



Chapter 14

Noun Clauses

CHAPTER SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE: The objective of this chapter is to enable students to easily comprehend and use noun clauses. The successful use of noun clauses allows students to engage in natural conversation, in which they can discuss how to get and give information. In addition, they will gain a working knowledge of reported speech, which they can use to relate past conversations and share information gained indirectly.

APPROACH: The first part of the chapter is organized around the three types of noun clauses: those introduced by (1) question words, (2) *if / whether*, and (3) *that*. In the first few sections, noun clauses are presented as transformations of information questions and yes / no questions.

In the second part of the chapter, students also learn to report the words of another person. This is useful in situations ranging from informal conversation to formal academic writing.

TERMINOLOGY: Other terms for some types of noun clauses are “nominal clause,” “*wh*-clause,” “*that*-clause,” and “included, embedded, or indirect questions.” In this text, subordinating conjunctions (e.g., *who*, *what*, *if*, *that*) are simply called “words that introduce noun clauses.” Quoted speech is also called “direct speech” or “direct discourse.” Reported speech is also called “indirect speech” or “indirect discourse.”

EXERCISE 1. Warm-up. Page 370
Time: 5 minutes

After students have marked their answers, you might want to have them find the subject, verb, and object in each item.

CHART 14-1. Noun Clauses: Introduction.
Page 370
Time: 10–15 minutes

The principal problem learners have with noun clauses is correct word order. Students may use question word order (i.e., inverted subject and verb) in noun clauses introduced by a question word.

INCORRECT: I wanted to know why did Ann leave early.

Similarly, students may use noun clause word order in questions:

INCORRECT: Why you left early?

Another difficulty stems from tense changes in noun clauses. For example, the spoken question, *Why is Tom absent?* sometimes changes tense if the reporting verb is past: *The teacher **wanted** to know why Tom **was** absent.*

The formal sequence of tenses in noun clauses is presented in Chart 14-10. Until that point in the chapter (i.e., until all three forms of noun clauses have been introduced and practiced), no introductory verbs are past tense if the student is required to supply the noun clause verb. In this way, students can avoid the complicated problem of changing noun clause verbs to past forms. You should remember to use only present introductory verbs such as *I don't know* when making up your own examples or quizzes.

- Start by putting a simple sentence on the board featuring an object noun that can easily be replaced by a noun clause. For example:

I love my home.

- Explain that *my home* can be replaced with a noun clause.
- Ask students to tell you what the elements of any clause are, and put these on the board. For example:

a clause has a subject and a verb

- Ask students to come up with a way to replace *my home* with a noun clause. For example:
my home = where I live
- Ask students to label the parts of the above clause. For example:

| | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|---|----------|---|-------------|
| | question word | + | subject | + | verb |
| <i>my home =</i> | <i>where</i> | | <i>I</i> | | <i>live</i> |
- Tell students that just as nouns can be subjects or objects, noun clauses, which take the place of nouns, can replace either a subject or an object.
- Ask students to take turns reading aloud the example sentences (a)–(f) from the chart.
- Go through the notes that accompany each example sentence and discuss these with students.

□ **EXERCISE 2.** Looking at grammar.

Page 370

Time: 5 minutes

- Explain to students that if a sentence also has a noun clause, it will have more than one subject and more than one verb.
- Give students time to underline the noun clauses they see and ask them to also identify the subjects and verbs in each item.
- Ask students to read each sentence aloud and then state the noun clause.

CHART 14-2. Noun Clauses That Begin with a Question Word. Page 371

Time: 10–15 minutes

The focus in this chart and the accompanying exercises is on word order in noun clauses that begin with question words. A quick review of question forms at this point is helpful for students.

This is an ideal time to remind students that they often “ask” questions merely by adding an inflected question mark at the end of statement word order. Reiterate that though most native speakers understand what they mean, their English suffers by not using proper question syntax.

- Ask students to explain what changes are needed when making a statement into a question.
- Put students’ explanations on the board. For example:

To make a question, you have to change the order of the subject and verb, so the verb comes first.

You have to use an auxiliary with simple present.

I want to go to the movies.

Do you want to go to the movies?

