TOPIC 6:
The Clause
(continued....)

Types of Clause (iii): Function Classes

In traditional grammar, clauses are often identified on the basis of the function they serve:

1. **Adverbial Clause**: a clause which functions as an Adjunct (replaces an adverb)
2. **Nominal Clause**: a clause that replaces an NP, and thus can function as Subject, Object, Complement, etc.
3. **Attributive Clause**: A clause that functions as a Postmodifier to a noun (the Qualifier) (‘replaces an adjective’, except adjectives are premodifiers).

These labels are deceptive, because they apply to a wide range of clauses. For instance, an adverbial clause could be a finite-clause with connector, infinitive-clause, present-participle clause or a past-participle clause.

So in fact, an adverbial clause is not a type of clause. It is a use of a clause. It is clearer to say “a clause that can fill the Adjunct slot” or “a clause that can fill the Subject/Object/Complement slot”.

3 Types of Clause (i): Finiteness

Above we have seen clauses can fill a number of different slots:

- As an independent clause in a simple clause or clause complex.
  
  *John swims daily. Mary cooks the food and John eats it.*

- As an Adjunct in another clause.
  
  *John likes Mary because she is cute.*

- As a Subject or Object in another clause.
  
  *I think that you should go.*

- As a Qualifier following a noun.
  
  *The man holding the gun liked pizza.*

The “shape” of a clause determines which of these slots the clause can fill. This section looks at the various “shapes” that clauses can take.
In summary, the most important types of clauses are:

finite-clause FINITE-CLAUSE-TYPE
- simple-finite-clause  
  I like ice-cream
- finite-clause-with-connector  
  because I like ice-cream
- that-clause  
  that I like ice-cream
- wh-nominal-clause  
  what I like
- relative-clause  
  that I like

nonfinite-clause NONFINE-CLAUSE-TYPE
- infinitive-clause  
  to like ice-cream
- present-participle-clause  
  liking ice-cream
- past-participle-clause  
  liked by all

4 Finite Clauses

A finite clause is one which has a Finite verb (which agrees with the Subject) and usually a Subject.

I like ice-cream because it tastes nice.

There are 5 Types of Finite clauses:

- Simple finite clause:  
  I like ice-cream
- Simple finite with connector:  
  because it tastes nice
- Relative-clause:  
  the car that Mary likes.
- Wh-nominal clause:  
  What I like is what I get.
- That-clause:  
  I said that you should go.
  the fact that Mary likes this car
Note the following cases of ellipsed Subject in a finite clause:

- I like Mary but _ø_ hate Jane
- the car _ø_ ate Paris
- the car that paris liked _ø_

### 4.1 Simple finite clause

Simple finite-clauses are most common clauses. A plain sentence consists of a single simple finite-clause:

- I am going to Sydney.

Two or more simple finite-clauses can join together as a complex sentence:

- I am leaving _but_ I will be back.

When a simple finite-clause is independent, it can be declarative, interrogative or imperative:

- **Declarative:** I will be back.
- **Interrogative (wh):** When will you be back?
- **Interrogative (yes-no):** Will you be back?
- **Imperative:** Come back!

### 4.2 Finite clause with connector

Finite clauses often function as Adjunct in a clause, specifying some circumstance of the clause. They usually have a connector at front, signalling the relation to the main clause:

- **Reason:** I left _because_ she cooks badly.
- **Temporal:** I left _while_ he was in the bath.
- **Condition:** if you eat it, I will pay for it.

Etc.

### 4.3 Wh nominal clause

Wh-nominal clauses generally function as Subject, Object or Complement, usually replacing reported speech or thought without explicit detail (_I told him to be here at 11_ -> _I told him when he should be here_). Wh-nominal clauses can represent content (what is said or thought) or polarity:

- **Content type:** I told them _what_ I like. _when_ I like it _who_ I like _how_ I like it _which_ car I wanted _what_ a good time I had _on_ which day I was going
Examples: It's amazing how it infuriates her.
I remember what a good time I had at your party.
I don't remember what time I left your party.
I don't know at what time I left your party.
I forget who you said I told Mary to see.

Polarity type: I don't know if Jack is at home; I asked whether they wanted any.

Wh-nominal clauses can also appear as Subject, or Complement in relating clauses: What you have is not good enough. I am what you want.

They can also be Subject or Object in other clause types: I found what you want. I can see who you are, etc.

