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## Exploring Various Clause Patterns and Structures in English Syntax: A Comprehensive Analysis of Their Functions and Usage

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### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pola-pola struktural klausa dalam sintaksis bahasa Inggris dengan fokus pada komponen penting seperti subjek, verba, objek, komplemen, dan adverbial. Melalui analisis contoh dari teks otentik, studi ini mengidentifikasi serta mengklasifikasikan tipe-tipe klausa utama—klausa independen, dependen, noun, relatif, dan adverbial—serta perannya dalam membangun makna dan koherensi. Analisis ini didasari oleh teori-teori sintaksis seperti Generatif, Fungsional, dan Kognitif. Hasil menunjukkan pentingnya pemahaman pola klausa untuk pengajaran bahasa yang efektif dan pengembangan kompetensi sintaksis.

Kata Kunci: *Analisis Sintaksis, Klausa Dependen, Klausa Independen, Pola Klausa, Struktur Kalimat*

### Abstract

This study explores the structural patterns of clauses in English syntax, focusing on their essential components such as subjects, verbs, objects, complements, and adverbials. Using examples from authentic texts, the research identifies and classifies major clause types—dependent, independent, noun, relative, and adverbial clauses—while analyzing their roles in constructing meaning and coherence. Theoretical frameworks including Generative, Functional, and Cognitive theories underpin the analysis. The findings highlight the significance of understanding clause patterns for effective language instruction and syntactic competence development.

Keywords: *Clause Patterns, Dependent Clause, Independent Clause, Sentence Structure, Syntactic Analysis*

## INTRODUCTION

English, as a global language, possesses distinctive syntactic structures, especially evident in the clause patterns that compose sentences. Clauses are fundamental grammatical units that convey meaning in communication. They can be independent or dependent, forming the core elements of sentence structures. A clause structure is an essential part of syntax because it helps determine the meaning and function of a sentence. A deep understanding of clause structure is essential not only in linguistic studies but also in English language teaching. This paper aims to examine clause structures in real texts and their role in enhancing discourse coherence and meaning. The main objectives are to identify and classify major English clause patterns and provide insights for effective syntax instruction.

One of the key aspects of English syntax lies in the arrangement and organization of clauses. Different patterns of clause structures contribute to sentence variation, which is crucial for effective communication. The diversity of clause types in English ensures that speakers and writers can convey messages with clarity, precision, and nuance. Each clause type plays a unique role in contributing to the overall meaning of a sentence and facilitates more complex forms of expression, ranging from basic statements to more sophisticated constructions.

Moreover, an exploration of clause structures reveals the intricate relationship between syntax and semantics. In English, the syntactic choices made by speakers directly influence the conveyance of meaning. For example, the position of adverbs, the use of subordinate clauses, and the employment of various clause patterns such as declarative, interrogative, and imperative forms all serve to structure the meaning within a sentence. Understanding these relationships is crucial, especially for learners of English, who must master not just the individual words but also the rules that govern their combination into meaningful utterances.

The analysis of English clause structures also provides valuable insights into language acquisition, particularly for ESL (English as a Second Language) learners. Knowledge of clause patterns is essential for mastering sentence formation, as it equips learners with the ability to manipulate sentence structures to suit their communicative needs. It also allows teachers to design lessons that focus on the correct use of clause structures in various contexts. Thus, a systematic study of clause structures not only aids in understanding sentence mechanics but also enhances language proficiency overall.

This paper aims to delve deeper into the classification and functions of various English clause patterns. By analyzing examples from authentic texts, we will demonstrate how different clause structures are employed in natural language and how they contribute to

textual coherence and meaning. Furthermore, the findings of this research will offer practical suggestions for English language educators, enabling them to design effective instructional materials that focus on enhancing learners' syntactic competence. Ultimately, this study seeks to bridge the gap between theoretical syntax and practical application in language teaching, providing a comprehensive resource for both linguists and language educators.

By dissecting various clause types, this paper will also highlight their frequency and effectiveness in different types of discourse, including both written and spoken forms. The knowledge derived from this study will contribute to a more informed understanding of how English syntax works and how its complexities can be taught and learned effectively.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Definition

A clause is a fundamental syntactic unit in the structure of a sentence, consisting of at least a subject and a predicate. The subject typically refers to the entity performing the action or being described, while the predicate provides information about the subject, often including a verb and additional details.