- Remind students of the common *wh*-question words and what pieces of information they elicit. Write these on the board. For example:

Where a place

When a time

What a piece of information

How in what way, or what manner

Why a reason

Who a person

Whose a person’s

- Remind students that these question words precede the question itself in a regular question and write an example of this on the board. For example:

Where does she work?

- Then write a noun clause next to the question that uses the same information. For example:

Where does she work?

I don’t know where she works.

- Explain that with noun clauses, question word order is not used and instead, the *wh*-word precedes normal *subject + verb* word order.

- Explain that question word order is not used in a noun clause because a question is not actually being asked, though we understand that a question is implied.
- Ask students to take turns reading the example sentences (a)–(j) aloud. Answer any questions.

□ **EXERCISE 4.** Looking at grammar.

Page 372

Time: 5–10 minutes

The difference between an actual question and a noun clause with an embedded question lies in word order. This distinction is what students are being asked to distinguish in this exercise.

- Remind students that if there is a noun clause (and thus if *I don’t know* can sensibly start the sentence), there is no inverted subject and verb order.
- Give students time to work through the items on their own.
- Review by having students read both (a) and (b) items aloud and correct each one accordingly.

□ **EXERCISE 5.** Looking at grammar.

Page 372

Time: 10 minutes

This exercise attempts to give students an idea of how noun clauses are typically used in conversation. Speaker B could, of course, simply stop after saying, “I don’t know,” but often a speaker will repeat what has been asked, often repeating nouns and proper names instead of substituting pronouns.

- Remind students to take the time to first identify the parts of speech in Speaker A’s part.
- Explain that part of the task of turning the subject and verb in Speaker A’s line into the completion of Speaker B’s line is choosing the correct tense.
- After students have had time to complete the items, review as a class.
- Be prepared to put Speaker B completions on the board so that students can see all the changes that were required, particularly in terms of tense.

□ **EXERCISE 6.** Let’s talk: pairwork.

Page 373

Time: 10–15 minutes

- Put students into pairs.
- Begin the exercise by asking students how to change the word order of a question to a noun clause and writing an example on the board. For example:

Question Auxiliary S V

How do we make noun clauses?

Question S V

Diego, can you tell me how we make noun clauses?

- In the example, make it clear that students realize that question mark is related to the *can you tell me*.
- Give students plenty of time to work with their partners while you circulate, answer questions, and facilitate discussion.
- Review by inviting students to change each item into a noun clause and writing these new questions with *can you tell me* on the board.

□ **EXERCISE 10.** Warm-up. Page 376

Time: 5 minutes

- Encourage students to read each item aloud in order to hear those items where something is incorrect.
- Ask students what they think *whether* means.

CHART 14-3. Noun Clauses That Begin with *If* or *Whether*. Page 376

Time: 10–15 minutes

In everyday usage, native speakers generally prefer *if* to *whether* to introduce noun clauses. The text emphasizes the use of *if* while acquainting the students with the use of *whether*.

Point out that *weather* and *whether* have the same pronunciation but very different meanings and spellings (they are homophones).

All possible patterns with *whether* and *if* are not presented here. See *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, Chapter 12, for an expanded discussion of these patterns.

- Explain that there are a number of ways to rephrase a yes / no question as a noun clause.
- Tell students the most common way is to introduce the yes / no noun clause with *if*.
- With the involvement of students, create a new sentence including a noun clause about a yes / no question regarding a student in the class.
- Write this example on the board and underline the *if*. For example:

We don't know if Marco has a girlfriend.

- Explain that there are a couple of other ways to indicate the same yes / no question as a noun clause.
- Tell students that one way to show this yes / no aspect of the noun clause is to use the phrase *or not*. This phrase indicates that the question presented is equally likely and equally unlikely.
- Write a sentence featuring *if . . . or not*. For example:

We don't know if Marco has a girlfriend or not.

- Make sure that students realize that this *or not* phrase can only come at the end of the sentence.
- Next, explain that *whether* can also be used to introduce such a yes / no clause or embedded question.
- Change the example accordingly and write the new version, featuring *whether*.

