

## Section 3. General philology and linguistics

<https://doi.org/10.29013/EJLL-23-2-15-21>

*Erëza Rushiti,  
MA, Department of English Language,  
Faculty of Foreign Languages  
AAB College, Pristina, Kosovo*

### NOUN CLAUSES AND THEIR SYNTACTICAL ROLE IN COMPLEX SENTENCES IN ENGLISH AND ALBANIAN

**Abstract.** The arrangement of words and phrases is essential in the creation of well-formed sentences in a language. The subject, predicator, and object, are the three main limbs of a sentence, and with the absence of one of them, the sentence is not possible nor completed. Knowing that noun clauses play the role of the noun in a sentence when dealing with these types of clauses in two different languages, it will be noted that the position and the order of the words inside the clause and the structure of the complex sentence as a whole will naturally not be the same in all cases.

The main purpose of this research was to give a contrastive analysis of the noun clauses in complex sentences in the English and Albanian languages, looking at how the arrangement of the words stands, the position of the subject, predicator, and the object, and the use of the subordinating conjunctions inside the clause and in the sentence as a whole, in both languages.

The novel “The Old Man and the Sea” by Ernest Hemingway and the version in Albanian “Plaku dhe Deti” by Ylber Pinjolli were used for the analytical part of the research. The clauses were found simultaneously in both novels, and the equivalents were shown and presented through tables, from which we can conclude that in most cases consistency was found between the noun clauses in English and those in Albanian, with some changes mostly valid in the use of the subordinating conjunction and the verb.

**Keywords:** noun clause, subordinating conjunction, complex sentence, English, Albanian.

#### Introduction

For it to be called a clause, there needs to be a subject (kryefjala), predicator (kallëzuesi), and object (kundrinori). Payne [6] defined the independent clause as one that is fully inflected and capable of being used in discourse on its own. As Agolli [1] states, according to the function they have in a sentence, subordinating clauses can be of three (3)

main types: noun or nominal clauses (fjali emërore), adjective clauses (fjali mbiemërore) and adverbial clauses (fjali rrethanore).

Nominal clauses have the function of a noun in a sentence; they can be subject clauses, object clauses, and subject complement clauses [1, p. 12]. As stated above, clauses without predicators cannot function, from what we understand that the

verb in them is very important. Therefore, we have the second division according to their grammatical form, where they can be finite and non-finite clauses.

The main purpose of this research was to give a contrastive analysis of the noun clauses in the English and Albanian languages, present the equivalents and show to what extent they correspond to one another. The objectives included defining the subordinate and nominal clauses, analyzing them in both languages by the aim of the research, as well as present the equivalents through tables.

### **Nominal clauses: Definition, types, and functions in English**

A nominal clause (noun clause) is a dependent clause that performs a nominal function, i.e. it has a range of functions similar to that of a noun/noun phrase. The main functions of nominal clauses include the subject of the complex sentence (subject clause), subject complement (predicate nominative clause), and the direct object (object clause). Finite nominal clauses in English are introduced by *that* or a *wh*-word (what, whatever, which, whichever, who, whoever, whomever, whether/if, how, where, why, when) [1, p. 12].

The subject clause is a dependent clause that performs the function of the subject of the main clause verb, and it can be identified by asking ‘Who or What carried out the action denoted by the verb?’ Example: **What you said** shocked me [1, p. 15].

A subject complement or predicate nominative clause (përcaktor kallëzuesor) usually follows a copular or linking verb and describes the subject of the main clause. Example: My concern is **that she is incapable of change** [1, p. 31].

In English and Albanian, nominal clauses can also function as object complements (përcaktor kallëzuesor i kundrinës). While subject complement clauses describe the subject, object complement clauses describe the status, characteristics, or qualities of the main clause direct object. Example: We made them **what they are** [1, p. 31].

Object clauses perform the function of the direct object in a complex sentence, and can be identified by asking ‘Who or what is affected by the action denoted by the verb?’ Example: I realized **that my best friend was lying** [1, p. 38].

Clauses functioning as indirect objects and prepositional objects: indirect object clauses show the receiver of the activity denoted by the verb. English indirect object clauses are introduced only by non-specific *wh*-words (whoever, whichever, whatever). Example: I will give **whomever I want** my book [1, p. 43]. Nominal clauses and non-finite *-ing* clauses can also occur as prepositional objects, fulfilling the function of a participant in a situation (laugh at, believe in, count on, smile at). Example: I saw **to whom she gave the secret files** [1, p. 43–44].

