

# SUBORDINATION, COORDINATION, and PREDICATION

## UWF Writing Lab

Excerpted from Heffernan and Lincoln, *Writing: A College Handbook*, W.W. Norton, 1982

### SUBORDINATION

Subordination enables you to show the relative importance of the parts of a sentence. To use subordination is to make one or more parts of a sentence depend on the part that is most important to you.

Suppose you have the following thoughts and you want to put them together in one sentence.

The dog lived next door.  
The dog was scrawny.  
The dog barked.  
The dog was old.  
The dog howled.  
The dog kept me awake.  
I was awake all night.

One way we could consolidate these thoughts is this sentence.

The dog was scrawny and old, and he lived next door; he barked and howled and kept me awake all night.

Coordination has begun the work on this sentence by bringing scrawny and old together and bringing howled and barked together. However, this sentence needs subordination to tell us which of the many facts about the dog are most important to you (the writer). How do you decide which facts are most important? If you are writing an essay about the people next door, the most important fact is that the dog belongs to them. Your sentence may look something like this:

The scrawny old dog, whose barking and howling kept me awake all last night, lives next door.

If you are writing an essay about yourself, the most important fact is that the dog kept you awake. Now your sentence must change to reflect the new emphasis:

The scrawny old dog, who lives next door, kept me awake by barking and howling all last night.

If you want to emphasize what happened to you as a result of the sleepless night with the dog, you might write a sentence like this:

Because the barking and howling of the scrawny old dog next door kept me awake all last night, I fell asleep in the middle of the chemistry final.

A subordinate or dependent clause is a group of words that cannot stand alone although it has a subject and a predicate. A subordinate clause must be attached to a main or independent clause to make a complete sentence.

<u>Subordinate Clause</u>	<u>Main Clause</u>
As he was being tackled,	he threw the ball

A subordinate clause can be a noun clause, an adjective clause, or an adverb clause.

### Noun Clauses

A noun clause is used as a subject, object or predicate noun within a sentence. Noun clauses begin with words such as whoever, whichever, whatever, who, that, what, how, why, when, and where.

Noun clause as a subject:

Sylvia did something.

It amazed me.

Combined: What Sylvia did amazed me.

Noun clause as an object:

I feared something.

We would never get out alive.

Combined: I feared that we would never get out alive.

Noun clause as a predicate noun:

My only hope was something.

We might be rescued.

Combined: My only hope was that we might be rescued.

### Adjective Clauses

An adjective or relative clause normally begins with a relative pronoun and modifies the word or phrase that comes before it. Adjective clauses begin with words such as which, that, who, whom, or whose. Adjective clauses are used to combine two sentences that refer to the same person or thing.

The dog lives next door.

The dog kept me awake last night.

Combined: The dog that lives next door kept me awake last night.

Combined: The dog that kept me awake last night lives next door.

In the first combination, we have emphasized the fact that the dog kept me awake by subordinating the fact that the dog lives next door. In the second combination, we have subordinated the fact that the dog kept me awake and emphasized that fact that it lives next door.

### Adverb Clauses

Like one-word adverbs, adverb clauses can modify words, phrases, or entire clauses. Adverb clauses begin with subordinating conjunctions such as because, as, if, when, before, since, and so that.

To reach the store before it closed, I drove like a madman.

Because I was late to class, I missed the reading quiz.

Adverb clauses are always subordinate to the main clause in a sentence. The subordinating conjunctions that begin adverb clauses can be used to signal one of the following relations:

Time: after, before, when  
Before he went to school, he fed the dog.

Causality: because, since  
Because she was afraid, Katie would not go on the roller coaster.

Concession/contrast:  
although, though, even though  
My husband is fat, even though I can't cook.

- Condition: if, as long as  
If I am late for class, I will miss the reading quiz.
- Purpose: so that, in order to  
I worked during the summer so that I could have spending money.
- Place: where, wherever  
Where the mother duck goes, the baby ducks follow.
- Result: so that  
Please write legibly so that I can understand your essay.
- Possibility: whatever  
Whatever my little brother wants, he gets.
- Comparison: than, as  
The river is cleaner now than it was two years ago.

The following faulty sentence structures can be corrected with subordination.

EXAMPLE #1:

The Romans had a strong sense of family and tradition and as its consequence were especially attentive to burial ceremonies.

This sentence contains two points about the Romans:

They had a strong sense of family and tradition.

They were especially attentive to burial ceremonies.

