**ANALYZING A SENTENCE**

A sentence is divided into subject and predicate.

The predicate is the part of the sentence or clause containing a verb and stating something about the subject such as what the subject is doing or what the subject is. At the heart of every predicate is a verb.

**Examples:**

Maria’s sisters (subject) are going to the pool (predicate)

I (subject) learned something new today (predicate)

The girls in our office are experienced instructors

People can come up with statistics to prove anything. Forty percent of all people know that.

The definition above doesn’t reflect the other units that function within the structure of the sentence. Therefore, a predicate can be further classified into four units which are: verb, complement, object, and adverbial.

**SUBJECT**:

The subject of the sentence is the person or thing doing the action or being described. It is what is being discussed and the actor in the sentence.

It is important to note that there are simple subjects and complete subjects. Subjects like: book, pope, butterflies, king, person, and currency are simple subjects. A Complete subject is a noun (or a pronoun) and all the modifiers that go with it. The sentences underlined below are “complete subjects”:

The New York phone book contained 22 Hitlers before World War II.

The world’s youngest pope was 11 years old.

All butterflies taste with their feet.

Only one person in two billion will live to be 116 or older.

The King of Hearts is the only king without a mustache.

Pierre and Claudette (compound subject) put a lot of garlic in their food.

That new boy from Paris and the tall girl with the long hair (compound subject) put a lot of garlic in their food.

**NB**: *Pierre and Claudette* is a compound subject. That just means it’s made up of more than one element. A complete subject will be a noun phrase or a noun clause.

**VERB**:

The verb in a sentence could be a simple verb phrase with only one verb or a complex verb phrase with two or more verbs. The verb states the action of the subject.

**Examples**:

Tom and Jerry were skipping around their little house.

Your camera takes fantastic pictures.

Dress smartly. Dress smartly. Arrive on time.

You may have played this game before.

The work should have been finished by 30 January.

**OBJECT**:

This is the part of the sentence affected by the action that the verb states. There are two kinds of objects – **direct** and **indirect.**

**Direct object**:

A direct object is a noun that receives the action of the verb. Direct objects usually answer the questions “what?” or “whom?”

**Examples**:

The students eat cake.

**Q: What** did the students eat?

**A**: cake

The family hugged their dog.

**Q**: **Whom** did the family hug?

**A**: dog

**Indirect object**:

An indirect object is the noun that receives the direct object itself. It does not receive the action of the verb but is possibly affected by the action.

**Examples**:

Eagle passed Brazil (ind.obj) the ball (d. obj)

In this sentence, passed is the verb and Eagle is the subject because he’s the one doing the passing. The direct object is the ball because it is the thing being passed. Brazil is the indirect object because he receives the ball, the direct object.

Indirect objects can only be used in sentences with direct objects. However, a sentence can have a direct object without an indirect object (an example of this is simply saying *Eagle passed the ball*).

An indirect object can only be placed directly **after the verb** and **before the direct object.**

**COMPLEMENT:**

This is an element added to complete sentence. The complement is usually a noun phrase, which serves as an attribute to either the subject or the object. Said in a more technical way, there are subject complements, as well as object complements. The subject complement is normally a noun or an adjective that defines or renames the subject in some way. Object complements follow and modify a direct object and provide additional information about it.

**Examples**:

Pablo is extremely intelligent. (subject complement)

I find him intelligent. (object complement)

Shyla eventually became my best friend. (subject complement)

You are making me sad. (object complement)

Known as “the father of the Texas blues,” Blind Lemon Jefferson was a popular entertainer in the 1920s. (subject complement)

**ADVERBIALS:**

Adverbials are words that we use to give more information about a verb. They can be one word (e.g. angrily, here) or phrases (e.g. at home, in a few hours) and often say how, where, when or how often something happens or is done, though they can also have other uses. Adverbials are optional parts of the clause, though it is usually weaved in into the clause structure. The Adverbial can occur in any part of the sentence-initial, media, and final positions.

**Examples**:

He drove the school bus as carefully as possible.

When the show ends, we’re getting dinner.

I went into town to visit my friend.

Jamie called her mother almost every day.

**NB**: The underlined adverbials can be omitted without making the sentence unacceptable as they serve only as added information that can be neglected.

**EXAMPLE OF ANALYSIS**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SUBJECT** | **PREDICATE** | | | |
|  | **Adverb** | **Verb** | **Object (direct)** | **Complement** |
| **The girl** | **Yesterday** | **Visited** | **Her grandmother** | **Who is blind** |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **SUBJECT** | | **PREDICATE** | | |
| **Adverb** |  | **Verb** | | **Object (direct)** | **Complement** |
| **Yesterday** | **The girl** | **Visited** | | **Her grandmother** | **Who is blind** |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SUBJECT** | **PREDICATE** | | | |
|  | **Verb** | **Object (direct)** | **Complement** | **Adverb** |
| **The girl** | **Visited** | **Her grandmother** | **Who was blind** | **Yesterday** |