### **Nominal clauses: Definitions, types, and functions in Albanian (Fjalitë emërore)**

According to function, syntactic relations to the main clause, and parallelism with the limbs of the sentence, the subordinate clauses in Albanian are divided into subject clauses (fjalitë kryefjalore), subject complement clauses/predicate nominative clauses (fjalitë kallëzuesore), object clauses (fjalitë kundrinore), clauses with indirect objects and prepositional objects (fjalitë me kundrinor të zhdrejtë dhe me kundrinor me parafjalë), object complement clauses (fjalitë përcaktore kallëzuesore të kundrinës) [2, p. 496].

Subject clauses in Albanian can be declarative (dëftore), interrogative (pyetëse), exclamative (thirrmore), and nominal relative (përemërore). The main clause usually expresses the speaker’s approach to the issue described in the subject clause. Albanian also allows the extraposition of declarative subject clauses introduced by **që**, especially if the main verb is **jam**. In these cases, the verb always starts the complex sentence, and the conjunction **që** can be present or omitted. Example: *Ishte e qartë që atyre s’u kishte rënë në sy kjo gjë.*; *Është marrëzi të mbyllesh në shtëpi në një kohë të tillë* [1, p. 15–16].

Subject complement or predicate nominative clauses can follow copula verbs such as: *jam, dukem, bëj, quhem, mbes, shtirem*, etc [1, p. 27]. Albanian counterparts of predicate nominative clauses introduced by the conjunction **that** are *fjalitë kallëzuesore* introduced by the conjunction **se, që**. Example: **Një nga arsyet mund të jetë që disa prej tyre kishin harruar mjetet përkatëse.**; **Problemi është se mungonte pjesa më e rëndësishme e detyrës** [1, p. 28]. *To-infinitive* subject complement clauses can be translated into Albanian using finite clauses (*fjalitë kallëzuesore*) with a verb in *mënyra lidhore*. Example: **Kryesorja tani për tani është të bisedojmë me nënën** [1, p. 30].

Object clauses (finite) represented by three main structural subtypes including *declarative, interrogative, and exclamative* object clauses also exist in the Albanian language, respectively termed as *fjali kundrinore dëftore, fjali kundrinore pyetëse, and fjali kundrinore thirrmore*. Albanian declarative object clauses (*fjalitë kundrinore dëftore*) are introduced by the conjunctions **se, që**, following verbs like *mendoj, besoj, kujtoj, pandeh, dëgjoj, shoh, ndiej, kuptoj, di*, etc. For example: **Ne besojmë se personi në fjalë është i pafajshëm.**; **Ata e kuptuan që veprimi nuk ishte bërë me qëllim.** [1, p. 38–39) Object clauses (*to-infinitive*) in English are functionally similar to Albanian *fjalitë kundrinore dëftore* containing a verb in *mënyra lidhore*. For example: **Ajo dëshironte që fëmijët të shkolloheshin jashtë vendit.** Because the *-ing* constructions are very nominal in function, they seem to have a similar use to *foljet e emëruara* in Albanian (*të punuarit, të ecurit*, etc.): **Më pëlqen të ecurit në park** [1, p. 42].

Indirect object clauses and prepositional object clauses: subordinate clauses in English and Albanian can appear as indirect objects (*kundinor i zhdrejtë*) and prepositional objects (*kundrinor me parafjalë*). Albanian indirect object clauses (*fjalitë kundrinore të zhdrejta*) are even more closely related to the verb/verb phrase and the direct object. For example: **Sigurisht ju vjen keq që po ndaheni.**

Object clauses in Albanian can be preceded by the prepositions *për, nga, me, në*: **S'dinte me se t'i gostiste miqtë** [1, p. 43].

Object complement clauses in Albanian (*përcaktor kallëzuesor i kundrinës*) also follow the direct object of the main clause, but they complete verbs like *shoh, dëgjoj, ndiej*, etc. In addition to the object complement clauses introduced by **që** or **tek**, Albanian uses a special type of object complement clause without a conjunction and with a verb in *mënyra lidhore*. For example: **E pa atë të kryente me sulm brenda disa orëve punën e disa ditëve.**; **Ndjeu zemrën t'i rrihte si çekan** [1, p. 31].

