



Chapter 12

Adjective Clauses

CHAPTER SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE: This chapter focuses on helping students understand the function of adjective clauses, comprehend them when encountered, and produce them naturally. By learning to use adjective clauses, students will greatly expand their ability to communicate and comprehend complex descriptions, definitions, contrasts, etc.

APPROACH: To keep the focus on main patterns, the text presents only restrictive (identifying) adjective clauses. These include fundamental structures with subject and object relative pronouns, omission of the object pronoun from an adjective clause, the placement of prepositions within a clause, and the use of *whose*. The text is designed so that the students first gain control of the basic patterns; they can wrestle with the punctuation of nonrestrictive and restrictive clauses at a later stage of their study of English in *Understanding and Using English Grammar*. The most important task is to foster recognition that by comprehending and using adjective clauses, students can describe their world very effectively.

TERMINOLOGY: Minimal terminology to describe dependent (subordinate) clauses is introduced in the extensive footnote to Chart 12-1. Some books use the term “relative clause” instead of “adjective clause,” and “relative pronoun” instead of “adjective clause pronoun.” Some students may find the terminology helpful; others will understand and gain control of the structures in this chapter without paying much attention to the terminology of grammar descriptions.

The extent to which you emphasize terminology in your teaching is your decision and, in large part, depends on the predominant learning styles of your students. Academically oriented students often like and need descriptive labels for grammar structures. Students interested in conversational English often concentrate more on understanding the examples than on trying to grasp the grammar explanations. There is no “right” way to incorporate terminology in the teaching of grammar. The intention of the text is to offer just enough so that teacher and students can communicate about the structures.

CHART 12-1. Adjective Clauses:
Introduction. Page 321
Time: 10–15 minutes

There are three principal kinds of dependent clauses in English: (1) an adverb clause, (2) an adjective clause, and (3) a noun clause. The text presents the fundamentals of all three kinds.

The concept of a dependent clause (for example, a “time clause” or an “if-clause”) is presented first in Chapters 2 and 3 in conjunction with the study of verb tenses. The terminology “adverb clause” is first used in Chapter 8 with the use of *because* and *even though*. This chapter presents adjective clauses. The third type of dependent clause, the noun clause, is introduced in Chapter 14.

The approach in this chart is to connect the function of adjectives to the function of adjective clauses. One problem in examples (a)–(d) in this chart is that some students may think an adjective clause needs to have an adjective in it. That is not true. Point out to students that example (e) contains no adjective; the information in the clause itself serves to describe the noun; for example, the function of the clause is the same as the function of an adjective, and that’s why these clauses are called adjective clauses. The real point here is that adjectives in a noun phrase precede the noun, whereas adjective clauses follow the noun.

The approach of the text is to connect the use of personal pronouns and relative pronouns. In a simple sentence or main clause, *he, she, it, they, him, her, them, his, and their* are used. Their counterparts in an adjective clause are *who, whom, that, which, and whose*. The object of this chapter is to show how these relative pronouns are used.

- Discuss with students how they describe nouns and what kinds of words they use to do so.
- From the above discussion, pick a few *adjective + noun* phrases and write some of these on the board. For example:

a mysterious letter
boring books
lively music

- To expand on these ideas, ask students questions such as:

What kind of a letter is a mysterious letter?

Which books are boring to you?

What kind of music is lively music?

- Students will naturally give you approximations of actual adjective clauses.
- Write their descriptions on the board. For example:

A mysterious letter:

I want to read it

It is not boring

With a secret in it

- With help from the class, create a new sentence on the board, drawing from the ideas about the phrase and containing an adjective clause.
- Tell students that adjective clauses provide ways for people to identify nouns with clauses. Explain that this is very useful because often the way we want to describe something does not have its own adjective. For example:
A mysterious letter is something that I want to read.
- Explain that by using the clause *that I want to read*, students can identify nouns on exactly their own terms.
- Ask students to read the example sentences (a) and (b) aloud. Discuss each one in contrast with (c)–(e).
- Read through the grammar notes with students and answer any questions students may have.
- Rather than having students simply read the notes on clauses, ask them to define these terms and to put the definitions on the board.

