

UNIT 7

THE SENTENCE

If the single independent clause can be thought of as the linguistic expression of a situation, the combination of several clauses together to form a larger unit can be thought of as the linguistic expression of a complex situation. This larger unit, the highest grammatical unit on the scale of rank, is traditionally called the **sentence**. A sentence is a group of words expressing a complete thought. It is the largest unit that is described in grammar. Sentences are made up of one *independent (main) clause*, or more clauses, combined with at least one independent and one or more *dependent (subordinate) clauses*.

A written sentence is one or more words (that begins with a capital letter and is punctuated as an independent unit) that say something. It is made complete by its grammatical form and meaning or occasionally, in special circumstances, by the context in which it appears. Traditionally, a sentence has to have a **subject** and a **finite verb** (see also 3.1). The apparent exception to this is the imperative, where usually the subject is implied rather than stated. Sometimes only one word can express a complete thought. It is important to distinguish between a sentence and an utterance. In spoken or written discourse, there are plenty of utterances which have neither a subject nor a verb, but which are acceptable as they are clearly signalled as complete in spoken English by intonation and in written language by punctuation: *Thanks. Excellent! OK. Oh dear! Stop.*

On the other hand, sometimes a group of words looks like a sentence when it is not. We must examine the group of words closely to be sure that it expresses a complete thought.

Before she came home. (The thought is not complete. What happened before she came home?) **NOT A SENTENCE**

She had done the shopping before she came home. **SENTENCE**

When we communicate, we have often to twist and turn sentences in different ways so that we get them say what we want. In this work, it is useful for us to understand different kinds of sentences and what each can do, the way the parts of a sentence fit each other, and the possibilities for altering and controlling our sentences.

One important way of analysing sentences is in terms of the number and the type of clauses they contain. Sentences containing just one clause are called **simple** and sentences that are made up of more than one clause are called **compound**, **complex**, or **compound-complex**.

7.1 SENTENCE TYPES ACCORDING TO STRUCTURE

As mentioned in 4.1, an independent clause (simple sentence) may contain embedded clauses or be coordinated with clauses on the same level. Based on how many and what type of clauses a sentence consists of, we distinguish:

SIMPLE sentences are independent clauses standing alone with no other clauses attached to them. A simple sentence contains:

a subject (a noun or noun equivalent) that governs the verb	a finite verb (a verb with tense)
<i>She</i>	<i>has gone to school.</i>

This definition is the traditional definition of a clause, but modern grammar has widened the term *clause* to include structures with non-finite verbs and also some verbless structures. In fact, **a simple sentence is a finite clause that stands alone.**

COMPOUND sentences contain more than one independent clause. The clauses are *co-ordinated* (joined by *and, but, so . . .*) and they are of equal importance.

Independent clause (main)	+	Independent clause (main)
<i>She has gone to school</i>	but	<i>her brother stayed at home.</i>

COMPLEX sentences consist of an independent clause and one or more dependent (subordinate) clauses. The dependent clauses are linked (*subordinated*) to the independent clause by subordinators or other elements (*if, when, although, that, wh-words, etc.*).

Independent clause (main)	+	Dependent clause (subordinate)
<i>She has gone to school</i>	although	<i>she had a headache.</i>

COMPOUND-COMPLEX sentences are made up of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Independent clause	+	Dependent clause	+	Independent clause
<i>She has gone to school</i>	although	<i>she had a headache,</i>	but	<i>her brother stayed at home.</i>

EXERCISES 111-119

111. Combine the following groups of sentences into ONE COMPOUND sentence. Make changes when necessary. Use different types of coordinators.

Example: My friend Paul was very upset last week.
His wife's employer told him he would not pay for his wife's studies.
Paul will try to convince the employer to change his mind.

*My friend Paul was very upset last week, **for** his wife's employer told him he would not pay for his wife's studies; **therefore**, Paul will try to convince him to change his mind.*

- 1. My English teacher is very patient.
My English teacher is understanding.
He raised his voice.
We didn't prepare for the lesson.

- 2. I didn't go to the supermarket.
I didn't go to the nearest shop.
I didn't go to the nearest shop.
My refrigerator is almost empty.
I think I'll be able to prepare something for dinner.

- 3. We're going to visit my grandparents this weekend.
We're going to visit my uncle this weekend.
I won't be able to go skiing with my friends.
I'll be miles away.

112. Develop each simple sentence below by adding dependent clauses as indicated in brackets to form a COMPLEX sentence.

Example: My mother travelled to Paris by train. (modify mother, modify the verb)
*My mother, **who is 75**, travelled to Paris by train **because she is afraid of flying**.*

- 1. James tried to persuade his girlfriend to buy a bigger apartment. (modify James and persuade)

2. Her plan caused Ann to accept the job. (*add appositive to plan, modify Ann and job*)

3. Leo's mother is happy. Leo eats a lot of fresh fruit and vegetables. (*add a NC-Adj.compl., modify eats*)

4. The librarian told us to be quiet. (*add two clauses modifying the verb time/cause*)

5. We must remember. (*add a clause modifying the verb, add a clause functioning as Object*)

113. Combine the two ideas in a way that you express the indicated relationships. Do it in different ways to form a SIMPLE, COMPOUND, and COMPLEX sentence if possible. Use prepositions, non-finite structures, coordinators, or subordinators.

