



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE

COMPLEX SENTENCE – PART 1

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Agreement Across Phrases & Clauses

- A “**Complex Sentence**” has a main clause and at least one subordinate clause.
- In the earlier units of this module we learnt how to identify a clause.

- Following is an instance of a complex sentence:

He was the only boy in the class who wore socks and shoes.

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
He was the only boy in the class	who wore socks and shoes

- Together these clauses make it a complex sentence.

- Let us look at another example.

There were vague rumours that he had come from some English boys' school somewhere in Madras.

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
There were vague rumours	that he had come from some English boys' school somewhere in Madras.

- So, this is also a complex sentence.

ACTIVITY

1. Look at the following paragraph, and underline complex sentences there. By using square brackets, also show main clause and subordinate clause, or clauses within the sentence.

This Rajam was a rival to Mani. In his manner to Mani he assumed a certain nonchalance to which Mani was not accustomed. If Mani jabbed, Rajam jabbed; if Mani clouted, he clouted; if Mani kicked, he kicked. If Mani was the overlord of the class, Rajam seemed to be nothing less. And add to all this the fact that Rajam was a regular seventy percenter, second only to Sankar. There were sure indications that Rajam was the new power in the class.

ANSWERS

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
<u>In his manner to Mani he assumed a certain nonchalance</u>	<u>to which Mani was not accustomed</u>
<u>Rajam jabbed</u>	<u>If Mani jabbed,</u>
<u>he clouted</u>	<u>if Mani clouted</u>
<u>he kicked</u>	<u>if Mani kicked</u>
<u>Rajam seemed to be nothing less</u>	<u>If Mani was the overlord of the class</u>
<u>And add to all this the fact</u>	<u>that Rajam was a regular seventy percenter, second only to Sankar.</u>
<u>There were sure indications</u>	<u>that Rajam was the new power in the class.</u>

- Rules of agreement of number apply across the clauses. Any reference to noun or pronoun of the main clause in a noun, or pronoun or verb in the subordinate clause will have to have the same number.
- If noun in the main clause is singular, then reference to it must be in singular. See the following, for instance:

These are the senior girls from this school who have been selected for training in life saving skills.

Main Clause	Subordinate Clause
These are the senior girls from this school	who have been selected for training in life saving skills

- But in the subordinate clause, you cannot write *who has been... That is ungrammatical, because “who” in this sentence refers to “girls”, a plural noun, in the earlier clause. Therefore, it takes “have”, not “has”.
- Any verb or noun in the subordinate clause referring to a noun in the main clause must agree with the noun in the main clause in number.

ACTIVITY

2. Look at the following sentences and add appropriate verb in the blank space in keeping with the number, singular or plural, of the noun.
- a. *I would keep out of the way of policemen who an awful lot,' said Swaminathan. (is/are)*
 - b. *The packet has potatoes that supplied by Amazon this morning. (was/were)*
 - c. *As far as Swaminathan could remember, he never been within three yards of Rajam. (has/had)*
 - d. *His father fussed about a little for his tiny silver snuff-box and the spotted kerchief, which the most unwashed thing in that house. (was/were)*

ANSWERS

- a. I would keep out of the way of policemen who are an awful lot,' said Swaminathan.
- b. The packet has potatoes that were supplied by Amazon this morning.
- c. As far as Swaminathan could remember, he had never been within three yards of Rajam.
- d. His father fussed about a little for his tiny silver snuff-box and the spotted kerchief, which was the most unwashed thing in that house.

ADDITIONAL EXERCISE

1. Maldives is a beautiful destination. Many people there for a vacation. (go/goes)
2. I don't enjoy winters. Two degrees too cold for me. (is/are)
3. Sushmita know how the incident occurred? (does/do)
4. A lot of natives here Hindi. (speak/speaks)
5. Tennis my favourite sport. (is/are)
6. Economics my favourite subject at school. (was/were)

ANSWERS

1. go
2. is
3. does
4. speak
5. is
6. was

Thank You!