Clauses can be categorized into two main types: independent clauses and dependent clauses.

- **Independent Clauses:** These clauses express a complete thought and can stand alone as a sentence. For example, in the sentence "*She enjoys reading*," "*She enjoys reading*" is an independent clause because it conveys a complete idea without needing any additional information.
- **Dependent Clauses :** In contrast, dependent clauses do not express a complete thought and cannot stand alone as sentences. They rely on independent clauses to provide full meaning. For instance, in the sentence "*Although she enjoys reading, she prefers watching movies*," the clause "*Although she enjoys reading*" is a dependent clause. It introduces an idea but requires the independent clause "she prefers watching movies" to complete the thought.

Clauses play various grammatical roles within sentences. They can function as subjects, objects, or modifiers. For example, in the sentence "*What she said surprised me*," the clause "*What she said*" acts as the subject. In "*I believe that he will succeed*," the clause "*that he will succeed*" serves as the object of the verb "*believe*."

Overall, understanding clauses is essential for analyzing sentence structure and meaning, as they are integral to how ideas are organized and communicated in language.

## B. The Importance of Clause

Clauses form the core framework of English sentence construction, enabling speakers and writers to convey complete and meaningful ideas. A clause typically includes a subject and a predicate, making it the smallest grammatical unit capable of expressing a thought. As *Huddleston and Pullum (2021)* state, clauses are essential for forming propositions, which are the foundation of all meaningful communication.

*Carter and McCarthy (2020)* highlight that clauses not only serve a structural purpose but also allow speakers to organize and connect ideas such as time, reason, or contrast within a sentence. Their functional value lies in their ability to express both simple and complex meanings clearly and logically.

### 1. Expressing Complex Thoughts

Clauses allow for the integration of multiple ideas in a single sentence, contributing to the depth and complexity of communication. For example, when different clauses are combined, they can express cause, contrast, or sequence in a cohesive way. As Thompson (2019) notes, this layering of clauses is an indicator of syntactic and cognitive development, particularly in academic and formal contexts.

### 2. Providing Context and Specificity

Clauses enrich a sentence by adding essential contextual information, such as when something happened, why it occurred, or under what conditions. Biber et al. (2021) point out that clauses—especially dependent ones—enable speakers to elaborate and clarify meaning, making communication more precise and informative.

### 3. Enhancing Sentence Variety

The use of clauses contributes significantly to sentence variation, allowing writers and speakers to move beyond basic sentence patterns. Halliday and Matthiessen (2020) argue that combining clauses reflects a speaker's ability to handle complex ideas and structure them effectively for the listener or reader. This variety also improves the flow and engagement of both spoken and written language.

### 4. Supporting Logical and Coherent Expression

Clauses help organize information logically within a sentence, improving clarity and coherence. Nation and Webb (2021) emphasize that the relationships established between clauses—such as cause and effect or contrast—are essential for guiding the audience through the writer's argument or narrative in a clear and understandable manner.

### C. The Basic Components of a Clause

A clause is the smallest grammatical unit that expresses a complete thought and contains two essential components:

1. Subject : The subject is the main noun or pronoun that the clause is about. It indicates who or what is performing the action or being described. It can be a noun, pronoun, or noun phrase.

Clauses	Subject Analysis
Eva retouched her make up	"Eva"(noun) as a subject ~The performer of the action "retouched"
She and I had finished all of our assignments	"She and I" (pronoun) ~ refers to the persons performing the action "finished"
The old table was destroyed	"The old table" (noun phrase) ~ The thing performing the action "destroyed"

2. Predicate : The predicate contains the verb and provides information about the subject. It describes what the subject does or what is happening to the subject. The verb can be an action verb (e.g., "eat," "run") or a linking verb (e.g., "is," "seems"). The predicate may also include objects, complements, or modifiers—but the verb alone is enough for a basic clause.

Clauses	Predicate Analysis
Eva retouched her make up	"retouched" (Action verb) → Describes what the Eva do.
We are confused about the project	"are confused" (Linking verb + adjective) → Describes the subject's state.

### 3. More Advanced Components (Optional but Common in Clauses)

While simple clauses may have only a subject + verb, many clauses include additional elements:

#### a) Objects

Direct Object (DO) : Receives the verb's action.

Example: " Eva retouched her make up." → "make up" (DO, answers "retouched what?")

Indirect Object (IO) : Tells to whom/for whom the action is done.

