

# ESL TUTORS' WORKSHOP #2

## PUNCTUATION AND JOINING CLAUSES IN LONG SENTENCES:

### COMMAS:

ESL students seem to have confusion about when to use commas in a sentence.

- A. The most common error I see is using a comma where a period, semi-colon or conjunction should be.

Example: I went to the beach, I had a really good time there, I hope I can go back again very soon, I was able to relax a lot there.

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- B. Another issue is knowing which grammatical situations (words) require a mandatory comma.

Example: If.....,

When.....,

After.....,

Even though.....,

Although.....,

Even if.....,

Despite.....,

In spite of.....,

Regardless of.....,

Before.....,

Etc.

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Therefore,

For instance,

However,

Also,

Moreover,

\*(Later,

Furthermore,

\*Then,

For example,

\*& other "time expressions")

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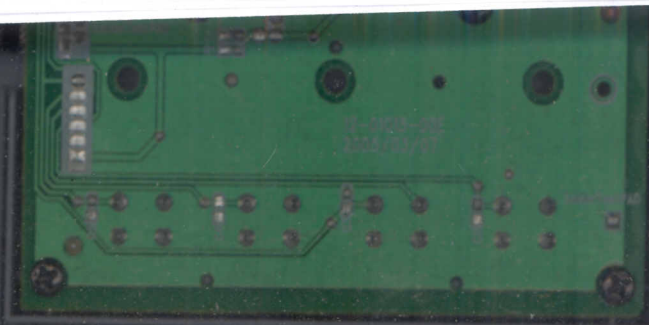
Example: I ate ice cream, a hot dog, French fries yesterday.

Example: I ate ice cream and a hot dog and French fries and cookies yesterday.

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There are some important things for students to understand/be aware of when they are trying to "fix" the problem presented in "A".

1. What is a "clause" – they need to understand it and be able to see them in a sentence so they can see where one clause has to JOIN the next one somehow.  
(Where are the subject + verb clauses in their sentence?)
2. What are the ways to join these clauses?  
( use and, so, but, because, or, semi-colon...or don't join the clauses...just put a period and make a new sentence)
  - You can also use all the words in SECTION B (above) to join clauses if they are "in the middle" of two clauses (not at the beginning of a sentence).  
Example: I bought a car even though I don't have a driver's license.  
Example: I'll call you if I have time.  
Example: I made lunch before he came home.
3. Which words can NOT JOIN clauses?  
(then, after, also, however, therefore, etc.....these need a new sentence or a semi-colon before they can be used in the sentence)
4. What is the advantage of using long sentences (many clauses joined together)?  
(Answer: It makes more sophisticated grammar and more interesting essays)
5. How many clauses can they join together?  
(Answer: lots....use your judgement, but up to 5 is possible)  
Example: She had to travel to Europe because there was an important conference there, so she made a reservation and she packed her suitcases; she didn't know what to pack, but she knew she had to hurry. (this sentence has 6 clauses)
6. Do you need to put commas before conjunctions in a long sentence as above in #5?  
(Answer: Most ESL grammar books nowadays are saying that you need a comma before all conjunctions which join one clause to another. However, traditionally, it was more a matter of understanding and breathing...in other words, you don't need to put commas if the sentence is not too long (ex: I bought a new car so I was broke.= no comma before "so"), but if the sentence is quite long, put them in to help the reader know when to pause/breathe for meaning which could become confusing as in example sentence #5.
7. Adjective clauses can also cause confusion with commas. (See attached worksheets)



MAKING LONG SENTENCES: (you want to do this for a good essay – it shows your skill)

WHAT IS A:

PHRASE

SENTENCE

CLAUSE

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WHEN YOU ARE WRITING, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHEN YOU ARE ADDING A NEW CLAUSE IN YOUR SENTENCE.

YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT WHEN YOU ADD A NEW CLAUSE (s+v), YOU NEED TO JOIN IT TO THE SENTENCE.

HOW CAN YOU JOIN CLAUSES TOGETHER IN SENTENCES?

CONJUNCTIONS (AND,BUT,OR,SO,BECAUSE)

PUNCTUATION (;) (SOMETIMES ,)

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Join the following sentences together (you can use conjunctions or semi-colon)-try to use a conjunction only once in each sentence – don't repeat

1. I have a big house.

I have an expensive mortgage.

I have to budget very carefully every month in order to make my payments.

If I don't , the bank will take away my house.

I don't think that is going to take place.

I am a very meticulous person.

2. They are in love.

They want to get married as soon as possible.

Their parents are not going to be happy.

They want their son and daughter to finish college first.

The couple has decided to elope.

They are going to face the music later.

3. Many cultures in the world have similarities.

There are also unique aspects of each one.

If you want to understand a country's people better, you should do research about it.

That way, you can really become acquainted with the reality of life there.

You will enjoy your experience there more fully.

4. Even though the American health care system has a lot of great aspects, it also has a lot of problems.

Obama created a new system to try to improve the situation.

A lot of conservatives don't like it.

They say that it takes away our individual choice.

It also is going to be more expensive.

Others say it is going to cost less.

It is going to reduce the power of the insurance companies over the individual.

THERE ARE MISTAKES IN THESE SENTENCES WITH PUNCTUATION.

1. UNDERLINE ALL THE SUBJECTS AND VERBS (CLAUSES).

2. RE-WRITE THE SENTENCES IN 2 WAYS:

- A. Put in conjunctions or semi-colon (if no conjunction possible) to join the clause into 1 sentence correctly (keep it one sentence).
  - B. Put in periods and divide the clauses into many smaller sentences.
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They told me to come to the office, I was worried because I was afraid there was a problem, then I might go back to my country, that would be sad.