Which point is more important? Which point can we logically subordinate? The fact that the Romans were attentive to burial ceremonies is the more important point. The reason for this attentiveness is that they had a strong sense of family and tradition. This kind of relation between two thoughts or sentences is called a causal relationship. To correct the original sentence, we will subordinate the clause dealing with a strong sense of family and tradition. To subordinate this clause correctly, we will use a subordinating conjunction indicating a causal relationship.

Because the Romans had a strong sense of family and tradition, they were especially attentive to burial ceremonies.

EXAMPLE #2

A teacher has too many students in a class; no one receives enough help or attention.

The more important point in this sentence is the fact that no one receives enough help or attention.

However, this situation does not occur all the time. It occurs only when a teacher has too many students in a class. The correction should reflect this fact.

When a teacher has too many students in a class, no one receives enough help or attention.

### COORDINATION

To coordinate two or more parts of a sentence is to give them the same rank and role by making them grammatically similar. A compound phrase links two similar words or phrases.

thick and thin

stern yet loving

over the hill and through the woods

A compound sentence uses coordination to join two or more simple sentences to show one of the following relations between them.

Addition: Jimmy got a new bicycle, and he rides it every day.

Contrast: Art is long, but life is short.

Cause and effect:  
Ann behaved badly; therefore, she was punished.

Choice: We must conquer inflation, or it will conquer us.

### Coordinating Conjunctions

The coordinating conjunctions (“FANBOYS”) are for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so.

F— for  
A— and  
N— nor  
B— but  
O— or  
Y— yet  
S— so.

Coordinating conjunctions indicate the following relations:

Addition: (and)  
The flag dropped, *and* the race began.

Addition of a negative point: (nor)  
They didn’t have money, *nor* did they have food.

Contrast: (but or yet)  
Her parents were strict, *but* she was loved.

Logical consequence: (for or so)  
For introduces a reason.  
She got married, *for* she was in love.  
So introduces a consequence.  
The weather was cold outside, *so* we went inside.

Choice: (or)  
We could go to the movie, *or* we could go bowling.

### Conjunctive Adverbs

Like coordinating conjunctions (“FANBOYS”), conjunctive adverbs indicate the relationships between the clauses they join. Conjunctive adverbs are more emphatic than the “FANBOYS.”

Addition: (besides, furthermore, moreover, and in addition)  
She thought the proposal was absurd; *furthermore*, she refused to vote on it.

Likeness: (however, nevertheless, still, nonetheless, conversely, otherwise, instead, in contrast, or on the other hand)  
The boys won their baseball game; *however*, their coach remained unhappy with their performance.

Cause and Effect: (accordingly, consequently, hence, therefore, as a result)  
Taxes are increasing; *therefore*, spending will decrease.

A Means-and-End Relation: (thus, thereby, by this means, in this manner)

Shirley works two jobs and goes to night school; *thus*, she will graduate soon and get a good job.

Reinforcement: (for example, for instance, in fact, in particular, indeed)

Pizza is America's favorite food; *in fact*, over fifty percent of us eat it once a week.

Time: (meanwhile, then, subsequently, afterward, earlier, later)

We got popcorn from the vendor; *then* we were seated in the theater.

The following faulty sentence structure can be corrected with coordination:

EXAMPLE 1:

Karen is an excellent student in mathematics, because in poetry she cannot understand meter or identify figures of speech.

The problem with this sentence is faulty subordination. The fact that Karen cannot understand meter or identify figures of speech is not the reason for her being an excellent student in math. We can correct this sentence by replacing the subordinating conjunction because with a coordinating conjunction indicating contrast.

Karen is an excellent student in mathematics, but in poetry she cannot understand meter or identify figures of speech.

EXAMPLE 2:

Our view of the world is affected by science, also our way of living.

In this sentence, the word also fails to show that both our view of the world and our way of living are affected by science. Using a coordinating conjunction, we can fix the problem.

Our view of the world is affected by science, and so is our way of living.

### **PREDICATION**

The predicate is the "verb part" of the sentence or clause, the part that expresses something about the subject. Faulty predication occurs when a sentence's subject and predicate are not logically related. Some of the most common forms of faulty predication are faulty complements, intervening words, faulty appositives, and faulty when or where clause constructions.

Faulty predication can occur when a when or where clause follows a be verb and is incorrectly equated with the subject.

EXAMPLE 1:

Taxidermy is where you construct a lifelike representation of an animal using its preserved skin.

Where denotes place, but taxidermy is not a place. Taxidermy is a process or construction.

Taxidermy is the construction of a lifelike representation of an animal by using its preserved skin.

EXAMPLE 2:

Depression is when a person has a mood of hopelessness and a feeling of inadequacy.

When denotes time, but depression is not a time. Depression is a state of being.