### Design and Methodology

For this study, a qualitative method of research was used. The research is two-fold: the equivalents of the noun clauses in English and Albanian are shown and presented through tables – the sentences were taken from the novel in English “The Old Man and the Sea” and the version in Albanian “Plaku dhe Deti” and randomly picked for the analysis. The strategies for translating the noun clauses from the source language into the target language are shown as well and presented in tabular form.

For the theoretical part of the research, respectively the literature review, the descriptive method was applied where different grammar and syntax books were used, both for the English and Albanian languages. The contrastive analysis of the clauses was conducted for the analytical part of the research. Clauses were analyzed in the syntactical aspect to show the equivalents according to the functions they perform in complex sentences, according to the grammatical form, and the use of subordinating conjunctions and verbs.

The content analysis has to do precisely with the examples taken from the novel. This analysis was done to comply with the objectives, the purpose of the study, and the research questions, in which case the examples, noun clauses in complex sentences themselves, were analyzed by the main purpose of this paper.

**Results**

From the findings, we have the equivalents of the noun clauses in English and Albanian as follows:

1. The subject clauses;

2. Clauses functioning as direct objects;
3. Clauses functioning as prepositional objects;
4. Subject complement clauses and;
5. Object complement clauses.

Table 1. – Illustration of Subject Clauses in English and Subject Clauses in Albanian

	No.	The Old Man and the Sea – Ernest Hemingway	Plaku dhe Deti – Ylber Pinjoll
Finite	1.	<b>Everything that shows on the surface</b> today travels very fast and to the northeast. (p. 28)	Çdo gjë që shfaqet sot në sipërfaqen e detit lëviz shumë shpejt dhe të gjithë shpejtojnë drejt verilindjes. (p. 23)
Finite	2.	But it is good <b>that we do not have to try to kill the sun or the moon or the stars.</b> (p. 57)	Por është gjë e mirë <b>që ne nuk kemi mundësi të vrasim diellin, apo hënë, apo yjet.</b> (p. 46)
Non-finite	3.	It is humiliating before others <b>to have diarrhea from ptomaine poisoning or to vomit from it.</b> (p. 46)	Është gjë poshtëronjëse <b>kur në sy të njerëzve të zë barku ose të vjellat nga një peshk i prishur.</b> (p. 37)

In the first example, we have a typical example of a subject clause as it is positioned at the beginning of the sentence. It contains **that clause** and is followed by the main clause beginning with the verb **travels**. Similarly, the subject clause in Albanian is positioned at the beginning of the sentence and is followed by the main clause that begins with the lexical verb **lëviz**.

2. There we have an example of extraposition: in English, the main clause that contains the subject and the copula verb **is**, precedes the subject clause introduced by the conjunction **that**. The extraposition in Albanian: the main clause containing the

copula verb **është** and the subject **gjë**, followed by an adjective **e mirë**, precedes the subject clause introduced by the conjunction **që**.

3. Another example of extraposition in the third sentence: the main clause that contains the subject **It**, the copula verb **is** and the adjective **humiliating**, is followed by the subject clause which is introduced by the infinitive with *to*, **to have**. The extraposition in Albanian: the main clause beginning with the copula verb **Është**, followed by the subject **gjë** and the adjective **e mirë**, precedes the subject clause that is introduced by the *wh*-word **kur** (adverb of time in Albanian), indicating what the subject is about.

Table 2. – Illustration of Object Clauses functioning as Direct Objects in English and Albanian

	No.	“The Old Man and the Sea” by Ernest Hemingway	“Plaku dhe Deti” by Ylber Pinjoll
Finite	1.	The boy did not know <b>whether yesterday’s paper was fiction too.</b> (p. 9)	Djali nuk e dinte <b>kishe apo jo plaku gazetë apo edhe kjo ishte gjithashtu një fantazi e tij.</b> (p. 8)
Finite	2.	He cannot know <b>that it is only one man against him, not that it is an old man.</b> (p. 35)	Ai nuk e di <b>se po lufton vetëm me një njeri ose më mirë me një plak.</b> (p. 29)
Non-finite	3.	But he could see <b>the prisms in the deep dark water and the line stretching ahead and the strange undulation of the calm.</b> (p. 45)	Por ai vështronte <b>si thyheshin rrezet në ujë dhe si binin drejt në thellësi fjetet dhe lëkundjet e çuditëshme të detit.</b> (p. 36)
Non-finite	4.	Otherwise, everyone would have wanted <b>it to go to a finish.</b> (p. 53)	Po të mos kishin punë do të donin <b>që gara të vazhdonte gjer sa të fitonte njeri.</b> (p. 43)

The main clause in English precedes the object clause which is introduced by the *wh*-word **whether** and followed by the object of the sentence, **yesterday’s paper**. In Albanian, the main clause with the verb in the negative form **nuk e dinte** precedes the object clause which begins with the verb in the interrogative form **kishte apo jo**.

