

## Combining Sentences

Academic prose requires complete sentences. You don't need to be able to explain what makes a complete sentence, as long as you can hear the difference between a group of words that says something and stands on its own, and one that doesn't complete its thought, or seems to need to be connected to something else.

Reading a sentence aloud is a good way to hear whether or not the sentence is complete.

### Sentence Elements

The basic elements of a sentence are its subject and its predicate. The *subject* identifies the topic of the sentence, and the predicate says something about that subject. A subject includes a noun or a pronoun; the predicate includes a verb.

### Simple Sentence

- A *simple sentence* consists of one subject and one predicate. The subject and/or the predicate can be compounded.
- A *subject* is one element of a sentence. [Simple sentence, simple subject and predicate]
- A *subject and a predicate* are essential to a complete sentence and constitute its meaning. [Simple sentence, compound subject and compound predicate, joined by *and*]

### Compound (Co-ordinate) Sentences

- Two simple sentences of equal weight can be joined with a colon or a semi-colon, or they can be connected with conjunctions.

### Complex Sentences

- Two simple sentences joined with a subordinate conjunction or relative pronoun make a complex sentence, which makes one part the main clause, and the other a subordinate (explanatory) clause.
- Complex sentences are useful because they show different relationships between ideas.

### Compound-complex Sentences

- A *compound-complex sentence* sounds complicated, but it really is just what it says it is.

Where is the subordinate clause in that example? "what it says it is"

Native speakers of English can produce compound complex sentences of all types without being able to analyze them, but mistakes do occur. Careful reading and editing can avoid confusing the reader.