement** gives extra information about another clause element;

the **Adverbial** adds information about the situation.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCES

Examples of simple (ONE VERB) sentence (or clause) structures:

John (S) carefully (A) searched (V) the room (O)

The girl (S) is (V) now (A) a student (C) at a large university (A)

His brother (S) grew (V) happier (C) gradually (A)

It (S) rained (V) steadily (A) all day (A)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SIMPLE SENTENCES

SIMPLE SENTENCES CONSIST OF ONE FINITE CLAUSE. THE LENGTH OF A SIMPLE SENTENCE IS NOT DETERMINANT.

THE NOUN PHRASES WHICH FORM THE SUBJECT, OBJECT OR ADVERBIAL OF THE SENTENCE DO NOT LIMIT ITS SIMPLICITY:

A number of people saw the terrible accident in the early afternoon.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

FINITE VERBS

Finite verbs, sometimes called main verbs, are limited by time (tense), person, and number.

Who killed the president?

The broker bought shares in Wall Street.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE FUNCTIONS

4 classical types of sentence function:

STATEMENT, QUESTION, COMMAND, EXCLAMATION

STATEMENT

A statement is a sentence whose purpose is to state, i.e. to convey information. Statements traditionally have a declarative structure, in the sense that they declare or make something known.

SENTENCE FUNCTIONS

4 classical types of sentence function:

STATEMENT, QUESTION, COMMAND, EXCLAMATION

QUESTION

A question is a sentence which seeks information.

3 types of questions:

- a) Yes-no questions
- b) Wh-questions
- c) Alternative questions (containing the connective or).

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SENTENCE FUNCTIONS

4 classical types of sentence function:

STATEMENT, QUESTION, COMMAND, EXCLAMATION

EXCLAMATION

Exclamations are sentences which show that a person has been impressed or roused by something. Single word or short phrase:

Oh Dear!

Gosh!

What a mess!

How nice!

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

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**

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MULTIPLE SENTENCES

A **COMPOUND SENTENCE** CONSISTS 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.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MULTIPLE 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 dependent).

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MULTIPLE SENTENCES - COMPLEX SENTENCE

SUBORDINATE CLAUSES ARE NOT ALWAYS ADVERBIALS. THEY CAN BE RELATIVE CLAUSES, OR CLAUSES THAT FUNCTION AS SUBJECTS, OBJECTS OR COMPLEMENTS OF A SENTENCE:

The heavy rain which had fallen the night before caused many damages to the town.

We asked her what to do.

That he won the marathon surprised everyone.

The result was that Moretti won.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

THE PHRASE

Phrases are larger structural units that come between the word and the clause (or sentence).

They represent the SUBJECT, VERB, OBJECT, COMPLEMENT OR ADVERBIAL of the clause.

That boy/cannot open/that heavy door

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

THE PHRASE

Phrases are normally multi-words, but also single words can be regarded as phrases, as long as they are expandable into a larger unit:

SUPPER, OUR SUPPER, THE BIG SUPPER

The second and third examples must be considered as expansions of a central element or HEAD.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

THE PHRASE

Hilary/ couldn't open/ the big windows /for a long time

IF THE CENTRAL WORD – OR HEAD – OF A PHRASE IS A NOUN, THEN WE CALL IT A NOUN PHRASE.

CONVERSELY, IF ITS HEAD IS A VERB, WE WOULD CALL IT A VERB PHRASE.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

THE PHRASE

NOUN PHRASE (It, John, the girl, that beautiful blue-eyed boy);

VERB PHRASE (gave, has been challenged, having been pushed);

ADJECTIVE PHRASE (very much happier, nice, rather happy)

PREPOSITIONAL / ADVERBIAL PHRASE
(at a large university, for me ; carefully, steadily, all day, every year, for a long time)