- Explain that *whether* can also be followed by *or not*, but that *whether* can be followed immediately by *or not*. The *or not* can also be located at the end of the sentence, the way it occurs with *if*.
- Make it clear that there are two options for the location of *or not* with the *whether*. For example
We don't know whether (or not) Marco has a girlfriend (or not).
- Ask students to read aloud example sentences (a)–(c) from the chart. Discuss the notes.
- Instruct students to read (d) and (e) aloud. Review the rest of the notes in the chart.

CHART 14-4. Noun Clauses That Begin with *That*. Page 379

Time: 10–15 minutes

Students should find this task exceedingly simple because they are already using this grammar point everyday. Now you are asking them to expand their usage ability by learning more words that introduce these clauses, such as *assume* and *realize*.

Discuss the meaning of the verbs followed by *that*-clauses in this chart by eliciting examples from the class.

The word *that* has no semantic meaning in this structure. It marks or signals the beginning of a clause. Its omission does not affect the meaning of a sentence. In everyday English, especially in spoken English, *that* is usually omitted. If it is not omitted, it is almost always unstressed and pronounced /θət/.

- Write *I think that* on the board and have students complete the sentence with noun clauses. For example:

I think that English grammar is easy to learn.

I think that American food is not very good.

I think that L.A. is an expensive city.

- Ask students to label subjects and verbs in the examples. For example:

S V

I think that English grammar is easy to learn.

S V

I think that American food is not very good.

S V

I think that L.A. is an expensive city.

- Explain that the *that*-noun clauses presented in this chart are noun clause objects of verbs that express thinking, opinions, etc.
- Tell students that it is also possible to have a *that*-clause be the subject of a sentence, but that this is far less common. For example:

S V
S V

That L.A. is an expensive city is common knowledge.

- Ask students to read through the example sentences (a)–(d) aloud. Review the notes.
- Have students read (e) and (f). Review the list of verbs followed by *that*-clauses.

□ EXERCISE 17. Let's talk: pairwork.

Page 379

Time: 10 minutes

- Assign students pairs.
- Remind students of the variety of verbs they can use to express their opinions and combine with *that*.
- Ask pairs to share answers with the class. Use these answers to promote a discussion of items 4, 5, and 6.

Expansion: Because the *that*-clause structure lends itself so well to discussions of beliefs and personal philosophies, foster a discussion of item 4 in the exercise above. Additional questions that will allow students to share personal and worldviews include the following:

What do you think the most important invention of the 20th century was?

Who do you think was the most important historical figure to date?

Do you think that the world is getting better or worse?

Do you think that technological advances are always beneficial?

Do you think that people are basically good, bad, or neutral?

What do you think is the most important lesson you have ever learned?

Do you think that it is better to be realistic, optimistic, or pessimistic?

Do you believe that you can fall in love at first sight?

Be sure to ask students to give examples to support their opinions and to use *that*-clauses.

CHART 14-5. Other Uses of *That*-Clauses.

Page 380

Time: 10–15 minutes

This chart seeks to acquaint learners with common expressions in which *that*-clauses are used.

Discuss the meaning of the expressions in this chart followed by *that*-clauses by eliciting examples from the class.

- Put some of the phrases that can precede *that*-clauses on the board with the names of your students and ask those students featured to complete them. For example:

Svetlana is certain that _____.

Magnus is happy that _____.

Wei-Wang is lucky that _____.

Felipe and Mara are surprised that _____.

We are all sorry that _____.

- Stress that these phrases use the verb *be* with adjectives describing feeling, certainty, knowledge, etc.
- Remind students that because there is not an action verb in these phrases, the subject is equated with the adjective in the phrase.
- Ask students to read example sentences (a)–(d) aloud. Read the accompanying notes.
- Have students read (e) and (f) aloud. Finish by reviewing the notes and the additional expressions followed by *that*-clauses.

□ EXERCISE 19. Looking at grammar.

Page 380

Time: 10 minutes

The ability to recognize when the clause marker *that* has been omitted can be important in reading comprehension. Whenever a reader (native or non-native speaker) is trying to figure out what a particularly confusing sentence means, an understanding of the underlying structure of the sentence is helpful if not essential. It's important for language users to know that optional parts of a structure (such as introductory *that*) might be omitted.

□ EXERCISE 20. Let's talk. Page 381

Time: 10–20 minutes

Part I

- Explain to students that these words all describe ways to support one's health.
- Tell students that in many Western countries, these practices are considered alternative to typical medical approaches.
- Ask students if they can provide working definitions of each word.