Structure of the Wh-clause

- The wh-word appears first.
- This word represents one of the constituents in the clause, which is not given in its usual place:
  - Replacing Object: Who I like ø is my business
  - Replacing Adjunct: When I eat ice cream ø …
  - Replacing subject: Who ø likes ice cream is a good question.

Note difference from wh-interrogatives:

Who I like vs. Who do you like?

When you eat ice cream vs. When do you eat ice cream?

Distinguishing wh-question, finite clause with wh-connector and wh-nominal clause:

- A wh-question is a simple finite clause in the interrogative mood. It usually starts with a wh-word, such as “Who are you?”, “When did you arrive?”. These clauses are almost always independent clauses. In a wh-question, the wh-word represents one of the constituents of the clause which is moved to the front of the clause. The Subject and Finite usually need to be inverted (when did/FIN you/SUBJ …), and a do-insert is needed if the finite verb is the main verb (except ‘be’)
- A finite clause with wh-connector occurs when the connector is a wh-word, for instance “When I get home, you should be ready.” Note that “when” here is a connector, and could be replaced by “before” or “after”. These clauses function as Adjunct. The wh-word does not stand in for any constituent of the clause. There is no Subject-Finite inversion, nor do-insert.
- A wh-nominal clause functions as Subject or Object. Since the wh-word represents one of the constituents of the clause (Subject, Object, Adjunct, …), a constituent should be missing (note: ‘when’ will replace an Adjunct). No Subject-Finite inversion. What I like is ice cream.
4.4 That clause (fact clause)

A that-clause is a finite clause fronted by “that”, and which represents a fact being presented to the addressee. Most typically, they appear as Subject or Object in a verbal or mental process:

I told him that I was not going
I don’t know that Smith was right.

The “fact” need not be a true fact, it is just a unit of information being dealt with. It could be a fact declared to be false, as in the following:

It is not true that she is silly.

These clauses often appear as Subject:

That she is wise is known by many.
That you are here pleases me.

That clauses can also post-modify a noun (the Qualifier slot) as in the following:

The report that I am dead was greatly exaggerated.
The fact that she was there ...

(compare: the man that was here)

Note the special case: He said he was coming. We might say that this is a that-clause with the ‘that’ elided (left out). On the other hand, we might say that this is a case where a simple-finite clause fills the Direct Object slot. Both answers will be accepted in the Exam.

4.5 Relative Clauses

A relative clause appears as a post-modifier to an NP (in the Qualifier slot).

The man that I saw
The men that saw me.
The man who I saw

They are syntactically similar to wh-clauses, in that the pronoun at front (called here the relative pronoun) represents one of the constituents of the clause. E.g.

The man that I saw ø yesterday
“that” stands in for the missing Object (I saw the man)

The man that ø saw me yesterday
“that” stands in for the missing Subject (the man saw me)

The place that I came from ø
“that” stands in for part of the missing Adjunct (I came from the place)
However relative clauses differ from wh-clauses:

- They function only as a postmodifier of an NP, while a wh-nominal clause cannot.
- In most cases, ‘that’ can be used instead of a wh-pronoun: the man that came to dinner, the man who came to dinner.

Defining and nondefining relative clauses: Above are examples of defining relative clauses. There are also nondefining relative clauses.

A defining relative clause appears without commas:

\[ a) \text{ The students who are bright passed the exam easily.} \]

A nondefining relative clause is punctuated with commas:

\[ b) \text{ The students, who are bright, passed the exam easily.} \]

The defining relative clause limits the reference, so that in (a), only the students who were bright passed the exam. A nondefining relative clause does not change the reference of the NP, but rather adds extra information. (b) Could thus be reworded as:

\[ c) \text{ The students passed the exam easily. They are bright.} \]

**Distinguishing wh-clause from relative-clause**: both relative clauses and that-clauses can start with a wh-pronoun.

- if the clause is Subject or Object, it is a wh-clause: “who I like is not your business”
- if the clause is postmodifying a noun, it is a relative clause: “the man who I like”. Generally, but not always, the wh-word in a relative clause can be replaced by “that”.

**Distinguishing relative-clause from that-clause**: both relative clauses and that-clauses can start with “that”.

if the clause is Subject or Object, it is a that-clause. “She said that…”
if the clause is postmodifying a noun:
if the noun is a container of information (fact, report, etc.), it is probably a that clause. (the report that you had died)
With a relative-clause, the “that” can generally be substituted for a wh-pronoun: “the man that…” -> “the man who…”. Not true for that-clauses.
With the relative clause, the “that” stands in for one of the constituents of the clause, so one should be missing. In a that clause, no constituent is elided.