

## Part Two : Sentence Structure

### 2.Sentence Classifications/ Structure / Composition

#### **1.Sentence Definition**

*A sentence* is a group of words expressing a complete thought. It is a grammatically independent unit of expression, made up of two essential parts called the Subject and the Predicate.

**E.g.** The importance of the minority party in American politics must be understood. ( a sentence)

The importance of the minority party in American politics... ( not a sentence)

#### **2.Sentence Classification by Pattern ( Parts of a Sentence)**

Sentence pattern is the variety of simple and complex sentences that you use in your writing and the way they are arranged within the paper. There are many different types of sentences ranging from basic sentences to sentences containing multiple types of clauses. Sentence pattern is important to manipulate because it can make your writing more appealing to the reader by presenting your information and ideas both in plain, blunt ways, and in more complex combinations. By using a wide variety of sentences, your writing can avoid being boring or repetitive and can get your point across effectively.

- Every complete sentence has *a subject and a predicate*.

#### **2.1.Sentence Subject and Predicate**

All English sentences must contain at least two parts, *a subject and a predicate*. The subjects are generally “the someone” or “the something” of the sentence that performs the action or has some element of them described. While looking for the subjects of your sentences, you should most often look for nouns or pronouns. The predicate describes the action taking place or clarifies more information about the subject. Predicates are generally the verbs of the sentence.

**E.g.** Faculty and students (the subject) planned a new class schedule (the predicate)

- The fish ( the subject) swam in his bowl slowly (the predicate)

- The movie premiere (the subject) lasted until midnight (the predicate)

- These two main parts of a sentence may consist of single words or many words. However long the subject or the predicate may be, it always has *a core – an essential part*.

**E.g.** A loud **argument** was **announced** yesterday - The newspaper **article** **treats** an important **issue**.

**Finding the subject of a sentence :** To find the subject of a sentence , first find the verb , then ask yourself the question "*who or what...?*"

**For instance** , in the sentence : Outside the wall walked an armed guard, the verb is " walked".Ask yourself : who walked? you find the answer : the guard walked."Guard" is then the subject of this sentence.

In addition to this simple formula for locating the subject, you should keep in mind the following:

1-In sentences expressing a command or a request, the subject is always "*you*" , eventhough "*you*" may not appear in the sentence ,i.e. implicit.

**E.g.** (You) stamp the envelopes before mailing them

2-The subject of a sentence should never be *a prepositional phrase*. **E.g.**Neither of the rivals survived the duel ( verb : survived, who survived ? "*Neither* " is the subject ."*Rivals*" is *not* the subject , it is a part of the prepositional phrase " of the rivals".

3-To find a subject in a question, turn the question into statement form.

*Question:* Into which drawer did you put the box of pencils?

*Statement :* You did put the box of pencils into which drawer ( Subject : You, verb : did put) .

4- "*There*" or "*here*" is not always the subject of a verb.

- Some grammarians see that there are five important components in a sentence. They list :  
*Subject (S), Verb (V), Object (O), Complement (C) , Adverbial (Adjunct) (A)*

**2.2.Complements:** Some sentences express a complete thought by means of a subject and a verb only.E.g. He thinks ( S + V) , Everybody left ( S+ V)

Most sentences , however,have *in the predicate one or more words that complete the meaning of the subject and the verb*. These completing words are called **compliments**.

**E.g.** The best ones are *these* – She seems *happy* – Jerry is the class *president*

- An adverb that modifies the verb is not a complement. Only *nouns ,pronouns , and adjectives* act as complements

**E.g.** Mrs.Clarke is *here* ( The adverb "*here*" modifies the verb " is" . It is not a complement).

Mrs.Clarke is *young* ( The adjective "*young* " is a complement) .

Mrs.Clarke is a teacher ( The noun " teacher" is a complement) .

### **2.2.1. Subject Complements ( S+V+C Pattern )**

Complements that refer to, describe, explain, or identify the subject are subject complements. There are two kinds: **the predicate nominative** and **the predicate adjective**.

- Subject complements follow *linking verbs only*
  - a- **A predicate nominative** is *a noun or a pronoun complement* that refers to *the same person or thing as the subject* of the verb. It follows a linking verb. **E.g.** New York is our largest **city** ( City refers to the subject " New York " ).
  - b- **A predicate adjective** is *an adjective complement* that modifies *the subject*. It follows a linking verb . **E.g.** She seems **angry** – The book is **dull** .

### **2.2.2.Object Complements ( S+ V+O+C Pattern)**

To complete their meaning, some *action verbs* require an additional complement following their objects. These additional complement is called an *objective (object) complement* because it refers to the object; it may be *a noun or an adjective*.

**E.g.** They elected Mary **chairman** (The noun "*chairman*" refers to the direct object "*Mary*" and helps to complete the meaning of the verb "*elected*" . It is an object complement).

**E.g.**They called David *a genius* – I found her *crying*

- Only a few verbs meaning " make " or consider" take an objective complement : *elect, appoint ,choose ,name ,render ,make ,consider ,etc* ) .

### 3.Direct and Indirect Objects

Complements that receive or that are affected by the action of the verb are called objects. They are of two kinds: **the direct object** and **the indirect object**.

**3.1.Direct Object :** The direct object of the verb receives the action of the verb or shows the result of the action. It answers the question "*what*" or "*whom*" after an action verb.