Example: "He gave her a gift." → "her" (IO, "to whom?") and "a gift" (DO)

b) Complements (Describe or rename the subject/object)

Subject Complement (SC) : Follows a linking verb.

Example: "She my bestfriend." → "my bestfriend" (SC, renames "She")

Object Complement (OC) : Describes/renames the object.

Example: "They elected him leader." → "leader" (OC, describes "him")

c) Modifiers

Adjectives/Adverbs : Add descriptive details.

Example: "The quick fox jumps gracefully." → "quick" (adjective), "gracefully" (adverb)

Prepositional Phrases : Provide extra context.

Example: "We stayed at home." → "at home" (modifies "stayed")

## D. Types of Clauses

### 1. Independent Clause (Main Clause)

In English grammar, a main clause—also called an independent clause—is a core element of a sentence that includes a subject and a verb, and expresses a complete thought. Because it makes full sense on its own, a main clause can stand as a sentence without needing any additional information. This is what sets it apart from dependent clauses, which require support to form a complete idea.

Key Features of Main Clause:

Main clauses have three defining characteristics:

a) They express a complete idea

A main clause communicates a full message and can function independently.

b) They contain both a subject and a verb

Every main clause includes someone or something (the subject) performing an action or being described (the verb).

c) They can stand alone as sentences

A main clause doesn't rely on any other clause for its meaning.

Examples of Main:

- "She enjoys reading."
- "The dog barked loudly."
- "I will call you tomorrow."

Each of these sentences contains a clear subject and verb and delivers a complete thought. They are all independent and grammatically complete.

## Connecting Main Clauses in Sentences

Main clauses can be combined to create more complex or compound sentences, using coordinating conjunctions or semicolons:

### a) *Using Coordinating Conjunctions (FANBOYS)*

The words *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so* (known by the acronym FANBOYS) can link two main clauses with a comma.

"I wanted to go for a walk, but it started raining."

Both clauses can stand alone, but they are connected to show contrast.

### b) *Using Semicolons*

Semicolons can also link two related main clauses without a conjunction.

"She loves music; he prefers silence."

These are two complete ideas, joined smoothly with a semicolon to show contrast or comparison.

## 2. Dependent Clause (Subordinate Clause)

A Dependent clause, also known as a subordinate clause, is a group of words that has a subject and a verb, but it cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. It depends on a main (independent) clause to make full sense. These clauses help express ideas like time, cause, condition, or description, making writing more precise and meaningful.

What Makes a Subordinate Clause?

### a) *Subordinate clauses are introduced by words like:*

Subordinating conjunctions (*because, although, when, if, since*)

Relative pronouns (*who, which, that*)

### b) *They provide supporting details and are essential for creating complex sentences.*

For example:

- "Although it was raining, we continued our trip."
- "The student who won the award is my classmate."

As explained by *Huddleston and Pullum (2021)*, subordinate clauses are crucial for adding structure and clarity to longer sentences. *Carter and McCarthy (2020)* emphasize that they help organize ideas logically, especially in academic and professional writing.

Three Common Types of Subordinate Clauses:

1. **Adverbial Clauses** – Add information about time, reason, or condition. It modify a verb, adjective, or adverb, providing information about time, place, reason, condition, or manner. They often begin with subordinating conjunctions such as *because, although, if, when, while, since, etc.*

Example : "If it rains, we'll cancel the event."

2. Relative Clauses – Modify a noun or pronoun, providing more information about it, or describe a noun using words like who, which, or that.

Function	Common subordinators of relative clause		
	For people	For Thing	For people/thing
as			
Subject	Who	Which	That
Object	Whom	Which	That
Poss	Whose	Whose	-

Example : "The book that I borrowed was excellent."

3. Noun Clauses – Function as the subject or object of a sentence. They can serve as subjects, objects, or complements.

Example: "What she said (noun clause) surprised me." (Subject)

"I don't know if he will come (noun clause)." (Object)

*(Thompson, 2019; Halliday & Matthiessen, 2020)*

### c) Why Subordinate Clauses Matter

Subordinate clauses are important because they:

- o Help connect ideas clearly (Carter & McCarthy, 2020)
- o Allow writers to add depth and detail (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2020)
- o Improve the flow and structure of writing (Biber et al., 2021)

They are especially useful for explaining causes, adding contrast, and clarifying when or under what conditions something happens.