Part II

- Ask students to complete the three items independently.
- As a class, discuss the completed items and compare students' opinions.

□ EXERCISE 22. Warm-up. Page 382

Time: 5 minutes

- First ask students to read aloud the three items that follow each exchange.
- Ask students to identify which items do not match the meaning of the dialogue.
- Ask students what they notice, if anything, about the use of *so* and *not*.

CHART 14-6. Substituting *So* for a *That*-Clause in Conversational Responses. Page 382
Time: 10–15 minutes

This structure allows speakers to answer yes / no questions without committing themselves to a definite, black-and-white, yes-or-no answer. It allows for “gray areas” in speakers’ knowledge.

Focus students’ attention on the meaning of *so* in expressions such as *I think so*. In this structure, *so* functions as a substitute for a noun clause introduced by *that*.

The word *so* has various uses. A dictionary will label it an adverb, adjective, pronoun, conjunction, and interjection. To the second language learner, *so* is probably one of the most confusing and unpredictable words in English. You could explain to your students that English has more than one *so*, each with a different function and meaning.

- Write the following two questions on the board:
Is the sun going to rise tomorrow?
Do you think it is going to rain tomorrow?
- The first question should elicit *Yes* answers. The second question should elicit, *Maybe, I don’t know, or I think so* answers.
- Explain to students that *so* softens an answer and indicates that the speaker is not 100% certain.
- Ask students to take turns reading the example sentences (a)–(c) aloud. Review the accompanying notes.
- Ask students to read (d)–(f) aloud. Review the notes.

□ **EXERCISE 24.** Let’s talk: pairwork.
Page 383
Time: 10–15 minutes

These short dialogues are typical of everyday conversations. Remind students that their conversations can develop in any direction that seems natural. You may want to have different pairs perform a few of the dialogues.

□ **EXERCISE 25.** Warm-up. Page 383
Time: 5–10 minutes

- After students circle punctuation and discuss differences, ask them to describe what is happening in the “scene” represented by the quotes.

□ **EXERCISE 14-7.** Quoted Speech.
Page 384
Time: 10–15 minutes

Using examples on the board, go through punctuation and capitalization of quotations step-by-step. This information will probably be new to at least a few of the students.

Learning how to use quotations in writing will help the students improve their narrative-descriptive writing as well as prepare them for academic writing in which they must cite sources (i.e., use the words of another writer or author). Students who are not interested in the conventions of written English could skip this unit, but most will surely benefit from understanding how to read quotes they find in newspapers and other everyday writings.

Information not included in the chart: When reporting words are not at the beginning of a quotation, the reporting phrase is sometimes inverted. For example, “*Cats are fun to watch,*” **said Jane**. This inversion is used in writing rather than in speaking, and students don’t need to concern themselves with this form.

Also, reporting words can come in the middle of a quoted sentence. “*Cats,*” **said Jane** / **Jane said,** “*are fun to watch.*” Give your students as much information as will be useful to them without overloading them. Most students at this level don’t require a survey of all the variations possible in writing quotations.

- Explain to students that quotations are meant to represent what was actually said, word for word, the exact wording.
- Ask a student to tell you a saying or quote that he / she is familiar with. Use this to teach the steps for punctuating quotations. For example:
Taka: When the cat is away, the mice will play.
- Explain that the first step is to choose a verb to show who spoke. Write this first step on the board. For example:
Taka said
- Tell students that after *said*, they need to place a comma and then add quotation marks and the word *said*. For example:
Taka said, “When the cat is away, the mice will play
- Tell students that if the quote is a statement, they should add the period and then closing quotation marks.
Taka said, “When the cat is away, the mice will play.”
- Ask students to take turns reading the example sections / sentences (a)–(c) aloud from the chart.
- Have students continue to read example sentences (d)–(g) aloud and help them inflect the actual quote correctly, to distinguish it from the *said*-phrase.
- Review all the notes with your students and answer any questions.
- Remind students that it is useful for them to be able to recognize and read quoted speech, and, therefore, this level of familiarity is helpful for them.

EXERCISE 27. Looking at grammar.

