2.Sentence Structure

Lesson Four : Clauses

Sentences can be classified either in terms of the kinds of clauses they contain (grammatically) or in terms of their purpose (rhetorically). Becoming aware of types of sentences allows one to vary his/her writing style to suit one's audience, content, and purpose. One will find, too, that sentence variety holds a reader's interest. How boring it isto read all simple sentences! In contrast, after many longer sentences, a punchy short sentence addsforce to a key point (Rosa and Eschholz 65).

1.Clause Definition A clause is a group of words that contain a subject and a predicate.It is used as part of a sentence.

2. Kinds and Functions: Clauses are classified according to grammatical completeness.Those that can stand alone when they are removed from their sentences are called *independent clauses*.Those that do not express a complete though and cannot stand alone are named *subordinate clauses*.

2.1.Independent Clause (Main Clause / Simple sentence):

An **independent clause** is a *simple* sentence. It can stand on its *own*.When Removed from its sentence , it makes a complete sense.Written with a capital letter at the beginning and period at the end,it becomes a simple sentence.It is called *independent* because it doesn't depend on anything else to complete its thought.

E.g.s I'*ll tell* her the assignment , The battery *is* defective , He *feels* well, Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings *lived* in Paris for a time .

- ***Commas join independent clauses***

Independent clauses can be written as individual sentences, or they can be joined as *one sentence*.

One way to join them is by using *a comma* and *coordinating conjunction* after the first independent clause. *Two or more* independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, for, nor, yet, or so) make up *a compound sentence*.

E.g.s: 1. Dan wrote a research paper on motivation**.** He submitted it for publication. (Two independent clauses.)

2. Dan wrote a research paper on motivation**, *and*** he submitted it for publication. (Compound sentence) . The same two independent clauses are joined by *a comma* and the coordinating conjunction *"and"*.)

<u>**N.B**</u>: Be careful that what follows the word *and* (or any other coordinating conjunction) is an *independent clause*. If not, then *do not* use a comma.

E.g.: Dan wrote a research paper *and submitted* it for publication.

- *No comma* is needed because " submitted it for publication" is *not an independent clause*; it does not have its own subject)

2.2.Dependent Clause (Subordinate Clause)

A dependent clause has a subject and a verb but *cannot stand* alone grammatically. A dependent

clause is dependent because its connecting word (*because, if, so, which, that, etc*.) links it to an

independent clause. They are used as nouns or modifiers in the same way as single words and phrases.The following are examples of subordinate clauses :

1-When the sun finally came out , that we are on the right track, As you requested…

- Combined with an independent clause , each of the subordinate clauses plays its part in a sentence :

1-*When the sun finally came out*, we left more cheerful.

2-I told you *that we are on the right track*.

3- *As you requested*, I have cancelled your trip to the fourth dimension.

- So, *dependent* clauses *rely on independent clauses to complete* the thought in the sentence.

2.2.1.Types of Subordinate Clauses

A subordinate (dependent) clause can function as *a noun,an adjective, or an adverb*.

E.g.s. I know *that wheat grows in Kansas*. (noun)

The car *which rolled over the cliff* was a pink Cadillac. (adjective)

He retired early *because he had made so much money*. (adverb)

2.2.1.1.Noun Clause : A noun clause is clause that functions as *a noun* functions. It can be a *subject*, a *predicate nominative*, an *object* of a verb, or *an object of a preposition*.

E.g.s

	Noun	**Noun Clause**

Subject :   1. *His whereabouts* are unknown.   1. *Where he lives* is unknown.

D.Obj   :   2. I don't know *that man.*   2. I don't know *who he is*.

I. Object 3. The security officer gave *the students* the key.   3. The security officer gave *whoever wanted it the key*.

Obj. of Preposition

4. He isn't interested in *geometry.*   4. He isn't interested in *what the class is studying.*

- A noun clause begins with a subordinator that connects the clause to the main clause. The following is a list of subordinators used to introduce noun clauses: *how ,where ,what, whatever , whose, whosever, that ,whether, if who, whoever, which, whichever ,when ,why whom, whomever (definite / indefinite relative pronouns)*
- Note below that the *subordinator* is in italics. The *noun clause* including the verb and any helping verb is underlined.

1-The laboratory aide reported *that* <u>all the</u> <u>students had completed</u> <u>the experiment</u>.

2-The students asked *when* <u>the psychology reports were due</u>.

3-Mrs. Peterson asked *whether* <u>the secretaries had ordered the office supplies yet</u>.

2.2.1.2.Adjective Clause (who/which/that clauses)

An adjective clause is *a dependent* clause. An adjective clause modifies a noun or a pronoun. An

adjective clause begins with who, whom, which, that, whose, when, where, why and follows the word it modifies.

E.g.s 1- David (noun) , *who has been with the company five years* (adjective clause) , is our new director.

2- The time (N) *when our plane arrives* (A.C) is 4:00 p.m.

3-The house (N) *where Lincoln lives as a young man* (A.C) was in Springfield, Illinois.