Example: His English was good. We made ourselves understood. REASON-RESULT
Due to his good English we made ourselves understood.
His English was good, **so (therefore...)** we made ourselves understood.
His English was **so good that** we made ourselves understood.

1. I didn't want to go anywhere. I had a bad headache. CAUSE/REASON

2. He did the best he could. Greta was not satisfied with his work. CONCESSION

3. The students hadn't paid attention. They didn't know how to solve the task. CAUSE

4. The ceremony ended. We went home. TIME

5. I was very tired. I took a nap. REASON-RESULT

6. Peter was always a careful driver. He had an accident. CONCESSION

7. She packed her suitcase. She left for the airport. TIME

8. The traffic was heavy. We didn't manage to get there on time. REASON-RESULT

9. His book was successful. He was asked to appear on TV. CAUSE

10. The cost of living in Britain is high. They enjoy living there. CONCESSION

114. Combine the following clauses into COMPOUND and COMPLEX sentences using noun, adverb, and relative clauses as well as independent clauses linked by coordinating conjunctions and conjunctive adverbs.

1. The grammar final was difficult. I took it last quarter.
2. I entered the room. I was a little nervous.
3. I didn't feel very confident. I had studied diligently.
4. The teacher gave us some directions before the exam. Her directions were poor.
5. I asked her a question. She answered the question very poorly. I got angry.
6. I was supposed to do something. I didn't understand what.
7. Her explanation was so poor. I didn't know what to do.
8. I don't like teachers. Their directions are not clear.
9. Everyone had finished the exam. I completed it.
10. I went to her desk. She was correcting exams from an earlier class there.
11. She took my paper. She didn't even look up.
12. She didn't like me all quarter. I don't know why.
13. My grade will be high or low. I'm not certain.

116. Instructions as for 115

1. I didn't carry an umbrella. I got wet.

2. The road will open. The snowplough will clear the snow.

3. Tell the taxi driver. Where do you want to go?

4. The weather was very windy. They went for a walk.

5. John was very lazy. He didn't even make his bed.

6. I went to bed. I wasn't sleepy at all.

7. He was whispering. He didn't want the others to hear what he was saying.

8. George will call me. He will arrive at Heathrow.

9. The teacher gave the students an assignment. They were supposed to do it at home.

10. I won't do it. They will not give me money.

117. Join each pair of clauses using coordinators or subordinators to form compound or complex sentences.

1. We took a taxi. We didn't want to miss the train.

2. My grandfather likes to drive his car. He is well over 80.

3. He asked me. Will you join us?

4. The coffee was very sweet. I didn't drink it.

5. Peter wants to know. Where did you put the book?

6. Tom will have his dinner. Tom will finish his homework.

7. Maria told me the gossip. She heard it from her classmate.

8. I will not go there. They will not invite me.

9. I didn't know. She has graduated from Oxford University.

10. George showed me the hotel. He stayed in this hotel last summer.

11. He was very angry. It was clear from his remarks.

12. It was raining. They went for a trip to the mountains.

118. Identify each sentence as simple (S), compound (CD), complex (CX), or compound-complex (CC).

Example: S Yesterday Helen cleaned the room and cooked dinner.

CX We were pleased that you invited us.

CD Her skin was soft, but her heart was hard.

CC Tom didn't want to eat because he had a headache; therefore, he had only a coffee.

1. The electric light was invented by Thomas Edison.
2. Read it; try to remember it.
3. Anyone who doesn't understand the task should ask their teacher to explain it.
4. The brushes and paint were kept in a cabinet.
5. After the document had been sealed with an insignia that identified the owner, it was put into the safe and the locking device was set.
6. Neil Armstrong was a member of the first group of astronauts who walked on the moon.
7. Mr. Foster, who has been in charge of surveys for the county, will personally inspect the site before he completes the report.
8. The sky is overcast, but the air is clear.
9. In tomorrow's seminar, Dr. Gooch will demonstrate and discuss new burn treatment.
10. He asked me whether I knew Tom Earl, who was his classmate.

119. Instructions as for 118.

1. Whatever you do, always try to do your best.
2. Norbert was a vegetarian, but to be polite he ate fried chicken which he was offered by his hostess.
3. Anxiety and guilt are my two worst enemies.
4. If you don't have anything useful to do, come over and chat with me.
5. Gold, platinum, and diamonds have appreciated in value; sapphires and silver have appreciated too, but at a lesser rate.
6. Some people think that wealth makes everyone happy, but others believe that health is the most valuable thing in one's life.
7. Ask me no questions; tell me no lies, unless I would enjoy hearing them.
8. Why you insist on seeing that monument remains a mystery to me.
9. Do you know that I never liked his way of treating his wife?
10. Whatever the reason for you taking my bike was, it is unforgivable that you stole it.