1.

2.

On the weekend, I went to Disneyland, I rode on many rides, I ate delicious food there too, but it was crowded, after that, I went home.

1.

2.

If you like warm weather, you'll enjoy living in LA. Because it is sunny, and you can wear short sleeves all the time, also you can swim in the ocean.

1.

2.

Studying for the toefl is very stressful, therefore I hate that test, maybe I'll just go back home. Because I miss my family, and it's expensive here.

1.

2.

## IDENTIFYING AND NON-IDENTIFYING ADJECTIVE CLAUSES:

Should you use "that" or not?

If you are using "that" in your clause, you need to be sure that the clause is not a "non-identifying" clause.

IDENTIFYING CLAUSE = WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE NOUN YET

NON-IDENTIFYING CLAUSE = WE ALREADY KNOW WHICH ONE IT IS (NOUN) AND THE ADJECTIVE CLAUSE IS JUST TELLING US "EXTRA" OR "INTERESTING INFORMATION ABOUT IT."

TRY TO JUDGE WHICH ONE IS IDENTIFYING AND NON-IDENTIFYING:

1. The professor \_\_\_\_\_ teaches chemistry is excellent.
2. Professor Wilson \_\_\_\_\_ teaches chemistry, is excellent.
3. Mr. Lee \_\_\_\_\_ I met yesterday, is very kind.
4. The man \_\_\_\_\_ I met yesterday is very kind.
5. This country, \_\_\_\_\_ consists of many states, is called the USA.
6. The country \_\_\_\_\_ consists of 50 states is called the USA.
7. The USA \_\_\_\_\_ has 50 states, is not my home.
8. Martha's kids \_\_\_\_\_ live around the corner, play outside every day.
9. Some kids \_\_\_\_\_ I know never do any sports.
10. Your desk \_\_\_\_\_ is too small, should be removed from the classroom.
11. A desk \_\_\_\_\_ is too small should be removed from a classroom.
12. My sister \_\_\_\_\_ is 25 years old, is called Jane.
13. The sister \_\_\_\_\_ has a pink skirt on is my friend.
14. Her friend \_\_\_\_\_ I just met, is very shy.

\*If you are not sure, don't use "that".

□ EXERCISE 22. Punctuating adjective clauses. (Chart 13-10)

Directions: Circle the correct explanation (a. or b.) of the meaning of each sentence

1. The teacher thanked the students, who had given her some flowers.
  - a. The flowers were from *only some* of the students.
  - (b) The flowers were from *all* of the students.
2. The teacher thanked the students who had given her some flowers.
  - (a) The flowers were from *only some* of the students.
  - b. The flowers were from *all* of the students.
3. There was a terrible flood. The villagers who had received a warning of the impending flood escaped to safety.
  - a. *Only some* of the villagers had been warned; only some escaped.
  - b. *All* of the villagers had been warned; all escaped.
4. There was a terrible flood. The villagers, who had received a warning of the impending flood, escaped to safety.
  - a. *Only some* of the villagers had been warned; only some escaped.
  - b. *All* of the villagers had been warned; all escaped.
5. Roberto reached down and picked up the grammar book, which was lying upside down on the floor.
  - a. There was *only one* grammar book near Roberto.
  - b. There was *more than one* grammar book near Roberto.
6. Roberto reached down and picked up the grammar book which was lying upside down on the floor.
  - a. There was *only one* grammar book near Roberto.
  - b. There was *more than one* grammar book near Roberto.

Discuss the differences in meaning in the following pairs of sentences.

7. He reached in the basket and threw away the apples that were rotten.
8. He reached in the basket and threw away the apples, which were rotten.
9. The students who had done well on the test were excused from class early.
10. The students, who had done well on the test, were excused from class early.
11. Cindy was delighted when she opened the present, which was from her grandmother.
12. Cindy was delighted when she opened the present that was from her grandmother.
13. The teacher pointed to the maps that were hanging on the rear wall of the classroom.
14. The teacher pointed to the maps, which were hanging on the rear wall of the classroom.

□ EXERCISE 23. Punctuating adjective clauses. (Chart 13-10)

Directions: Add commas where necessary.

1. We enjoyed the city where we spent our vacation.
2. We enjoyed Mexico City where we spent our vacation.

## 4 BETWEEN FRIENDS

Grammar Skills

Read these conversations between friends. Then use the first sentence in each conversation to help you write a summary. Use adjective clauses. Remember to use commas where necessary.

1.       **A:** This article is really interesting.  
          **B:** What's it about?  
          **A:** It discusses the different types of friendship.

SUMMARY: This article, which discusses the different types of friendship, is really interesting.

2.       **A:** So, they'll meet us at the restaurant, OK?  
          **B:** Which restaurant?  
          **A:** You know the one. It's across the street from the library.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_

3.       **A:** The navy blue suit looked the best.  
          **B:** Which navy blue suit?  
          **A:** The one on sale.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_

4.       **A:** Bill and Sue aren't close friends with the Swabodas, are they?  
          **B:** Well, the Swabodas' interests are very different from theirs.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_

5.       **A:** The neighbors came by while you were gone.  
          **B:** Do you know what they wanted?  
          **A:** They wanted to borrow some folding chairs.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_

6.       **A:** I was just laughing at an old picture of Jason.  
          **B:** Which one? You have hundreds.  
          **A:** You know the one—it's in his high school yearbook.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_

7.       **A:** My boyfriend left me a lot of plants to water.  
          **B:** How come?  
          **A:** He took a group of students to Venezuela for two weeks.

SUMMARY: \_\_\_\_\_