□ EXERCISE 3. Warm-up. Page 322

Time: 5–10 minutes

Expansion: Ask students what other specialist names they know and define them in the same way as in the Warm-up.

Other specialist titles include:

a podiatrist

an endocrinologist (a doctor that treats hormonal disorders)

a gerontologist (a doctor that treats elderly people)

a psychiatrist (a doctor that treats mental illness)

an obstetrician (a doctor that treats pregnant women)

an ophthalmologist (a doctor that treats eye disorders)

an oncologist (a doctor that treats cancer)

a neurologist (a doctor that treats diseases of the nervous system)

You can further expand this by asking students to distinguish the names of specializations and see if they can distinguish two types of specialty names. Students should be able to identify that some specialties are named for the person that the doctor treats (children, elderly people, pregnant women) and some specialists are named for the disease that they treat.

CHART 12-2. Using *Who* and *That* in Adjective Clauses to Describe People. Page 322

Time: 10 minutes

The text presents a little information at a time about the patterns of adjective clauses. This chart presents the subject pronoun *who*. Importantly, the chart also illustrates that the *who* in an adjective clause describing a person can also be replaced with the general subject pronoun *that*.

Review the terms “subject” and “object” with your students and ask them to define “subject,” while introducing the topic.

*INCORRECT: The man who **he** lives next to me is friendly.*

*INCORRECT: The woman that **she** works in our pediatrician’s office is helpful.*

Typical mistakes are including (or repeating) the personal pronoun in addition to the personal pronoun. Learners need to understand that *who* and *that* are used instead of personal pronouns but never in addition to personal pronouns.

This text does not present nonrestrictive adjective clauses. All the adjectives presented here define and identify the nouns they modify. For a discussion of nonrestrictive adjective clauses, please see *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, Chapter 13.

At this stage in language study, learners generally still do not use adjective clauses idiomatically. Because they are not completely comfortable using them, students may avoid these altogether. Assure students that their idiomatic usage ability will grow as they gain more experience with the language. Conversely, they will not be able to grow their language and develop confident usage ability without using these challenging target structures. Remind students that mastering adjective clauses allows them limitless new opportunities for description of nouns and thereby, overall expression. They can simply say so much more when they are not limited to a list of adjectives already in existence. As the English saying goes, from a small acorn, the great oak grows. It is counterproductive for the grammar teacher or text to present the whole oak tree right at the beginning.

- Emphasize to students that adjective clauses allow English users to describe any person, place, or thing much more specifically and accurately.
- Tell students adjective clauses free them to describe people in many more ways.
- Ask for a student volunteer. Explain that the class is going to describe this student nicely. (You can encourage the students by saying that demonstration gives students a chance to know what their classmates think of them. If no one offers, use yourself in this role.)
- Write the following simple sentences on the board (if you are using yourself as the subject). If not, create a new simple sentence to introduce the student others will describe.

The woman is patient. She teaches our grammar class.

- Now show students how to combine these sentences into one sentence. Show every step you take in doing so by crossing out, moving, and adding words. Explain each step you take:

The woman is patient. ⇒ *She teaches our grammar class.*

The woman who teaches our grammar class is patient.

- Now ask students to offer other sentences as alternatives to the first sentence in the original pair of sentences. For example:

The woman is strange but funny.

The woman loves grammar.

The woman bikes to work.

The woman eats ice cream frequently.

- Ask students to make new combinations from the clauses above and write these on the board. For example:

The woman who teaches our grammar class is strange but funny.

The woman who teaches our grammar class loves grammar.

The woman who teaches our grammar class bikes to work.

The woman who teaches our grammar class eats ice cream frequently.

- Explain that **that** is also a subject pronoun and can replace *who* in the above sentences.
- Ask a student or students to replace the *who* with *that* and read the resulting sentences aloud.
- Ask a student to read through example sentences (a) and (b). Review the chart notes on the right.
- Ask a different student to read example sentences (c) and (d) aloud. Answer any questions that remain.