2. The verb phrase **cannot know** in the main clause is preceded by the object clause introduced by the conjunction **that**. In Albanian, we find the verb in the negative **nuk e di** followed by the object clause introduced by the subordinating conjunction **se**.

3. The main clause in English with the verb phrase **could see** precedes the object clause that begins with the object of the sentence itself. We notice that the clause has two objects within 1. **the prisms in the deep dark water**, and 2. **the line**.

The clause has the direct object *-ing* clause present in it (*stretching ahead*). In Albanian, the main clause with the verb **vështronte** is followed by the object clause rather introduced by the conjunction **si**. This conjunction was used twice in the clause in Albanian, therefore we have two clauses within the clause: 1. **si thyheshin rrezet në ujë**, and 2. **si binin drejt në thellësi fjetet dhe lëkundjet e çuditëshme të detit**.

4. The verb phrase **would have wanted** in the main clause is followed by the object clause that has the direct object *to-infinitive* clause beginning with the object **it**. In Albanian, the main clause with the verb phrase **do të donin** in **mënyra kushtore**, precedes the object clause introduced by the conjunction **që**, followed by the subject of the clause **gara** and verb **të vazhdonte** in **mënyra lidhore**.

Table 3. – Illustration of Prepositional Object Clause in English and Albanian

	No.	“The Old Man and the Sea” – Ernest Hemingway	“Plaku dhe Deti” – Ylber Pinjulli
Non-finite	1.	He worked back <b>to where he could feel with his foot the coils of line that he could not see</b> . (p. 63)	U kthye pas <b>gjersa gjeti me këmbë lëmshet e fillit që nuk mund t’i shihte me sy</b> . (p. 51)

The main clause is followed by the prepositional object clause that begins with the preposition **to** and the *wh*-word **where** and proceeded by **he could feel**, whilst, in Albanian, the main clause has got the

verb in *forma joveprore*, **U kthye pas**, followed by the prepositional object clause which has the concatenated preposition **gjersa** and the verb of the clause **gjeti**.

Table 4. – Illustration of Subject Complement Clauses in English and Subject Complement Clauses in Albanian

	No.	The Old Man and the Sea – Ernest Hemingway	Plaku dhe Deti – Ylber Pinjulli
Finite	1.	All I know is <b>that young boys sleep late and hard</b> . (p. 15)	Unë di vetëm <b>që djemtë e rinj flejnë shumë dhe bëjnë gjumë të rëndë</b> . (p. 13)
Non-finite	2.	My choice was <b>to go there to find him beyond all people</b> . (p. 36)	Fati im ishte <b>që të shkoja dhe ta gjeja vetëm, atje ku nuk kish depërtuar asnjeri tjetër</b> . (p. 30)

The main clause in English contains the copula verb **is** and precedes the finite subject complement clause introduced by the conjunction **that**. In Albanian, the main clause has no copula verb but the particle **vetëm** instead, followed by the subject

complement clause introduced by the conjunction **që**.

2. The main clause in English has the copula verb **was** and precedes the non-finite subject complement clause that begins with the *to-infinitive*

verb **to go**. Another *to-infinitive* verb is present in the same clause, therefore we have two to-infinitive verbs: 1. **to go**, and 2. **to find**. The main clause in Albanian also has the copula verb **ishte** but is preceded by the non-finite subject complement clause

introduced by the conjunction **që**, and followed by the *to-infinitive* verb in *mënyra lidhore*, **të shkoja**. There are two to-infinitive verbs within the same clause in Albanian as well: 1. **të shkoja** and 2. **ta gjeja**.

