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**THE SYNTACTIC STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONAL ROLE OF  
COMPOUND SENTENCES IN THE ENGLISH GRAMMAR**

Jizzakh branch of the National University of  
Uzbekistan named after Mirzo Ulugbek

The faculty of Psychology, department of Foreign languages  
Phylology and foreign languages

**Teshaboyeva Nafisa Zubaydulla qizi**

**Student of group 301-21: Abdug`aniyeva E'zoza Zafarjon qizi**

**Annotation:** This article provides an in-depth exploration of compound sentences in the English language, covering their definition, structure, and use in writing. A compound sentence combines two or more independent clauses, which can stand alone as complete thoughts but are linked to enhance meaning and coherence. The article explains the main ways to structure compound sentences—using coordinating conjunctions (e.g., FANBOYS), semicolons, or conjunctive adverbs—and discusses the purpose each structure serves. Additionally, common mistakes, such as comma splices and run-on sentences, are addressed to help readers avoid common pitfalls. Through examples and explanations, this piece emphasizes the importance of compound sentences in creating clear, varied, and engaging writing. The conclusion highlights the value of mastering this sentence structure to strengthen written communication.

**Key words:** compound sentences, English grammar, independent clauses, coordinating conjunctions, FANBOYS, semicolons, conjunctive adverbs, sentence structure, writing clarity, comma splices, run-on sentences, writing skills, sentence variety, English language, grammar mistakes, effective communication.

In English grammar, compound sentences are a fundamental concept that enhances both the clarity and style of writing. Understanding compound sentences allows writers to connect related ideas smoothly and can improve the readability and expressiveness of their work. This article will cover what compound sentences are, how they are structured, the types of conjunctions used, and common mistakes to avoid when constructing them.

**What is a Compound Sentence?**

A compound sentence is a sentence that contains two or more independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction, semicolon, or transitional phrase. Each clause within a compound sentence could stand alone as a complete sentence since each has a subject and a predicate.

For example:



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

In this sentence, "I wanted to go for a walk" and "it started to rain" are both independent clauses, each conveying a complete thought. They are connected by the coordinating conjunction "but."

### Structure of a Compound Sentence

A compound sentence is typically formed in one of the following ways:

Using a Coordinating Conjunction

- Formula: Independent clause + , + coordinating conjunction + independent clause
- Example: "She loves to read novels, and he enjoys watching movies."
- In this structure, a comma precedes the coordinating conjunction (like and, but, or, for, nor, so, yet).

Using a Semicolon

- Formula: Independent clause + ; + independent clause
- Example: "I wanted to watch the movie; it was already too late."
- A semicolon is used when two independent clauses are closely related but do not require a conjunction to make sense together.

Using a Semicolon with a Conjunctive Adverb or Transitional Phrase

- Formula: Independent clause + ; + conjunctive adverb/transitional phrase + , + independent clause
- Example: "The concert was canceled; therefore, we decided to go out for dinner instead."
- Here, a transitional word or phrase, such as therefore, however, or meanwhile, connects the clauses.

### The Role of Coordinating Conjunctions in Compound Sentences

In English, coordinating conjunctions are a primary tool for linking clauses in compound sentences. The seven coordinating conjunctions are remembered using the acronym FANBOYS:

- For
- And
- Nor
- But
- Or
- Yet
- So

Each coordinating conjunction has a unique purpose:



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- For explains reason or purpose ("I stayed home, for I wasn't feeling well").
- And adds information ("She packed her bag, and he got the tickets").
- Nor presents an additional negative idea ("He didn't like the weather, nor did he enjoy the company").
- But shows contrast ("She wanted to stay, but she had to leave").
- Or offers an alternative ("We could go to the park, or we could stay indoors").
- Yet introduces a surprising or opposing idea ("She is very young, yet she has a lot of experience").
- So indicates a consequence ("It was raining, so we stayed inside").

### Common Mistakes in Compound Sentences

#### Comma Splices

- A comma splice occurs when two independent clauses are joined by only a comma, without a conjunction or semicolon.
- Incorrect: "It's a sunny day, we should go for a hike."
- Correct: "It's a sunny day, so we should go for a hike."

#### Run-on Sentences

- A run-on sentence happens when two independent clauses are connected without any punctuation or conjunction.
- Incorrect: "I enjoy reading mystery novels they are very engaging."
- Correct: "I enjoy reading mystery novels; they are very engaging."

#### Misusing Conjunctions

- Be careful with conjunctions that imply a specific relationship between clauses. For example, "but" suggests contrast, so it should only connect clauses with opposing ideas.

### Examples of Compound Sentences

- "I tried calling her several times, but she didn't answer."
- "We could go to the beach; it's a beautiful day."
- "I forgot my homework; however, the teacher allowed me to submit it later."
- "He loves football, and he watches every game."

### Why Use Compound Sentences?

Compound sentences add variety and improve readability. By combining related ideas, compound sentences can make writing smoother, reduce redundancy, and help clarify relationships between ideas. For instance, instead of writing, "I like coffee. I drink it every morning," using a compound sentence like "I like coffee, and I drink it every morning" gives the statement a natural flow.

### Conclusion



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In conclusion, compound sentences are more than just a grammatical concept—they are a powerful tool for expressing ideas fluidly and connecting thoughts with purpose. By understanding and practicing compound sentence structures, writers can create more dynamic and engaging sentences that guide readers smoothly from one idea to the next. Whether used to show cause and effect, add contrast, or simply link related information, compound sentences are invaluable for anyone looking to elevate their English writing skills. Embracing compound sentences in your writing will not only improve clarity but also enrich the overall reading experience, making your message stronger and more cohesive. Mastering compound sentences is an important step in developing clear and expressive English writing. By learning to effectively use coordinating conjunctions, semicolons, and transitional phrases, writers can enhance their style, communicate relationships between ideas more effectively, and engage readers with a more varied sentence structure. Whether for storytelling, formal writing, or everyday communication, compound sentences are an essential tool in the English language.

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