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Time: 10 minutes

- Lead students through this exercise, asking them to call out the required punctuation marks while you take direction and write the correct items on the board.
- Discuss how to indicate through inflection the parts of the quoted speech and explain that with the *said*-phrase, the voice usually drops its inflection.

Optional Vocabulary

sign language
replied
deaf

Expansion: Cut comic strips from a newspaper or other source. Use white-out to block the actual words “said” by each character. Ask students to work in groups and write new conversations for the comic characters, using correct quotation punctuation.

You can pick either the same comic strip for the whole class or different ones for each group. Then compare dialogues.

Another expansion for quotes can be done with film clips. Take a very short film clip with a lot of overt action. Prepare it for the class so you can play the entire clip without sound. Play it frame by frame, pausing after each action or obvious character speech and give students time to write down what they think must have just been said. Instruct students to use appropriate quotation punctuation. Finally, compare the different quotations students create.

EXERCISE 28. Reading and writing.

Page 385

Time: 20–30 minutes

Part I

- Give students time to read through the entire passage and to underline all the quoted speech.
- Ask students if they are already familiar with this story. Then ask them to take turns paraphrasing the parts of the story.

Optional Vocabulary

| | |
|-----------|------------|
| nest | wandered |
| ducklings | reeds |
| hatch | reflection |
| ugly | beamed |
| clumsy | |

Part II

- Discuss the story and the lessons learned through reading it.
- Discuss how similar stories inform the shared culture of children (fairy tales, fables, universal stories).
- Ask students if they know who Aesop is and what his fables are.

CHART 14-8. Quoted Speech vs. Reported Speech. Page 387

Time: 10–15 minutes

The purpose of this chart is to introduce the concept of “reported speech.”

Point out that *I* in reported speech (a) becomes *she* in (c) because the *I* in the quotation refers to Ann, the original speaker. You could illustrate this by using names of students and having them read short sentences from the board for other students to report.

Be ready to remind students of all necessary changes including tenses, pronouns, and adverbs of time and place.

Example:

Sentence on board: *I'm sleepy.*

Speaker A: *I'm sleepy.*

Speaker B: *Natasha said that **she was** sleepy.*

Speaker C: *I'm also sleepy.*

Speaker B: *Po said that **he was** also sleepy.*

- Ask students to tell you how they are feeling at the moment. Put their responses on the board. For example:
Kiyoko: I am a little confused about reported speech.
Bo-Sung: I am not confused, but I am really hungry.
Juan: I am really nervous because I am waiting for an important phone call.
- Tell your students that several changes take place when reporting direct or quoted speech.
- Explain that one change is the tense. If the speaker originally speaks in present, a short amount of time lapses and thus, a change in tense happens to put the verb in the past.
- Tell students that another change is in pronoun use. Though above, Kiyoko uses *I* about herself, others describing what she said have to use *she* to refer back to her original statement.
- After you have explained these necessary changes to students, ask them to help you very carefully make the changes in the sentences on the board. For example:
Kiyoko: I am a little confused about reported speech.
Kiyoko said (that) she was a little confused about reported speech.
Bo-Sung: I am not confused, but I am really hungry.
Bo-Sung said (that) he was not confused but (that) he was really hungry.
Juan: I am really nervous because I am waiting for an important phone call.
Juan said (that) he was really nervous because he was waiting for an important phone call.
- Point out that these transformations to reported speech are new sentences containing noun clauses as the object of the verb *say*.
- Explain that the clause marker *that* is optional but can be useful when first writing reported speech.
- Ask students to take turns reading example sentences (a) and (b) aloud. Then discuss the notes.

- Emphasize the changes made in order to transform the direct speech to reported speech and ask students to read (c) and (d) aloud.

□ **EXERCISE 31.** Warm-up. Page 387

Time: 5–10 minutes

- Ask students to read each of the four items, (a)–(d), aloud.
- Ask students to explain the changes they have noticed in tenses. Then ask them to imagine what these changes relate to.

CHART 14-9. Verb Forms in Reported Speech. Page 388

Time: 10–15 minutes

Students probably will not have control of these patterns, but the exercises that follow the chart gives students lots of opportunities for practice.

Some students might benefit from a quick reminder of names and meanings of the verb forms in Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7. Perhaps focus on the fact that auxiliaries carry most of the information about tense and number.