Table 5. – Illustration of Object Complement Clauses in English and Object Complement Clauses in Albanian

	No.	The Old Man and the Sea – Ernest Hemingway	Plaku dhe Deti – Ylber Pinjulli
Finite	1.	He went back to rowing and to watching the long-winged black bird <i>who was working, now, low over the water.</i> (p. 23)	Ai u vu përsëri të vozite dhe të vërente zogun e zi me krahë të gjata <i>që po gjuante tani fare poshtë, pranë faqes së ujit.</i> (p. 19)
Non-finite	2.	I can remember the tail <i>slapping and banging and the thwart breaking and the noise of the clubbing.</i> (p. 6)	Më kujtohet bishti <i>që përplasej dhe godiste dhe që theu fronin dhe zhurma e shkopit tënd kur ti i bie peshkut.</i> (p. 5)

1. The object of the sentence **the long-winged blackbird** (an adjective phrase) in the main clause in English precedes the finite object complement clause introduced by the *wh*-word **who**. In Albanian, the object of the sentence, **zogun e zi me krahë të gjata** (a noun phrase) in the main clause is followed by the finite object complement clause introduced by the conjunction **që**.

2. The object **the tail** in the main clause in English precedes the non-finite object complement clause introduced by the -ing clause, beginning with the gerund **slapping**. Three gerunds are present in this clause: 1. **slapping**, 2. **banging**, and 3. **Breaking**. We notice the presence of another object complement clause within the same clause: (*the thwart breaking...*). In Albanian, the main clause with the object **bishti** is followed by the non-finite object complement clause introduced by the conjunction **që**, and instead of gerunds, the two verbs are in **koha e pakryer**: 1. **përplasej** and 2. **godiste**, the first in **forma joveprore** and the second in **forma veprare**.

### Conclusions

With the analysis having been carried out and to summarise the points made in this paper, it can be concluded as follows:

– Noun clauses, both in English and Albanian can be identified by asking “who or what carried out the action denoted by the verb” and “who or what is affected by that action”; based on what they show and describe; based on what they are introduced by (conjunctions, *wh*-words, *wh*-clauses, to-infinitive clauses, -ing clauses)

– In most cases, consistency was found between the noun clauses in English and those in Albanian, with some minor changes mainly valid in the cases of using the subordinating conjunction and the verb. From the examples that were illustrated in this paper, it can be understood that these changes occurred in order not to lose the meaning in the translation of these clauses and the sentences as a whole in Albanian, as well as to keep the naturalness in the Albanian language.

### References:

1. Agolli E. Complex Sentences in English and Albanian: A Course in Contrastive Grammar. – Tiranë: Westprint. 2017.
2. Çeliku M., Domi M., Floqi S., Mansaku S., Përnsaka R., Prifti S., & Totoni M. Gramatika e Gjuhës Shqipe II: Sintaksa. – Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave. 2002.

3. De Capua A. *Grammar for Teachers: A Guide to American English for Native and Non-native Speakers*. New Rochelle, – New York. Springer. 2008.
4. Hemingway E. *The Old Man and the Sea*. – London: Arrow Books. 2004.
5. Krohn R. *English Sentence Structure*. – Michigan. The University of Michigan Press. 1971.
6. Payne T. E. *Understanding English Grammar: A Linguistic Introduction*. – New York: Cambridge University Press. 2011.
7. Pinjollli Y. *Plaku dhe Deti*. – Kërçovë: Shtëpia Botuese Feniks BB. 2003.
8. Quirk R., Greenbaum S., Leech G. & Svartvik J. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. Essex, – England. Longman Group Limited. 1985.
9. Swan M. & Walter C. *Oxford English Grammar Course*. – Oxford. Oxford University Press. 2011.
10. Vitto Cindy L. *Grammar by Diagram: Understanding English Grammar through Traditional Sentence Diagramming*. – Canada. Broadview Press. 2006.
11. Wekker H. & Haegeman L. *A Modern Course in English Syntax*. London. Routledge. 1985.

**Online Sources:**

12. Drančák Eduard. *Characteristics of Nominal Clauses in Spoken and Written English*. 2019. Institute of British and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Prešov in Prešov, Slovakia. Retrieved July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. From: URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332580560\\_Characteristics\\_of\\_Nominal\\_Clauses\\_in\\_Spoken\\_and\\_Written\\_English](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332580560_Characteristics_of_Nominal_Clauses_in_Spoken_and_Written_English)
13. Gjini E. (April 29, 2020). *Fjalitë e përbëra. Llojet e fjalive me nënrenditje*. Retrieved July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. From: URL: <https://prezi.com/p/rub7km-b6cex/fjalite-e-perberallojet-e-fjalive-me-nenrenditje>
14. Nordquist Richard. (2020, August 29). *What is a Noun Clause (or Nominal Clause) in English Grammar?* Retrieved July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. From: URL: <https://www.thoughtco.com/noun-nominal-clause-1691440>