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# Homework

1. When I fall in love, it will be forever (sung by Nat King Cole)
2. Wherever I lay my hat, that’s my home (sung by Marvin Gaye)
3. Whenever/wherever we’re meant to be together, I’ll be there and you’ll be near (sung by Shakira)

These all contain examples of ADVERBIAL CLAUSES (underlined)

# Clauses

## Definitions

A clause is a linguistic unit (phrase) which describes a **situation**. It must have a **Verb** (to describe the situation), and it must have at least one **Argument** (the entity involved in the situation). If there is only one argument, this will come in subject position.

Typically the verb will carry tense.

For the purposes of this course, a “clause” is indistinguishable from a “sentence”, e.g.

1. Jack likes cheese
2. Anita is the coolest person in the universe!

Both of these can be described as **sentences** or **clauses**.

## Unusual types of clauses

There are unusual types of clause which depart from the above definition. Some clauses can contain an **implicit argument** and a **non-finite verb**, e.g.

1. (My) Being rich is not my primary aim in life

However, we are not going to be focusing on these types of clauses in the course.

## What is the purpose of clauses?

Clauses describe SITUATIONS which correspond to SCENES or MENTAL PICTURES. These scenes/mental pictures are essential to the way we think, express our thoughts, and categorise the world around us. (Nelson, K. (1999). Event representations, narrative development and internal working models. *Attachment & Human Development*, *1*(3), 239–252.). Without clauses we wouldn’t really be able to communicate.

## So why not just use the term “sentence”

We tend to use the term “Clause” as opposed to a “sentence” when there are multiple situations per sentence.

## Subordinate versus main clauses

We distinguish between the main (or matrix) clause, and the dependent (or subordinate) clause, e.g.

1. When I fall in love (SUB.), it will be forever (MAIN)
2. Wherever I lay my hat (SUB.), that’s my home (MAIN)
3. Whenever/wherever we’re meant to be together (SUB), I’ll be there and you’ll be near (MAIN)

In the above examples, the subordinate clause is (a) semantically backgrounded and (b) syntactically optional (the sentence sounds okay without it). However, the sentence would sound very odd without the main clause.

To test whether a clause is subordinate, you might wish to try the “door test”. Imagine someone pops their head round the door, and says a clause. If that clause is the main clause, it will probably sound okay in isolation. (I wish to acknowledge former student Steve McCafferty for this test!)

## Exercise

For the following sentences, identify the subordinate and main clauses. Try to use the following tests

1. Are they semantically backgrounded?
2. Are they syntactically option (if yes, they are likely to be a subordinate clause)
3. Do they pass the “door” test (if no, they are likely to be a subordinate clause)
4. You can’t come to the party unless you bring strawberries and champagne
5. You can bring books into the exam as long as they are placed on your desks.
6. While Nancy likes hot food, her partner cannot stand chilli pepper.
7. Nancy stood on tiptoe so that she could reach the top shelf
8. Because it had been raining so heavily the fields were all underwater.
9. When she was challenged about the stolen cake Dawn burst into tears.

# Adverbial clauses

All of the dependent clauses in the above examples are “Adverbial Clauses”. This is because the clause (including the “connecting” words, e.g. *unless, as long as, while, so that, because*) fufils the function of an Adverbial. They are

1. Optional (like an adverbial)
2. Movable (like an adverbial)
3. Modify the event in the main clause (like an adverbial)

Have a look at the following examples:

1. Prepositional Phrase acting as an Adverbial
2. (Because of the rain) the fields were under water: phrase is OPTIONAL
3. The fields were underwater because of the rain : phrase is MOVABLE

It also “modifies” the event in that it describes a reason for being underwater

1. Clause acting as an Adverbial
2. (Because it had been raining heavily) the fields were under water: phrase is OPTIONAL
3. The fields were underwater because it had been raining heavily : phrase is MOVABLE

It also “modifies” the event in that it describes the reason for being underwater

# Subordinating conjunctions

## What is a subordinating conjunction

Adverbial clauses are headed by linking words known as **subordinating conjunctions**, or **subordinators**, e.g. *unless, as long as, while, so that, because*. They express a variety of different meanings including (a) Logical Conditions (e.g. *if*, *unless*, *provided that*, *as long as*), (b) Temporal Situations (e.g. *while*, *when*, *whenever*), (c) Cause and Effect (e.g. *because*, *since*, *so that*), Contradiction (e.g. *although*) and Contrast (e.g. *while, whereas*).

Subordinating conjunctions come before the clause, and the phrase which contains both the conjunction and the clause is described as the Adverbial Phrase:

1. **Because** it had been raining…

Subordinating conjunctions are like little pick-up trucks! When we add a subordinating conjunction to a sentence it becomes movable, e.g.

1. He had a good time at the party. He was tired.
2. He had a good time at the party, **although** he was tired.
3. **Although** he was tired, he had a good time at the party.

## Subordinating conjunctions and other linking words

Subordinating conjunctions have similar meanings to other linking words:

1. **Although** he was tired, he had a good time at the party. SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION - acts like a pickup truck and makes the clause movable.
2. He was tired, **but** he had a good time at the party. COORDINATING CONJUNCTION - can only come between clauses.
3. He was tired. **However**, he had a good time at the party. ADVERB - can only come between sentences (note the full stop!)

## The importance of subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions are very useful devices for linking events in a narrative.

They are assessed in many language assessments, e.g. the Formulating Sentences subtest of the CELF.

Language impaired individuals have great difficulties using subordinating conjunctions to introduce adverbial clauses. They have lower **clausal** density (number of clauses per sentence)

# Exercise

For the following sentences:

1. Link them using a subordinating conjunction.
2. Do tests for the adverbial phrase (the movement test and “door” test)
3. Try to rewrite the sentence using either an Adverbial or a coordinating conjunction (not always possible)
4. Touch that wire. You will be electrocuted.
5. Jack did not study very hard. He failed the exam.
6. Max can come to the party. He promises to behave himself.
7. Janice and Elena were on holiday. Their house was being burgled.
8. Jack added salt and pepper. The food tasted better.

# Homework

How many finite clauses in the following lyrics from the Blur song “Girls and Boys”?

(We’re) looking for…

Girls who are boys Who like boys to be girls Who do boys like they’re girls Who do girls like they’re boys Always should be someone you really love