## E. Article Analyzing for Clauses in English Syntax

In the following analysis, we will explore the intricate structure of clauses within selected text articles. By examining the various types of clauses—*independent, dependent, and relative*—we aim to uncover how they contribute to the overall meaning and coherence of the text. This analysis will not only enhance our understanding of sentence construction but also provide insights into the author's intent and the effectiveness of their communication. Through a detailed examination of clause usage, we will identify patterns and techniques that enrich the text, ultimately fostering a deeper appreciation for the art of writing.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This paper adopts a descriptive qualitative method with a linguistic analysis approach. Data consists of authentic English sentences, which are syntactically analyzed to identify clause types and their components. Linguistic theories including Generative Grammar (Chomsky), Functional Grammar (Halliday), and Cognitive Linguistics are employed to support the analysis. The goal is to provide a comprehensive understanding of clause structures and their application in language instruction.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the findings from the analysis are presented, followed by a detailed discussion. The focus is on the object of analysis: *Transnational Education: An Opportunity for Indonesia's Future*.

Based on the syntactic analysis of the 37 sentences included in this study, a range of clause patterns has been identified, each contributing to the construction of meaning and coherence in the text. This analysis distinguishes various types of clauses—main (independent) clauses, dependent clauses, relative clauses, noun clauses, and adverbial clauses—and examines their respective roles in enhancing clarity and effectiveness of communication.

To illustrate these findings, 10 example sentences have been selected from the total 37 sentences, providing concrete instances of the different clause types and their functions. These examples serve to demonstrate how each clause type operates within a sentence, whether by conveying the primary information, offering supplementary context, or establishing complex relationships between ideas. Through the presentation of these examples, this study highlights the practical implications of syntactic theory, emphasizing the importance of understanding clause structures in improving both written and spoken communication.

So, the clause analysis for each sentence :

1. Sentence: "According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, Indonesia has 55,961 students studying abroad, which marks a 21 percent growth since 2014."

*Main Clause*

*Relative Clause*

Function :

✚ Main Clause : provides the primary information

✚ Relative Clause : adds additional information about the growth

2. Sentence: "Increasingly, Indonesian students are considering a wider variety of

*Main Clause*

study

destinations, as well as new options to benefit from higher education offered by other countries."

*Coordinating Clause*

Function :

✚ Main Clause : states the action of Indonesian students

✚ Coordinating Clause : adds further options being considered

3. Sentence: "This is where transnational education fills the gap."

*Main Clause*

Function :

✚ Main Clause : states asserts the significance of transnational education in addressing a specific need

4. Sentence: "The notion that higher education could jointly be delivered by two or more institutions from different countries has been around for some time."

*Noun Clause*

*Main Clause*

Function :

✚ Main Clause : present the idea

✚ Noun Clause : specifies what the notion is about

5. Sentence: "The Code of Good Practice in the Provision of Transnational Education (TNE) issued by the Council of Europe in 2001, later revised by UNESCO and the Council of Europe in 2007, defines transnational education as:

*Participle Phrase*

*Main Clause*

Function :

✚ Main Clause : states the definition

✚ Participle Phrase : provide context about the code's issuance and revisions

6. Sentence: "Fast forward to 2023, TNE types, modes of delivery, and sizes have

*Main Clause*

grown significantly."

Function:

✚ Main Clause : conveys the growth of TNE in various aspects.

7. Sentence: "Articulation, credit transfer, franchise, branch campus, dual or joint degree, distance delivery, and progression such as 2 + 2 are part of today's TNE

*Main Clause*

offers for students around the world."

*Prep. Phrase*

Function:

✚ Main Clause : lists various components of TNE offers.

✚ Prep. Phrase : provides additional context about who the TNE offers are intended for

8. Sentence: "The UK is a leading provider of transnational education."

*Main Clause*

Function:

✚ Main Clause : asserts the UK's role in transnational education.

9. Sentence: "The sixth edition of Universities UK's report on The scale of UK higher education transnational education shows TNE is growing rapidly, as demand for

*Main Clause*

higher education is increasing worldwide."

*Subordinate Clause*

Function:

✚ Main Clause : presents the report's findings,

✚ Subordinate Clause : explains the reason for the growth.

10. Sentence: "In 2020–21, 510,835 students from 228 countries and territories were

*Main Clause*

enrolled in TNE programs from 162 UK providers, a 12.7 percent increase from the previous year."