Depression is a state in which a person has a mood of hopelessness and a feeling of inadequacy.

### Faulty Complement

Faulty complements are found in sentences containing linking or be verbs in which the subject complement does not logically relate to the subject.

#### EXAMPLE 1:

In my philosophy class, the discussion is only a few students and the instructor.

In this sentence, the writer is saying that a few students and the instructor are a discussion. People can't be a discussion. People have discussions, and the sentence correction will reflect this fact.

In my philosophy class, the discussion is carried on by only a few students and the instructor.

#### EXAMPLE 2:

Biology's most important contribution to world peace will probably be that of the development of harvestable plants that grow in salt water.

In this sentence, the faulty predication lies in the phrase "that of the development of harvestable plants." This phrase is not logically related to the subject "biology's most important contribution to world peace." The correction will make the predicate equal to the subject.

Biology's most important contribution to world peace will probably be the development of harvestable plants that grow in salt water.

### Intervening Words

When intervening words obscure the connection between the subject and the verb, another form of faulty predication occurs. The connection between a subject and a verb must be clear and logical.

#### EXAMPLE 1:

The decision about the disposal of waste products has delayed construction of new nuclear power plants.

The subject of this sentence is decision, and the verb is has delayed. This sentence structure is illogical because a decision cannot delay anything. People who make decisions can delay things.

Lack of a decision about the disposal of waste products has delayed construction of new nuclear power plants.

OR

The committee's failure to decide about the disposal of waste products has delayed construction of new nuclear power plants.

#### EXAMPLE 2:

The development of telescopes was made in considerable numbers and was found throughout Europe soon after.

This sentence contains the subject development and the compound verb was made and was found. However, the development wasn't made or found; telescopes were made and found.

Telescopes were made in considerable numbers and were found throughout Europe soon after their invention.

## Faulty Appositives

An appositive is a noun or noun phrase which is placed with another as an explanatory equivalent. A faulty appositive occurs when an appositive is equated with a noun or pronoun which it cannot logically modify.

### EXAMPLE 1:

The salaries are high in professional athletics, such as football players.

In this sentence, athletics is being equated with players. Players are not the athletics; they are athletes.

The salaries are high for professional athletes, such as football players.

### EXAMPLE 2:

Competition is intense for the higher paid professions, such as doctors.

In this sentence, professions is being equated with doctors. Doctors are professionals, not professions. Professions are medicine and law.

Competition is intense for the higher paid professionals, such as doctors.

**OR**

Competition is intense for the higher paid professions, such as law and medicine.

## So vs. So that

So is a coordinating conjunction and should be used alone only in that capacity to mean therefore.

We were getting rained on, so we went inside.

Do not use so to mean so that. So that can be used before a result clause, but unlike the coordinating conjunction so, so that is not preceded by a comma.

Incorrect: He wore elevator shoes so he would look taller.

Correct: He wore elevator shoes so that he would look taller.

If so is being used as an intensifier, it should be followed by a qualifying phrase beginning with that.

Incorrect: I was so excited!

Correct: I was so excited that I forgot to say goodbye.

So that has been misused in the following sentence.

So many people wanted to take advantage of the free dental examination so that appointments had to be made months in advance.

The first so is correct. The second so is redundant.

So many people wanted to take advantage of the free dental examination that appointments had to be made months in advance.

## Because vs. The Reason

When we say because, we mean “the reason is that.” Therefore, to have both because and the reason in the same sentence is incorrect.

Incorrect: The reason she won the race is because she trained hard.  
Correct: Because she trained hard, she won the race.  
OR  
Correct: The reason she won the race is that she trained hard.

### Clauses

When they are used incorrectly, clauses beginning with who, that, where, and when can also cause predication errors. Each of the underlined pronouns above has its place in a specific type of clause. Who most often introduces clauses referring to people but may also introduce clauses referring to animals with names. Which introduces clauses referring to animals and things. Where introduces clauses referring to places. When introduces clauses referring to times. That usually introduces clauses referring to people, animals or things. **It especially refers to people when they are collective or anonymous.**

#### Who clauses:

He who owns the gold makes the rules.  
The girl who lives next door is my best friend.

#### Which clauses:

The story which she told us was scary.  
The birds which are overhead are causing problems for the pedestrians.

#### Where clauses:

The restaurant where we ate lunch is downtown.  
The store where I bought your gift is closed on Sundays.

#### When clauses:

There comes a time when everyone must face his past.  
At six o'clock in the morning, when the sun is rising, I am asleep.

#### That clauses:

The dog that bit me was rabid.  
Infants that walk need constant tending.

The following examples of faulty predication can be corrected by using the correct clause.

