



IIT Madras
ONLINE DEGREE

COMPLEX SENTENCE 2 – NOUN CLAUSE

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NOUN CLAUSE

- We know that a complex sentence has a main clause and at least one sub-ordinate clause.
- A main clause necessarily has a noun phrase and at least one verb phrase , which has a verb in either present or in past tense.

- But subordinate clause can be of many kinds, and may function in the sentence like a noun phrase, or noun, a verb phrase, or verb, an adjectival phrase, or an adjective, adverb or an adverbial phrase, etc.

- In other words, a clause can also function like a phrase, or a word, performing the function of its class, like an adjective, or an adverb, or a noun, or verb. In the following sentence, for example, the subordinate clause works like an adjective.

Only the wearer knows where shoe pinches.

| Main clause | Subordinate clause |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Only the wearer knows | where shoe pinches |

- The sub-ordinate clause here works like a noun. It is the object to the verb “know” in the main clause. What do you know – you know “where shoes pinches”.

- Let us look at another example.

That the river is in spate here at this time of the year is well known.

- Here [That the river is in spate here at this time of the year] sub. noun clause functions like a noun which is the subject to the verb “is” within the main clause.

- The entire subordinate clause here functions like a simple word “It” which has become the subject of the sentence “[[It] is well-known]”. The entire sentence could also be written or spoken as

It is well known that the river is in spate here at this time of the year.

- So the subordinate clause [That the river is in spate here at this time of the year] is a noun clause which is the subject of the main clause “[[] is well-known]. So like a noun, or like a noun phrase, noun clause can also perform the function of a noun by becoming either subject or object of a subordinate clause.

ACTIVITY 1

Look at the following paragraph, and underline all subordinate clauses that work like a noun, whether subject or object of a verb.

‘...You don't know what a great fellow Rajam is.’ He told her the story of the first enmity between Rajam and Mani and the subsequent friendship. ‘You know, he has a real police dress,’ said Swaminathan. ‘Is it? What does he want a police dress for?’ asked granny. ‘His father is the Police Superintendent. He is the master of every policeman here.’ Granny was impressed. She said that it must be a tremendous office indeed. She then recounted the days when her husband, Swaminathan's grandfather, was a powerful Sub-Magistrate.

ANSWERS

'.....You don't know what a great fellow Rajam is.' He told her the story of the first enmity between Rajam and Mani and the subsequent friendship. 'You know, he has a real police dress,' said Swaminathan. 'Is it? What does he want a police dress for?' asked granny. 'His father is the Police Superintendent. He is the master of every policeman here.' Granny was impressed. She said that it must be a tremendous office indeed. She then recounted the days when her husband, Swaminathan's grandfather, was a powerful Sub-Magistrate.

ANSWERS

| | Main clause | Sub Noun clause | Object to |
|----|--------------------|--|------------------|
| 1. | you don't know | what a great fellow Rajam is | know |
| 2. | You know, | he has a real police dress | know |
| 3. | asked granny | What does he want a police dress for? | asked |
| 4. | She said | that it must be a tremendous office indeed | said |

ACTIVITY 2

Do you know how many marks he gets in Arithmetic?' 'He gets all the marks, does he, child?' asked granny. 'No, silly. He gets ninety marks out of one hundred.' 'Good. But you must also try and get marks like him. . . You know, Swami, your grandfather used to frighten the examiners with his answers sometimes. When he answered a question, he did it in a tenth of the time that others took to do it. And then, his answers would be so powerful that his teachers would give him two hundred marks sometimes. . . . When he passed his F.A. he got such a big medal! I wore it as a pendant for years till—When did I remove it? Yes, when your aunt was born. . . . No, it wasn't your aunt. ... It was when your father was born. ... I remember on the tenth day of confinement. . . .No, no. I was right. It was when your aunt was born. Where is that medal now? I gave it away to your aunt—and she melted it and made four bangles out of it. The fool! And such flimsy bangles too! I have always maintained that she is the worst fool in our family.

ANSWERS

| | Main clause | Sub Noun clause | Object to |
|----|--------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Do you know | how many marks he gets in Arithmetic? | know |
| 2. | asked granny | He gets all the marks | asked |
| 3. | | does he, child? | asked |

| Main clause | Sub Noun clause | Complement to |
|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| It was | when your father was born | was |

Thank You