□ EXERCISE 5. Looking at grammar.

Page 323

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Allow students a few minutes to complete each item.
- Ask a few students to write the sentences on the board, underline the adjective clause, and draw an arrow to the noun modified.
- Leave the sentences on the board and correct any mistakes that students may have made.

□ EXERCISE 8. Let's talk. Page 324

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Put students into pairs or small groups.
- Ask students to see how many sentences they can readily make from each item given.
- Walk around the room, encouraging students to try out new vocabulary, and correct and support them as they do so.
- Take notes on errors that you hear. The errors can range from target structures to any other words or phrases, or simple pronunciation mistakes.
- If one group or pair finishes earlier than others, have them use *that* in each item and create new sentences just by changing the noun being modified.

- Call students' attention to the board as you bring the exercise to a close and write some of the errors on the board, as you heard them made.
- Have students offer corrections for the mistakes written on the board and review them.

□ EXERCISE 9. Warm-up. Page 324

Time: 5 minutes

- You can introduce this exercise by discussing teachers and what makes a good teacher.
- Create a sentence regarding a teacher you had when you were in school, and then ask students to complete each item.
- Review and discuss their completed items along with the qualities they describe.

CHART 12-3. Using Object Pronouns in Adjective Clauses to Describe People.

Page 324

Time: 10–15 minutes

Help students focus on the fact that adjective clauses can be used to describe both subject and object pronouns. Reiterate that students can use the adjective clause pronoun *that*.

A few notes on the use of *whom*: It is used infrequently in adjective clauses (and questions and noun clauses as well). It is presented here as a device to help students distinguish between subject and object relative pronouns in adjective clause patterns. However, though *whom* is used for object pronouns in adjective clauses, *that* is much more commonly used.

In actual usage:

who is preferred to *that* as a subject pronoun

that is preferred to *who* and *whom* as an object pronoun

in everyday use, omission of the object pronoun is usually preferred to either *that* or *whom*.

The text does not give the students this information. Rather it aims to help students gain control of a few basic patterns.

Explain to students that the only time you can omit a pronoun with an adjective clause is when you are modifying the object; this is not possible with a subject.

- Present this chart with the same approach you used in Chart 12-2. Have students make up sentences describing a classmate with a view to combining these step-by-step with an adjective clause. For example:

The student is from Colombia. I met her in this class.

The student is from Colombia. ⇒ I met ~~her~~ in this class.
that

The student that I met in this class is from Colombia.

- Ask students to take turns reading the example sentences (a)–(c). Review the notes to the right of those.

- Ask other students to take turns reading the example sentences (d)–(f) aloud. Review the second set of notes.

EXERCISE 15. Warm-up. Page 326

Time: 5–10 minutes

You can begin this Warm-up by discussing pets in general.

Possible discussion questions:

How common are pets in your country?

What pets are popular?

What reasons do people have pets?

What is your impression of U.S. pet ownership and / or the role of pets within a U.S. family?

CHART 12-4. Using Pronouns in Adjective Clauses to Describe Things. Page 327

Time: 10–15 minutes

Which is also used in questions to ask for a choice between known items (for example: *Which book is yours?*) Students are learning a different use of *which* in this chart.

A fairly common error is the use of *what* in place of *which*:

INCORRECT: *The book **what** I read was very interesting.*

What is never used as an adjective clause pronoun.

- Because students have now been walked through two presentations of adjective clauses step-by-step, you can invite students to help lead the presentation as much as possible.
- Start by putting two sample sentences on the board and asking a student to come to the board and combine them using *that*. For example:

English is a language. Many people study it.

- Instruct students at their seats to remind the student combining the sentences at the board of all the steps that must be taken. These include:

removing the first period

removing / crossing out the final pronoun it

adding that between the two clauses

- Review the new combined sentence:

English is a language that many people study.

- Invite students to create new combinations based on alternatives to *Many people study it*.

- Write these on the board. For example:

It is not very melodic.

English is a language + It is easy to learn.

It has simple grammar.

It is used in international business.

- Ask students to make new combinations.