While I was waiting for Mary, it started to rain heavily

MULTIPLE COMPLEX SENTENCE

2 FINITE CLAUSES:

MAIN CLAUSE → it started to rain heavily

SUBORDINATE/SECONDARY CLAUSE → while I was waiting for Mary

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MAIN CLAUSE: it started to rain heavily

It / started / to rain heavily

IT → Noun phrase (NP): Subject

STARTED → Verb phrase (VP): Predicate

TO RAIN HEAVILY → non-finite clause:
Complement (Predicate complement)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MAIN CLAUSE: it started to rain heavily

It / started / to rain heavily

IT → Noun phrase (NP): Subject; Head:
personal pronoun

STARTED → Verb phrase (VP): Predicate;
Lexical verb

TO RAIN HEAVILY → non-finite clause:
Complement (Predicate complement) →
To rain/heavily

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

MAIN CLAUSE: it started to rain heavily

It / started / to rain heavily

IT → Noun phrase (NP): Subject; Head: personal pronoun

STARTED → Verb phrase (VP): Predicate; Lexical verb

TO RAIN HEAVILY → non-finite clause: Complement (Predicate complement).

To rain → Verb phrase (VP): Predicate; lexical verb

Heavily: Adverbial phrase: Adverbial; Head: adverb

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SUBORDINATE/SECONDARY CLAUSE: While I was waiting for Mary

While / I / was waiting / for Mary

WHILE → Linker

I → Noun phrase (NP): Subject

WAS WAITING → Verb Phrase (VP): Predicate

FOR MARY → Prepositional phrase (PP):
Adverbial

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

SUBORDINATE/SECONDARY CLAUSE: While I was waiting for Mary

While / I / was waiting / for Mary

WHILE → Linker

I → Noun phrase (NP): Subject; Head: Personal pronoun

WAS WAITING → Verb Phrase (VP): Predicate; primary auxiliary (was) + lexical verb (waiting)

FOR MARY → Prepositional phrase (PP): Adverbial; Preposition (P: for) + Head: Prepositional Complement (NP: Mary)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly.

SENTENCE:

- a. simple
- b. multiple

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly.

MULTIPLE SENTENCE:

- a. compound
- b. complex

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly

MULTIPLE SENTENCE:

- a. compound
- b. Complex**

How many finite clauses?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause:

Subordinate/Secondary clause:

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause: he finished his work very quickly

Subordinate/Secondary clause: Since he wanted to go home early

How many and which phrases?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early,
he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause: he finished his work very quickly

How many and which phrases?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause: he/finished/his work/very quickly

How many phrases? 4

Which ones?

He:

Finished:

His work:

Very quickly

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause: he/finished/his work/very quickly

He: NP – Subject →

Finished: VP – Predicate →

His work: NP – Direct Object →

Very quickly: Adv. P – Adverbial →

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Main clause: he/finished/his work/very quickly

He: NP – Subject → Head: personal pronoun

Finished: VP – Predicate → Lexical verb

His work: NP – Direct Object → Determiner: possessive adjective; Head: noun

Very quickly: Adv. P – Adverbial → Premodifier: adverb; Head: adverb

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since he wanted to go home early

How can we divide it?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since / he / wanted / to go home early

Since:

He:

Wanted:

To go home early:

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since / he / wanted / to go home early

Since: linker

He: NP – Subject – Head: noun

Wanted: VP – Predicate – Head: lexical verb

To go home early: Non finite clause: Direct object

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since / he / wanted / to go home early

How can we divide «to go home early»?

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since / he / wanted / to go home early

How can we divide «to go home early»?

To go:

Home:

Early:

THE STRUCTURE OF THE ENGLISH SENTENCE

Since he wanted to go home early, he finished his work very quickly

COMPLEX SENTENCE, 2 finite clauses

Subordinate clause: Since / he / wanted / to go home early

How can we divide «to go home early»?

To go: VP – Predicate; Lexical verb

Home: NP - complement (predicate complement); head: noun

Early: Adv, P – Adverbial; head: adverb