

# 6

## CLAUSES AND SENTENCES

- 1 Main clauses are marked with an M and dependent clauses with a D.
  - a. everyone went together – M
  - b. I didn't know – M
  - c. if you are rich – D
  - d. in order to celebrate – D
  - e. you can do what you like – M
  - f. that more people can move into the area – D
  - g. they sell fruit and vegetables – M
  - h. which they have grown themselves – D

The most obvious combinations are a+d, b+f, c+e, g+h, but others may be possible too.

- 2 Explain the difference in form and meaning between the members of each pair.
  - a. 1 She screamed and they ran away.  
2 She screamed that they ran away.

Sentence (a1) is a compound sentence: *she screamed* and *they ran away* are both main clauses. Sentence (a2) is a complex sentence: *that they ran away* is a dependent clause. It describes what she screamed, while the second main clause in (a1) describes an action that happened in addition to (possibly as a result of) her screaming.

b. 1 Because he is smart, Peter reads a lot.

2 Peter is smart because he reads a lot.

Both sentences are complex sentences. Sentence (b1) starts with a dependent clause and (b2) starts with the main clause. There is a possible meaning difference: in sentence (b1) Peter's reading is a consequence of his smartness. In (b2) it may be the other way round; the reading makes him smart.

c. 1 Mary did the laundry and went out.

2 Mary did the laundry and Sarah went out.

Both sentences are compound sentences. In the second part of (c1) there is no subject. This means that Mary is the subject for this second clause as well as the first. She did the laundry before she went out. The second main clause in (c2) has Sarah as subject. Thus two different people were involved in two different activities.

d. 1 It was sunny when he wore his new suit.

2 It was sunny, but he wore his new suit.

Sentence (d1) is complex and contains the dependent clause *when he wore his new suit*. Sentence (d2) is compound. The second main clause is introduced by the coordinating conjunction *but*. The meaning of (d1) is that the sun was shining at the time when he wore his new suit. Sentence (d2) means that he wore his new suit in spite of the sun – maybe the suit would normally be considered too warm in sunny weather.

3 Read the following text and answer the questions below:

(i) **The Mondana “school bus”** picks up dozens of children every morning along the banks of the River Napo. (ii) **The Napo** flows from Ecuador into the Amazon. (iii) It's one of the Amazon's greatest tributaries, and in Mondana it's also the local highway. (iv) There are very few roads deep in the rainforest. (v) Without the school canoe, most of these children would miss out on an education altogether because the journey to school would be too difficult. (vi) But last year a road was built across the river from the school, through the village. (vii) **Lizbeth, age 17,** lives next to the new road with her mother Rosa. (viii) Now **Lizbeth and her family** can catch the bus to the local market town, which has changed their lives.

a. Subjects are marked with **green** and verbals with **red** in sentences (i), (ii), (vii) and (viii).

b. Only sentence (iii) is a *compound sentence*.

c. *Dependent clauses* in the text have been underlined.

- 4 Answers based on the British National Corpus at <http://corpus.byu.edu/>.
- a. *Because* seems to occur most often later in the sentence, but is not uncommon in the beginning of sentences either.
  - b. Especially some of the sentences that start with *because* are incomplete sentences, such as *Because I like it*. This is a dependent clause that occurs on its own, and is thus an incomplete sentence.
  - c. Seventeen instances of the word *sentence* probably refer to its grammar/linguistics sense (one or two are a bit unclear in their meaning). Three refer to prison sentences.
  - d. The great majority of occurrences of the phrase *main clause* are in texts about grammar/linguistics. But there is at least one from a legal text, where *clause* means “part of a legal document or law that officially states that something must be done” (definition from *Macmillan Dictionary*).