English is a language that is not very melodic.

English is a language that is easy to learn.

English is a language that has simple grammar.

English is a language that is used in international business.

- Ask students to read the example sentences (a)–(c) aloud. Review the notes.
- Turn to example sentences (d)–(g) and discuss the use of object pronouns.
- Review the explanations on the right-hand side of the chart.
- Explain to students that the only time you can omit a pronoun with an adjective clause is when you are modifying the object; this is not possible with a subject.

EXERCISE 16. Looking at grammar.

Page 327

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Give students time to complete this item as seatwork.
- Review the completed exercise.
- Have students either put the sentences on the board to underline each adjective clause and show which noun is modified, or simply explain aloud.

EXERCISE 17. Looking at grammar.

Page 328

Time: 5 minutes

Two or three students can respond to each item, each student giving a different form of the answer. Or, the sentences can be written on the board by various students.

EXERCISE 22. Game. Page 330

Time: 10–20 minutes

Expansion: Prepare index cards with lists of random items, places, and people. Distribute these, one to each student. Have students sit in pairs. Instruct students that they need to use adjective clauses correctly and effectively in order to get their partner to say the names of the nouns listed on the index card. Partner A must describe the items on the card until Partner B says the item, person, or place described. Move around the room and assist students with the vocabulary. Make sure students can describe each item, person, or place using adjective clauses.

a toothbrush

Tiger Woods

a doctor's office

a parakeet

yellow stickies
 fish sticks
 a flashlight
 Barack Obama
 apple juice
 a shoe horn
 an electric guitar
 a crossword puzzle
 Tom Cruise
 an ocean reef
 a helicopter

robots
 Paris, France
 Jennifer Aniston
 Skype
 chocolate chip cookies

a DVD
 Swiss cheese
 makeup
 a disco
 laundry detergent

CHART 12-5. Singular and Plural Verbs in Adjective Clauses. Page 331
 Time: 10 minutes

Relative pronouns in English have the same forms in singular as in plural, but they carry the same number as their antecedents; verbs must agree with that number.

Special attention is paid to subject-verb agreement in adjective clauses because it is a common source of errors. (Indeed, subject-verb agreement even in simple sentences remains a problem at this level and beyond.)

INCORRECT: My brother knows several people who is from Lebanon.

INCORRECT: I know a woman who live in the Courtyard Apartments.

- Explain to students that it is critical that they can identify the noun that the adjective clauses describe.
- Demonstrate the importance of identifying the noun that is referred to by creating a very long phrase before the noun and the relative pronoun.
- For example, write the following example (or one of your own creation) on the board.
The student who now takes classes at two universities is friendly with Jin.
- Ask students to come to the board and label the subjects and verbs using capital letters for the subject

and verb of the main clauses and lowercase for the subject and verb of the adjective clause. For example:

S s v V

The student who now takes classes at two universities is friendly with Jin.

- With your students' direction, draw arrows from the subjects to their respective verbs and from the adjective clause pronoun to the noun it refers to.
- Discuss the importance of subject-verb agreement with students and show students how to locate the relative pronoun and locate its antecedent, to ensure agreement.
- Ask students to take turns reading the example sentences (a) and (b) aloud. Discuss the accompanying notes.

EXERCISE 25. Warm-up. Page 332
 Time: 5 minutes

- Ask students to complete the items and then have them read and discuss the items aloud briefly, comparing responses.
- Then, have students underline the adjective clause in each sentence.
- Review their answers as a class.

CHART 12-6. Using Prepositions in Adjective Clauses. Page 332
 Time: 10 minutes

Discuss the concept of formal vs. informal English. Formal English is found, for example, in academic journals, a school or business report, official correspondence, or nonfiction books. Informal English occurs in everyday conversation, a letter to a friend or family member, a relaxed classroom, an email, etc.

The pattern in example (d) is uncommon and very formal ("careful English"). A native speaker might use *who* instead of *whom* but would be more likely to use the patterns in (b) and (c). The pattern in (e) is only used in very formal English.

