



Tikrit University

College of Education for women

English Department

Subject : Grammar

4th Year

Lecturer: Dr. Hanan Khattab Omar

hananeng@tu.edu.iq

((Clause Structure))

Clause Structure

A **CLAUSE** is a group of words containing a **SUBJECT** and a **PREDICATE**. Clauses that can stand alone are called **INDEPENDENT CLAUSES**; Clauses that do not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone are called **DEPENDENT CLAUSES**.

Clauses come in four types: main (or independent), subordinate (or dependent), adjective (or relative), and noun. Every clause has at least one subject and one verb.

Main Clause: Every main clause will follow this pattern:

SUBJECT + VERB = COMPLETE THOUGHT.

Subordinate Clause: A subordinate clause will follow this pattern:

SUBORDINATE CONJUNCTION + SUBJECT + VERB = INCOMPLETE THOUGHT.

- **ADJECTIVE CLAUSE**

An adjective clause is a relative clause that modifies a noun or pronoun, as who saw us in "It was she who saw us". The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines an adjective clause as "an clause introduced by a relative pronoun expressed or suppressed, relative adjective, or relative adverb and having either a purely descriptive force (as in John, who often tells fibs) or a limiting one (as in boys who tell fibs)".

An adjective clause will begin with a relative pronoun such as (**who, whom, whose, which, or that**) or a relative adverb (**when, where, or why**). The patterns look like these:

.
RELATIVE PRONOUN AS THE SUBJECT + VERB = INCOMPLETE THOUGHT.

RELATIVE PRONOUN OR ADVERB + SUBJECT + VERB = INCOMPLETE THOUGHT

Like subordinate clauses, adjective clauses cannot stand alone as complete sentences. One must connect them to main clauses to complete the thought as in:

- Whom Professor Russell hit in the head with a chalk eraser

Whom = relative pronoun; Professor Russell = subject; hit = verb.

- Where he chews and drools with great enthusiasm

Where = relative adverb; he = subject; chews, drools = verbs.

- That had spilled over the glass and splashed onto the counter

That = relative pronoun (as the subject); had spilled, splashed = verbs.

- Who loves pizza crusts

Types of Adjective Clauses

Adjective clauses can be divided into two based on their nature and behaviour in a sentence. The two types of adjective clauses are:

Essential Adjective Clauses and Non-Essential Adjective Clauses

▪ The Essential Adjective Clause

As the name suggests, an essential adjective clause is one that is required to make sense of the sentence. It is a part of the sentence and the description is what matters, and so it is necessary to make the sentence meaningful, hence cannot be removed from the sentence. No specific punctuation marks are used to separate the clause from the rest of the sentence. Some examples of sentences with essential adjective clauses are given below.

- My neighbour does not like children **who sit for hours fidgeting with their smartphones.**

- We did not find any cafe **that sold vegetarian momos**.

- **The Non-Essential Adjective Clause**

Unlike essential adjective clauses, a non-essential adjective clause provides additional information about the noun and is not the main focus. These kinds of clauses, even if removed, do not make a difference as the sentence still remains complete without it. A clause of this nature is enclosed within a pair of commas or brackets to separate it from the rest of the sentence. Here are some examples of non-essential adjective clauses for your reference.

- My brother, **who lives in Australia**, will be coming to India next month.
- The restaurant, **where we first met**, is being torn down.

Punctuating adjective clauses may show whether the adjective clause is essential or nonessential by using commas accordingly. Essential adjective clauses do not require commas. An adjective clause is essential when one needs the information it provides. The clause helps determine which one of many the writer means. Read this example:

- A dog that eats too much pizza will soon develop pepperoni breath. Dog is nonspecific. To know which dog we are talking about, we must have the information in the adjective clause. Thus, the adjective clause is essential and requires no commas. If, however, we revise dog and choose more specific words instead, the adjective clause becomes nonessential and does require commas to separate it from the rest of the sentence. Read this revision:
- My dog Floyd, who eats too much pizza, has developed pepperoni breath.

▪ Examples of Adjective Clauses

Take a look at the following examples and analyse it closely to understand well how it works and how it should be used.

- The company **that I worked for in 2018** is shutting down.
- The girl, **who has shifted from Japan**, is here to meet you.
- The man **who came here earlier** is on the phone and wants to talk to you.
- Gowrishankar, **the boy who scored the highest marks**, has joined the army.
- My mom loved the bag **that I had bought from Bangalore**.
- The girl **whose parents died last year** was adopted by my uncle.
- I did not know what to do with the dress **that I bought recently**.
- Neena and Madhavi were not happy with the send-off party **which we had organized**.
- Nobody saw the boy **who came first in the running race**.
- Diana, **the girl who spoke third**, got the second prize.