- An adjective clause, like an adverb clause, begins with a subordinator. The subordinator connects the adjective clause to the word in the main clause it modifies: it stands for this word.
- *Relative Pronouns*: Adjective clauses often begin with the relative pronouns : *who, whom ,which,*or *that.* These pronouns refer to a noun or a pronoun that has come before (antecedent).   A relative pronoun does three things :
  - ☒ It refers to the preceding noun or pronoun .**E.g**. The joke was one <u>*that*</u> <u>I had heard before</u>
  - ☒ It connects its clause with the rest of the sentence. **E.g**. I do not admire anyone <u>*who* acts like that.</u>

☒ It performs a function within its own clause by serving as the subject, the object,…etc of the subordinate clause .**E.g.** The principal appointed George, _who is reliable student._
(" who" is _the subject_ of the verb "is" in the adjective clause " who is reliable student")

2.2.1.3. Adverb Clauses (because/if/when clauses)

An adverb clause is a dependent clause. An adverb clause modifies a verb, an adjective, another

adverb, or a sentence. The Adverb clauses always begin with a subordinator. The subordinator is a connecting word which explains _the relationship between the adverb clause and main clause_. It tells the reader what kind of information is added by the adverb clause. The following subordinators (_subordinate conjunctions_) are often used to begin adverb clauses:

after	Before	Though	whatever
although	even it	Unless	whenever
as	even though	Until	wherever
as if	as far as	as soon as	whether
because	Since	as well as	while

• An adverb clause can answer any of the following questions: _When? Where? How? To what_

degree? and _Under what condition_?

• _**Examples of adverb clauses that answer a question:**_

a-Cinderella lost her shoe _after the clock struck twelve_. (_When_ did she lose her shoe?)

b-Mary hid the key _where no one could find it_. (_Where_ did she hide it?)

c-My sister drove so fast _that she got a ticket_. _(How_ fast did she drive?)

d-The bush is _as high as the fence_. (_To what degree_?)

e-The fire will burn the forest _unless it rains_. (_Under what condition_?).

2.2.1.4. Essential and Non-essential Clauses (Restrictive and Non-restrictive)

An essential clause or phrase (also called a _restrictive_, or necessary clause or phrase) appears after a noun and is essential in the sentence to completethe meaning. An essential clause or phrase

cannot be moved to another sentence or _omitted_ because the meaning of the sentence would change.

• Essential clauses and phrases are not set off _by commas_. Clauses starting with _**that**_ are

almost always essential.

E.g.s.: Compare the meaning of the following two sentences _with_ and _without_ the clause after the noun people:

1-People *who can speak more than one language* are multilingual.

People are multilingual.

- ***Using "the that clause" versus "taking the that clause out"***:

2- Please repair all the windows *that are broken*.

Please repair all the windows. (The meaning of the sentence changes).

A non-essential clause or phrase (also called a *non-restrictive* or unnecessary clause or phrase) adds extra information but *can be removed* from a sentence without disturbing the meaning. The information can be put in another sentence.

E.g.: Compare the following two sentences to see if the primary meaning of the sentence remains the same even after the clause is removed:

3-My cousin Michael, *who lives in New York*, is coming for a visit over Thanksgiving vacation.

My cousin Michael is coming for a visit over Thanksgiving vacation.

The "who clause" is nonessential because it adds information about "where Jim lives", but it is not necessary.

- **Note**: *A pair of commas* is necessary when nonessential clauses and phrases appear within a sentence. Only *one comma* is needed when non-essential clauses and phrases appear at the end of a sentence.

3.Sentence Classification by Structure (Types)

Classified according to their structure, there are four kinds of sentences: *simple, compound, complex ,* and *compound complex.*

3.1. Simple Sentence : A simple sentence is a sentence with *only one independent clause*, i.e. it does not consist of a subordinate one.

E.g. Great literature stirs the imagination

3.2.Compound Sentence : It is a sentence composed of *two or more clauses* but *without* subordinate ones.

E.g. Great literature stirs the imagination, and it challenges the intellect.

- Independent clauses can be joined by *coordinating conjunctions* like : and ,but, for, yet.. or by *conjunctive adverbs* as : also, therefore ,moreover, besides, however, then, furthermore ,thus…

3.3.Complex Sentence : It is a sentence that contains *one independent* clause and *one or more subordinate* clauses.

E.g. -Great literature ,which stirs the imagination, also challenges the intellect.

-You need to prepare for the spelling test tomorrow if you want to get all your spellings right.

-Although Tom reads novels, Jack reads comics.

3.4.Compund-complex Sentence: A compound-complex sentence is comprised of at least *two independent* clauses and *one or more dependent* clauses.

E.g.s - Although I like to go camping, I haven't had the time to go lately, and I haven't found anyone to go with.

- Laura forgot her friend's birthday, so she sent her a card when she finally remembered.

- Because compound-complex sentences are normally longer than other sentences, it is very important to punctuate them correctly.