



Tikrit University

College of Education for women

English Department

Subject : Grammar

4th Year

Lecturer: Dr. Hanan Khattab Omar

hananeng@tu.edu.iq

((Sentence Structure))

Sentence Structure

A *sentence* is a collection of words assembled in such a way that they present a complete thought or idea. There are four sentence structures in English: **simple, compound, complex and compound-complex sentences**. Mastering these different types of sentences will allow highlighting varying relationships between ideas, improving written expression and adding variety to writing.

1.Simple Sentences

A simple sentence only has one independent clause. An independent clause has a **subject** and a **verb** and expresses a complete thought.

A simple sentence can be two words, twenty, or more. It just has to have a *verb* (an action, or being, or possessing) and a *subject* (something or someone that's doing the verb). Each of the following is a complete simple sentence, also called an "independent clause":

- *The cat fell.*
"The cat" (subject) + "fell" (action verb)
- *Kelly has it.*
"Kelly" (subject)+ "has" (possessing verb)+ "it" (what she has)

A simple sentence can have two subjects doing the verb, two verbs being done by the subject, or both. No commas separate these elements.

- *Randy and Kim moved pipe last summer.*
- *Randy moved pipe and drove a truck last summer.*
- *Randy and Kim moved pipe and drove a truck last summer.*

2. Compound Sentences

A compound sentence has two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (**for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so**). Except for very short sentences, a comma goes right before a coordinating conjunction. Two simple sentences can be put together with a semicolon like:

- Randy moved pipe last summer; Kim drove a truck.

or with a comma before one of the following words: *and, but, so, or, for, nor, yet*. The following example contains two clauses joined with (but):

- Randy moved pipe last summer, *but* Kim drove a truck.

A sentence with two properly connected independent clauses is called a “compound sentence.” If the clauses are not properly connected, however, a compound sentence can easily become a run-on sentence, and must be rewritten:

-(**wrong**) Randy moved pipe last summer Kim drove a truck. (no connector at all)

-(**wrong**) Randy moved pipe last summer, Kim drove a truck. (comma only)

-(**wrong**) Randy moved pipe last summer, and Kim drove a truck, but Casey worked in Alaska. (too many clauses connected with but or and).

3. Complex Sentences

A complex sentence has *one independent clause* and *one to two dependent clauses*. A complex sentence always has a subordinating conjunction (**because, since, after, although, when...**) or a pronoun

(**who, which, and that**). If a dependent clause has a subordinating conjunction and is located at the beginning of the sentence, a **comma** should be used to separate it from the independent clause.

Many other groups of words, however, cannot stand alone as independent clauses. The minute a simple sentence or its verb is preceded by a word like: [**as, if, who, when, because, or that**]. It stops being independent and can no longer stand by itself as a sentence:

- **Because** Randy moved pipe last summer... (what happened as a result?)
- Randy, **who** moved pipe last summer... (what about him?)

Other groups of words that can't stand alone will start with what looks like a verb but isn't acting as one--even though it may begin with {**to**} or end in {-**ing** or -**ed**} like:

- *To keep up with the rest of the class* (who should do what to make this happen?)
- *Knowing that spring was coming* (who knows it, and what are they doing with this knowledge?)
- *Exhausted by the night of cramming* (who crammed, and what happened because they were exhausted?)

So one can tell that these are not ordinary verbs because you can't make a full sentence even by putting a subject with them: To keep up with the rest of the class, Alex (What did Alex do to keep up?) Alex.

When a group of words cannot stand alone as a sentence, it has to be connected to an independent clause--usually with a comma. A sentence

that combines an independent clause and a dependent clause is called a “complex sentence.” As represented by the following sentences:

- *When Randy moved pipe last summer, Kim drove a truck.*
- Randy moved pipe last summer, *because Kim drove a truck.*
- *Knowing that spring was coming, Alex ordered seeds.*
- *Alex fell asleep, exhausted by the long night of cramming.*

If a group of words that can't stand alone is not connected to an independent clause, it becomes a “sentence fragment.” Rewrite it or use a comma to connect it to the sentence before or after it.

4. Compound-complex sentences

This sentence type combines a compound sentence with a complex one. Essentially, compound-complex sentences consist of two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses. These sentences are indeed tricky, and they take some practice to write:

- **While** the first study was too general, *the second study was too narrow* **and** *it was conducted without ethics approval.*
- *We were all delighted* **when** Nathan came home; *he had been away so long!*
- **Although** John loves to write, *he did not have a lot of time to do so lately,* **for** *he has been reading numerous novels.*

The clauses which are written with italic form represent the compound sentences.