- Continuing from the Warm-up above, ask students to give you examples of verbs that are followed by prepositions, and write some of these on the board. For example:

listen to
look forward to
talk about
care about
think about

- Ask students questions that use each of the above verb + preposition combinations. For example:

listen to *What kinds of music do you like to listen to?*
look forward to *What kinds of events do you look forward to?*
talk about *What kinds of topics do you enjoy talking about?*

- Ask students to use adjective clauses when responding to the questions above.
- Help students to form answers using adjective clauses.
- Give explicit instructions about the placement of the prepositions and tell students that prepositions can come at the end of the adjective clause.
- Explain that omitting the relative pronoun (*that, whom, which*) is helpful in keeping sentences brief and clear. Students can omit the relative pronoun more readily as they gain mastery of this grammar.
- Have students write some of their responses to the earlier questions on the board:

The music I like to listen to is slow and lyrical.

The events that I always look forward to are usually big family gatherings.

The topics which I enjoy talking about are sports and international news. The topics I don't enjoy talking about are Hollywood gossip and fashion news.

- Ask students to take turns reading the example sentences (a)–(e) aloud.
- Elaborate on the notes to the right and ask for any further questions.
- Have students read (f)–(j) aloud. Summarize the final notes and examples, using the board as needed.

□ EXERCISE 26. Looking at grammar.

Page 332

Time: 5–10 minutes

Students could write their combinations and then exchange papers, or they could write the completed combinations on the board.

□ EXERCISE 27. Looking at grammar.

Page 333

Time: 10–15 minutes

Students sometimes ask how they are supposed to know which preposition they need to use. This exercise consists of preposition combinations with verbs, as listed in Appendix Unit C. Preposition combinations can be memorized, but principally in most teachers' teaching experience, these combinations need to be practiced until they "sound right." Appendix Unit C contains preposition exercises, as does the Appendix section in the *Workbook*. The intention of the text is for the teacher to intersperse work on prepositions throughout the teaching term, using the material in the Appendix as it best fits in with his / her syllabus.

□ EXERCISE 29. Reading and grammar.

Page 334

Time: 10–20 minutes

Part I

- Discuss the pre-reading questions with the class and write as many of students' thoughts and responses on the board.
- Ask students to take turns reading through the passage aloud.
- Correct pronunciation and clarify any adjective clauses.
- Ask students to tell you which nouns are antecedents for the adjective clauses identified.

Part II

- Ask students to complete the sentences by paraphrasing what was read in the passage.
- If needed, refer back to the passage and have students read key sentences aloud.

CHART 12-7. Using *Whose* in Adjective Clauses. Page 336

Time: 10 minutes

The use of *whose* in adjective clauses is difficult for most learners. It occurs relatively infrequently. The text presents only a brief introduction and does not anticipate any degree of usage mastery by the learners.

Pronounce *whose* and *who's* for the students, pointing out that they sound identical. One can discern the meaning (as a possessive or as a contraction of *who* and *is*) from the structure and context.

Point out that *whose* always accompanies a noun in an adjective clause; it does not stand alone as a pronoun as do *who*, *which*, and *that*. *Whose* functions as a possessive adjective; grammatically it is equivalent to the personal possessive adjectives *their*, *his*, and *her*. (*Whose* can also be the equivalent to the possessive *its*, but the text does not introduce the use of *whose* to modify "things" as well as "people"; for example, *an organization whose membership exceeds a thousand people*. See *Understanding and Using English Grammar*.)

- Explain that *whose* shows possession or, in a more general sense, belonging.
- Write two observations in two sentences about a student, on the board. For example:

There is a woman in our class.

Her sense of humor amuses us.

- Explain to students that by using *whose*, the possessive adjective can be omitted and the second clause used to describe the first. For example:

There is a woman in our class whose sense of humor amuses us.

- With your students, create another example for the board, by starting with two related sentences. For example:

I like the young man.

His face is kind.

I like the young man whose face is kind.

- Ask students to take turns reading (a) and (b) aloud. Then review the notes on the right.
- Repeat these instructions with (c)–(f), respectively.

□ EXERCISE 31. Looking at grammar.