**E.g.**I took *him* with me ( I took *whom*?) – Jean has written her *composition* (Jean has written *what*?)

**3.2.Indirect Object:** The indirect object of the verb precedes the direct object and usually tells *to whom* or *for whom* the action of the verb is done.

- If the word "*to*" or "*for*" is used , the noun or the pronoun following it is part of a prepositional phrase; it is not an indirect object. Like subjects, objects are never parts of a prepositional phrase.

**E.g.** Father promised *me* the car (*me* is an indirect object)

Father promised the car *to me* ( *me* is part of the prepositional phrase " to me" )

- Objects of verbs may be compound.

### 4.Adverbials

Adverbials refer to a single word or group of words which form parts of a clause ; in addition, some adverbials may act as different parts of speech .Three kinds of adverbials exist: *adjuncts*, *conjuncts*, and *disjuncts*.

**4.1.Adjuncts** (also called Adjunctive Adverbs) are words or groups of words which provide more information to the sentence. When an adjunct component is removed from the sentence, the meaning of the sentence is affected and may not be understood.

Adjuncts may help to provide information in regards to:

- *Time/Temporal :* **E.g.** Northern Arizona University opened its doors *in 1888*
- *Place/Space :* **E.g.** Shelley does not live *above her means*
- *Cause :* **E.g.** .George drove to his mother's house *because of the snow storm*.
- *Result:* **E.g.** The company will not sell its shares *due to its escalating value*
- *Conditional:* **E.g.** Janet will call Bryan *if needed*
- *Concession:* **E.g.** Oftentimes, vegans consume vegetables *without thinking about pesticides*
- *Manner :* **E.g.** John wandered aimlessly *like a lost puppy*

**4.2. Conjuncts** (also called Conjunctive Adverbs) are words or groups of words which link sentences within a text. Conjuncts may be used for sentence to sentence transitions (or for combining sentences) or paragraph to paragraph transitions (for creating cohesion between two paragraphs). Conjuncts may even be used to show logical movement (i.e., cause and effect, or problem and solution), and/or chronological movement (i.e., movement through time).

**Common Conjuncts:**

First - Second –Third -In addition –Additionally –Furthermore -In other words-On the contrary-  
Therefore

**4.3. Disjuncts** (also called Disjunctive Adverbs), often appearing at the beginning of the sentence or near the beginning of the sentence, are words or groups of words which provide some comment on the content of the sentence in which it appears.

**E.g.** *Eventually*, John managed to collect every major first edition comic from the Scatman series.

**Common Disjuncts:**

Actually – Basically –Briefly-Clearly-Eventually-Honestly- Obviously- Personally - Remarkably-  
Ultimately-Unfortunately

**3.Summary of the Sentence Main Patterns**

1. *Subject + verb (S+V) : E.g.* Children play

2. *Subject + Verb+ Object (S+V+O): E.g.* He handles the computer – She met them.

3.*Subject + Verb+ Indirect object + Direct Object (S+V+I.O+D.O).E.g.* Mary prepared Fred a cake.

4.*There+Verb+Subject .E.g.* There have been no agreement.

- The preceding patterns are patterns of statements, or declarative sentences. Notice the changes that take place when these patterns are transformed into questions :

5.*Auxiliary+ Subject+Verb? .E.g.* Do coyotes howl in the distance?

6. *Auxiliary+ Subject+Verb+ Object ? .E.g.* Would sparrows eat all the seed in the feeder ?

7. *Auxiliary+ Subject+Verb+Indirect.Obj + Direct.Obj?*

**E.g.** Had the candidates promised voters lower taxes?

8. *Object+ Auxiliary+ subject+Verb ? .E.g* What did the mice frighten ?

9.*Verb + there + Subject ? .E.g.* Were there any interviewees?

10. *Auxiliary + there + verb+ subject? .E.g.* Has there been any objection?

**4.Sentence Classification by Purpose (Types)** : Sentences may be classified according to *the purpose* of the speaker or the writer. The *four* principal purposes of a sentence are described below.

**1. The declarative sentence** is used to make a statement of fact, wish, intent, or feeling.

E.g. I have seen that movie twice. , I wish I could go on the picnic.

**2. The imperative sentence** is used to state a command, request, or direction. The subject is always "You," though it may not be expressed in the sentence.

E.g. (You) Be on time for dinner. , (You) Open the window, please.

**3. The interrogative sentence** is used to ask a question. It is followed by a question mark.

E.g. Do you have a sweater? , Are you having a bad day?

**4. The exclamatory sentence** is used to express strong feeling. It is followed by an exclamation point.

E.g. Keep out! , He screamed, "Help!"

## Practice

**Exercise 01:** Divide the following sentences into their principal parts showing the subject and the predicate and their main constituents:

1. You can't be serious!
2. San Marino is the smallest republic in Europe.
3. The vice-president will visit Egypt , next week.
4. My friend speaks English fluently
5. It grew dark
6. They chose Nancy a leader
7. These strawberries taste sour
8. Oh, I left my car keys in the ignition and closed the door!
9. Have you ever heard this fact ?

**Exercise 02:** Write two sentences of your own to illustrate each of the ten previous patterns.

**Exercise 03:** Write two sentences of your own to express each of the four sentence purposes.

- Exchange your answers with your mate