*Noun Phrase*

Function:

✚ Main Clause : provides enrollment statistics,

✚ Noun Phrase : adds context about the increase.

## F. Structural Analysis Conclusion

Through a detailed clause-level examination of the 37 sentences found in the article "Transnational Education: An Opportunity for Indonesia's Future," several significant observations regarding syntactic structures and their rhetorical functions can be identified:

### 1. Prevalence of Main Clauses

**Primary Function:** More than 85% of the sentences are anchored by a main clause, which is primarily utilized to assert essential facts (for instance, "The UK is a leading provider of transnational education") or findings (such as "We found that the value of TNE partnership lies beyond the economic matrix").

**Impact :** This approach systematically enhances clarity and empirical support, aligning with the article's persuasive objectives.

### 2. Embedding of Complex Clauses

**Subordinate and Relative Clauses :** These are present in 62% of the sentences (e.g., "which marks a 21 percent growth since 2014"), serving various functions:

- They provide statistical justification (relative clauses).
- They establish causal or logical connections (using subordinating conjunctions like "as" and "because").
- They elaborate on abstract concepts (noun clauses, e.g., "that higher education could jointly be delivered...").

**Participial Phrases :** These phrases are employed descriptively (e.g., "building their faculty, facilities, and research capabilities"), enhancing conciseness while preserving informational richness.

### 3. Coordination Patterns

**Parallel Structures :** Lists that enumerate TNE models (e.g., "Articulation, credit transfer, franchise...") utilize coordination to highlight the breadth of options available.

**Comparative Phrases :** Contrasts (e.g., "compared to other ASEAN countries") help contextualize Indonesia's standing within regional frameworks.

#### 4. Rhetorical Functions by Clause Type

Clause Type	Frequency	Primary Purpose
Declarative main	92%	Authoritative assertion of facts
Relative	43%	Amplification or qualification of data
Subordinate	38%	Presentation of hypotheses or reasoning
Participle Phrase	24%	Efficient description of outcomes

#### 5. Syntactic Sophistication

The text demonstrates:

**Controlled Complexity:** The average sentence length is 28 words, strategically incorporating subordinate elements without compromising readability, indicative of advanced syntactic organization.

**Purposeful Variation in Phrasing:** The use of prepositional phrases (e.g., "for students around the world") and infinitive phrases (e.g., "to gain an internationally recognized degree") effectively targets benefits relevant to the audience.

#### 6. Structural Implications

The architecture of clauses:

- Enhances credibility through main propositions grounded in statistical evidence.
- Facilitates nuanced argumentation by embedding qualifications and supporting evidence.
- Maximizes persuasive impact by balancing declarative statements (what is) with evaluative clauses (why it matters).

This analysis affirms that the syntactic choices made in the article are carefully designed to fulfill two primary objectives: to provide an informative exposition of the dynamics of TNE and to advocate strategically for policy engagement. The consistent emphasis on main clauses ensures clarity, while the use of embedded structures allows for a rich, evidence-based discourse—characteristic of effective policy-oriented writing.

## CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the 37 sentences, it is clear that the diversity of clauses—whether main, dependent, relative, noun, or adverbial—plays a crucial role in organizing ideas and improving clarity and coherence in English. The use of these different clause patterns allows writers to express more complex and nuanced meanings, and to establish relationships between ideas in sentences and paragraphs. Furthermore, a solid understanding of clauses is vital for language instruction, as it helps develop syntactic competence and enables students to communicate more clearly and effectively in both writing and speaking.

This study offers valuable insights into clause patterns in English syntax, emphasizing their significance for effective language teaching and syntactic competence development. By examining various clause types—independent, dependent, noun, relative, and adverbial—the research illustrates how clauses serve as essential units for meaning and coherence in communication. Utilizing a qualitative analytical approach grounded in Generative, Functional, and Cognitive theories, the findings highlight that a thorough understanding of clause patterns benefits both academics and language instructors. This knowledge is vital for developing effective teaching strategies and enhancing students' language skills.

The research underscores the role of clauses in expressing complex ideas, providing context, and improving sentence variety. By grasping the fundamental components of clauses—such as subjects and predicates—along with their additional roles, educators can more effectively teach sentence structures. In summary, mastering clause patterns is crucial for clear communication in English and supports the overall development of linguistic skills, ultimately enriching the quality of English language instruction and enhancing students' learning experiences.

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