Page 336

Time: 10 minutes

In explaining the direction line, make sure students understand the rationale behind steps 1–4. The purpose is to make sure students don't miss a step and that they fully understand which noun *whose* refers to.

- Ask students to work through this exercise independently while you circulate, offering help and support.
- Invite students to write the correct combined sentences on the board for analysis and correction.
- Provide clear and immediate correction and give students multiple examples of the correct use of *whose*.

Optional Vocabulary

resigning
burglarized

□ EXERCISE 32. Let's talk: pairwork.

Page 337

Time: 10–15 minutes

First ask the students to find the possessive adjective for each item in the given sentences. For example, in item 1, the possessive adjective is *his*. Then have them change *his* to *whose*. Ask students to identify to whom *his* and *whose* refer. (Point out that *his* and *whose* have an identical meaning.) They refer to *the man*. *His* = *the man's* and *whose* = *the man's*. The man in sentence (a) lost his car to thieves. Tell students to keep *whose* with the noun that immediately follows (*car*), and move the phrase *whose car* immediately after the noun it modifies. That is how an adjective clause with *whose* is formed.

Some students find these clauses confusing, especially in a case such as item 4, in which the word order changes from simple sentence to adjective clause, with the object (in this case *sister*) preceding the subject and verb.

□ EXERCISE 33. Listening. Page 337

Time: 5 minutes

- Write *who's* (*who* + *is*) and *whose* on the board for students to refer to while listening.
- Remind students that *who's* already has a verb (*to be*) included in it.
- As you review the correct items, point to the corresponding word on the board.
- Review any particularly challenging items.

□ EXERCISE 35. Looking at grammar.

Page 338

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Give students time to complete this review on their own, as seatwork.
- Then ask students to take turns reading their completed items aloud.
- Discuss all possible answers in the cases where more than one completion works.
- Put any particularly challenging items on the board for analysis.

Optional Vocabulary

audition
collapsed
heat exhaustion
budget
dented

□ EXERCISE 38. Let's talk: interview.

Page 340

Time: 10–15 minutes

This exercise can also work well when teacher-led. However, if you can get students to interview each other in-depth, they will have more opportunities to rephrase questions just as they would need to do in real conversations with native speakers.

This exercise presents a typical pattern in which adjective clauses are used. It also draws attention to problems of number when *one of* and *some of* are part of the subject of a sentence.

The pattern with *one of* seems to be a particular source of errors. It is a useful pattern, and it would work well to follow this interview with more oral exercises like the Expansion.

Expansion: Give students a noun and the pronoun, *I*, and write the topic and form on the board. Have the students complete this pattern in referring back to the topic.

One of the + plural noun + adjective clause + singular verb + rest of sentence.

For example:

Teacher: *Cities, I.*

Student: *One of the cities I like best is Bangkok.*

Teacher: *Books, I.*

Student: *One of the books I use in my English classes is (name of a book).*

Topics for this expansion and oral practice:

books	numbers
places	movies
people	cuisines
women	holidays
men	restaurants
problems	students
buildings	teachers
classes	animals
countries	

□ **EXERCISE 41.** Reading and writing.

Page 341

Time: 10–20 minutes

Expansion: Ask students the following related discussion questions before moving on to the writing element.

Do you know many people who are vegans?

Have you ever considered becoming one?

What are some of the challenges to maintaining such a diet?

Is the cuisine of your country suited to being a vegan?

Would people find it particularly difficult to follow a vegan diet while living in your country? Why or why not?

Do you know many people who are vegetarians? What do you think of this type of diet?

Have you ever followed any kind of strict diet? Do you think there is any advantage to human beings to eating meat-based protein products?

What is something you eat every day or every other day?

What do you almost never eat?

Most people prefer the food of their home country to any other. Why is the cuisine of your home country so good? What complaints do people have about it?

Part II

- Give students time to start writing their paragraph in class.
- Walk around the room checking in with students, encouraging them, and providing additional assistance to help them feel motivated to write.
- Ask students to complete the paragraph at home and bring it to the next class for review and correction.