#### EXAMPLE 1:

The dentist where I get my teeth done was recommended to me by my next door neighbor.

A dentist is a person, but in this sentence, dentist is being modified by a where clause.

The dentist who does my teeth was recommended to me by my next door neighbor.

#### EXAMPLE 2:

Frog gigging is when you kill frogs with a long, sharp stick.

This sentence indicates that frog gigging, an activity, is a time.

Frog gigging is the act of killing frogs with a long, sharp stick.

Here are some other instances of faulty predication and ways to correct them.

#### EXAMPLE 1:

Recently, many sports celebrities have taken advantage of their fame to become a successful politician.

In this sentence, we have the plural celebrities taking advantage of their fame to become a single politician.

Recently, many sports celebrities have taken advantage of their fame to become successful politicians.

EXAMPLE 2:

Even though the class was an able one, only thirty of the students graduated from law school, passed their qualifying examinations, and became a lawyer.

In this sentence, we have thirty students becoming one lawyer.

Even though the class was an able one, only thirty of the students graduated from law school, passed their qualifying examinations, and became lawyers.

### YOUR TURN

Directions: Each of the following sentences contains at least one error. Many of the sentences can be corrected in more than one way. Use the most logical way to correct each sentence.

1. Sally teased the dog mercilessly and because of this fact, the dog bit her on the hand.
2. The *Mona Lisa* was in the Louvre, and it was stolen from there in 1911.
3. You misspell just one word, and she gives you an F.
4. Herman Melville lived in New York City for most of his life, and he wrote *Moby Dick* on a farm in Massachusetts.
5. Everyone has heard of Davy Crockett; most people do not know that he was a congressman.
6. Couples seen holding hands or kissing are indicators of affection.
7. Brian babysat his sister on Friday so he could go to the movie on Saturday.
8. Many models wear black so they will look slimmer.
9. In running to catch the bus was how I twisted my ankle.
10. I hope I get into medical school because I've done well in all my classes.
11. The ERA was supported by many Americans; it failed to win passage in the allotted time.
12. Texas is the largest state in the continental United States, and Alaska is actually the largest state in the Union.
13. Mercury is the planet where is closest to the sun.
14. Students which complete their work in less than four years can enter the job market more quickly.
15. The sun was so hot we became sunburned in less than an hour.
16. Matthew is a high school football star because he makes bad grades.
17. The reason for the grammar lessons is because many people need extra attention and help in order to write standard English.
18. Mounting costs and declining advertising revenue were the demise of *Look* magazine in 1971.
19. By trying to find a short route to India was how Columbus discovered the New World.
20. Competition is fierce among athletes such as fencing and water polo.
21. Joseph Lister proved that one of the best germ killers is by coating a wound with carbolic acid.
22. Because of a defect in the design made the roof of the gym collapse.
23. The purpose of Napoleon's campaign failed because of the Russian winter.
24. Only those men who pass their physicals can join the Army and become a soldier.

25. Dr. Jones gives her patients gas so they won't feel any pain where she drills their teeth.
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KEY

1. Because Sally teased the dog mercilessly, it bit her on the hand.
2. The *Mona Lisa* was stolen from the Louvre in 1911.
3. If you misspell just one word, she gives you an F.
4. Herman Melville lived in New York City for most of his life, but he wrote *Moby Dick* on a farm in Massachusetts.
5. Although everyone has heard of Davy Crockett, most people do not know that he was a congressman.
6. Holding hands and kissing are indicators of affection.  
**OR**  
Couples seen holding hands or kissing are indicating affection.
7. Brian babysat his sister on Friday so **that** he could go to the movie on Saturday.
8. Many models wear black so **that** they will look slimmer.
9. In running to catch the bus, I twisted my ankle.
10. I've done well in all my classes, and I hope I get into medical school.
11. **Although** the ERA was supported by many Americans, it failed to win passage in the allotted time.
12. Texas is the largest state in the continental United States, **but** Alaska is actually the largest state in the Union.
13. Mercury is the planet **that** is closest to the sun.
14. Students **who** complete their work in less than four years can enter the job market more quickly.
15. The sun was so hot **that** we became sunburned in less than an hour.
16. Matthew is a high school football star, **but** he makes bad grades.
17. The reason for the grammar lessons is **that** many people need extra attention and help in order to write standard English.
18. Mounting costs and declining advertising revenue were **factors in** the demise of *Look* magazine in 1971.
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24. Only those men who pass their physicals can join the Army and become **soldiers**.
25. Dr. Jones gives her patients gas so **that** they won't feel any pain **when** she drills their teeth.