The following are the sequence of verb forms in the examples in the text:

simple present ⇒ *simple past*
present progressive ⇒ *past progressive*
present perfect ⇒ *past perfect*
simple past ⇒ *past perfect*
am, is, are going to ⇒ *was, were going to*
will ⇒ *would*
can ⇒ *could*

Other changes not introduced in this text (but covered in *Understanding and Using English Grammar*, Chapter 12): *may* ⇒ *might*; *have to* ⇒ *had to*; *must* (meaning “necessity”) ⇒ *had to*; *should* ⇒ *should* (no change); *ought to* ⇒ *ought to* (no change).

In actual usage, there is no consistent rule for changing verb forms in noun clauses. The chart provides guidelines, but that is all they are.

After discussing the verb changes in the chart, use a different verb and ask the class to change it appropriately. For example, conduct an oral exercise using the verb *watch*.

Teacher: *I watch TV a lot.*

Student: *You said you watched TV a lot.*

Teacher: *I am not watching TV right now.*

Student: *You said you weren't watching TV right now.*

- Ask students to give you a simple present sentence. Show both immediate and later reporting by writing both versions on the board. For example:

Ahmed: *I am very thirsty.*

Immediate reporting: *Ahmed said he is thirsty.*

Later reporting: *Ahmed said he was thirsty.*

- Lead your students through the changes in tenses by asking students to report your sentences after you. Write the sequences on the board and highlight changes in both tenses and pronouns or adverbs.

You: *I run a few miles every night.*

Students: *You said you run a few miles every night.*

You: *I ran a few miles last night.*

Students: *You said you ran a few miles last night.*

- Ask students to take turns reading example sentences (a)–(d) aloud.
- Review the notes.
- Highlight the difference between immediate reporting and later reporting and then ask students to read the example sentences (e)–(f) aloud. Review the notes.
- Ask students to read (g) aloud. Then have students take turns reading aloud the transformed sentences immediately below.

□ **EXERCISE 32.** Looking at grammar.

Page 388

Time: 10 minutes

- Give students time to work through these items as seatwork.
- When students have completed the items, ask them to first read the quoted or direct speech (and remind students to inflect the speech meaningfully).
- After one student has read the direct speech, invite another student to read the reported speech completion.
- Provide immediate correction and go through necessary changes step-by-step as needed.

□ **EXERCISE 33.** Looking at grammar.

Page 389

Time: 10–15 minutes

The focus here is on the tenses used to report a statement that was made in the past. Anticipate the exercise to proceed quite slowly and require a lot of discussion, repetition, and boardwork.

CHART 14-10. Common Reporting Verbs:

Tell, Ask, Answer / Reply. Page 389

Time: 10 minutes

The main point the students need to understand from this chart is simply that *tell* is always followed by a (pro)noun object when used to report speech.

Another pattern with *say* that is not mentioned in the chart is the use of *to* + a (pro)noun object: *Ann said to me that she was hungry.* Native speakers generally prefer *told me* to *said to me*, but both are correct.

As a side note, the pattern *said . . . to me* is used idiomatically to report greetings and goodbyes: *Tom said good morning to me. I said hello to him. We said goodbye to each other.*

INCORRECT: Tom said me good morning. I said him hello. We said each other good-bye.

□ **EXERCISE 37.** Looking at grammar.

Page 391

Time: 10 minutes

Make sure that students understand the format of the cartoons. For example, remind them that the story should be read from top left to top right to bottom left to bottom right.

□ **EXERCISE 40.** Reading. Page 392

Time: 10-15 minutes

Part I

- Give students time to read through the passage on their own first.

- Ask students to then retell the story included in the passage in their own words.

Optional Vocabulary

| | |
|-----------|---------------|
| lecture | survive |
| series | tend |
| wisdom | appropriately |
| uplifting | |

Part II

- Ask students to work in groups, discussing the advice they read in Randy Pausch's lecture.
- Ask them to support their agreement or disagreement with examples from their own lives and observations of the world.
- Walk around the room, facilitating lively discussing, joining groups, and asking provocative questions.
- End the discussion by coming together again as a class and writing students' thoughts on the board, using the target noun clause and reported speech forms.

