

## Lesson 1: Sentences structure

Having the ability to write complete and effective sentences is a significant factor in being a successful academic writer and requires a comprehensive understanding of sentence structure. It is important to create sentences that are correct, inventive, and engaging to the reader.

- A **sentence** is a set of words that come together to express a complete thought. Sentences are made up of **clauses** and **phrases**.



### Requirements of a sentence:

- A sentence must begin with a capitalized letter.
- A sentence must end with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation point.
- A sentence must have a subject (a word or words that name the topic of the sentence).
- A sentence must have a predicate (a complete verb that shows tense).
- A sentence must have at least one independent clause.

- A **clause** is a group of words that contains a **subject** and a **predicate**. Some clauses are independent, and others are dependent. For a sentence to be complete, it must contain at least one independent clause.
- An **independent clause** expresses a complete thought. It has a subject and a verb and can stand alone as a complete sentence.

**E.g.,** Learning a new language is often frustrating.

- A **dependent clause** is not a complete sentence. It has also a subject and a verb, but it can not stand alone, it must be connected to an independent clause.

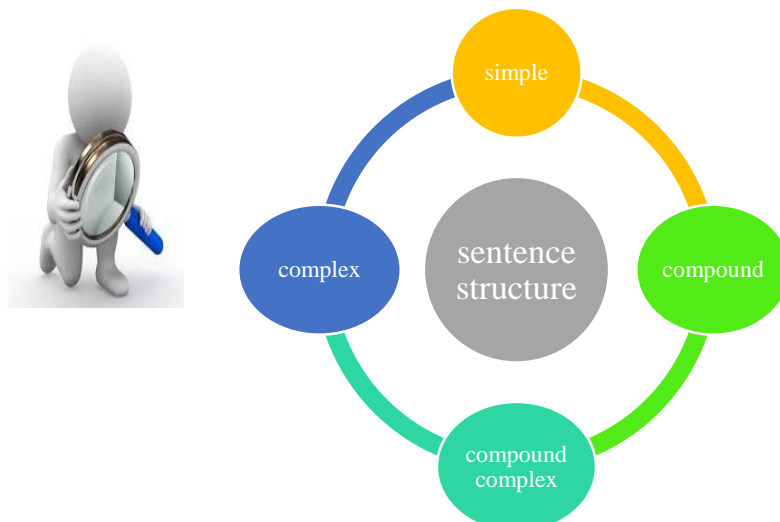
**E.g.,** Although learning a new language is often frustrating.

There are two types of dependent clauses, those that begin with **subordinating conjunctions** and those that begin with **relative pronouns**.

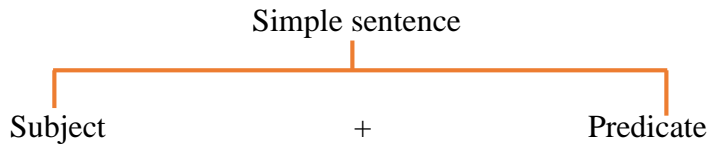
**E.g.,** **When** John wrote an amazing paragraph (subordinating conjunction).

**E.g.,** John, **who** wrote an amazing paragraph (relative pronoun).

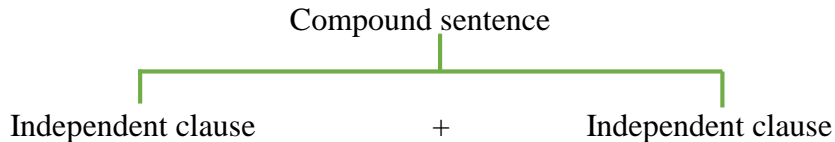
We can categorize sentences based on different criteria, and one way to categorize them is based on their structure. When we do this, we find that there are four sentence structures.



1. **Simple sentences:** A simple sentence has only one clause, which must be an independent clause. The word “*simple*” does not necessarily mean “*easy*”; simple sentences can also contain phrases, so they are often long and complicated. However, they have only **one subject** and **one finite verb**.



- **E.g.,** Fiscal policy involves the use of the government’s spending, taxing and borrowing policies.
  - **E.g.,** John Maynard Keynes did not follow the ideas of the classical economics.
2. **Compound sentences:** A compound sentence has two or more independent clauses.



There are three ways to join the independent clauses in a compound sentence:

- ☞ Two independent clauses may be joined by a **semicolon**.
- **E.g.,** Our car broke down; we came last.
- ☞ Two independent clauses may be joined by a **comma** and a **coordinating conjunction**. The seven coordinating conjunctions are easily remembered with the mnemonic device FANBOYS.

For -And -Nor -But -Or -Yet -So

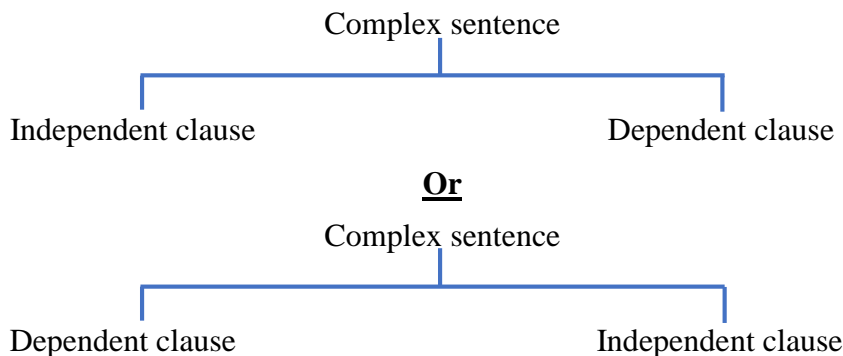
- **E.g.,** Diversity has become a strategic imperative for corporations, and the term has already entered the corporate vocabulary.
- Our car broke down, so we came last.
- ☞ Two independent clauses may be joined by a **semicolon**, a transitional word called a **conjunctive adverb**, and a comma.

Here are some examples of commonly used **conjunctive adverbs**:

However	Nonetheless	Accordingly
Therefore	Similarly	Consequently
Moreover	Undoubtedly	Finally
On the other hand	For example	Thus

- **E.g.,** The need for keeping a certain amount of money to spend depends on the purchasing power of money; therefore, the nominal value of the currency is irrelevant.
- Our car broke down; thus, we came last.

3. **Complex sentences:** A complex sentence has one independent clause and one or more dependent clauses.



In this type of sentence, the clauses do not have equal importance. The independent (or main) clause contains the most important idea, and the dependent clause adds extra information.

- ☞ The two clauses are linked by a subordinate conjunction placed at the beginning of the dependent clause.

Examples of common **subordinating conjunctions** used in English language: although, as if, after, before, because, just as, since, whereas, unless, even though...etc.

- **E.g., Because she did not know the route well,** she drove slowly.
- **E.g., She drove slowly because she did not know the route well.**
- **E.g., Wherever you go,** you can always find beauty.

### Look out!

Only use commas if the subordinating conjunction is the first word of a sentence. Place the comma after the first clause.

- ☞ The two clauses are linked by a relative pronoun placed at the beginning of the dependent clause.

Relative pronouns are: who, whom, whose, which and that.

- **E.g., Gabriel Garcia Marquez, who won the Nobel Prize,** wrote many novels.



Thanks for attending the session  
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