

Basic Sentence Structure

A **sentence** is defined as one or more independent clauses, sometimes connected to dependent clauses and sometimes not, that express a complete thought.

Elements of a sentence

Independent clause: A subject and a predicate that express a complete thought. An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence (e.g., “I like to run.”).

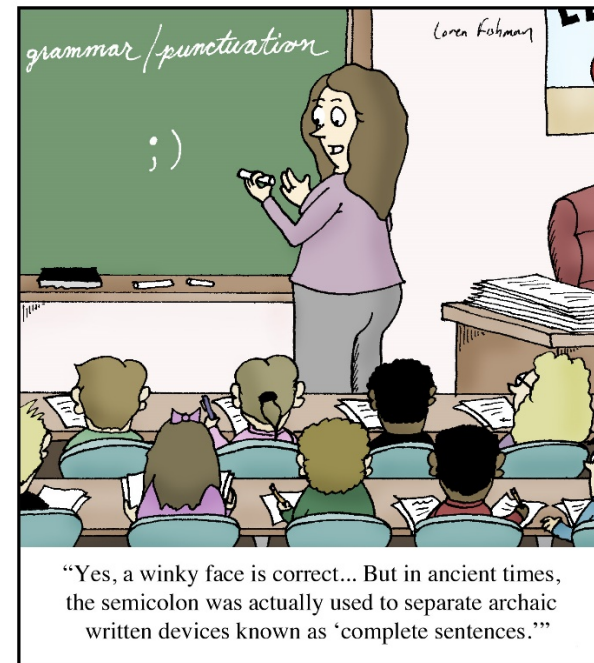
Subject: The noun, noun phrase, or gerund that is performing the action or state of being described in a sentence.

Predicate: The verb describing the action or state of being performed by the subject of a sentence, as well as any object of the verb.

Dependent clause: A subject and predicate that do not express a complete thought. A dependent clause must be connected to an independent clause in a sentence; it cannot stand alone (e.g., “because I like to run.”).

Coordinating conjunction: A word that links two independent clauses. The words that can be used as coordinating conjunctions are *for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so*.

Subordinating conjunction: A word that links a dependent clause to an independent clause. Examples include *after, before, even though, during, if, when*, and many more.



1. Simple Sentence

A **simple sentence** consists of one independent clause

Ex. 1

Run!

Independent clause



Subject: implied *you* (noun)
Predicate: *run* (verb)

Ex. 2

James ran.

Independent clause



Subject: *James* (noun)
Predicate: *ran* (verb)

Ex. 3

James ran across the wet field.

Independent clause



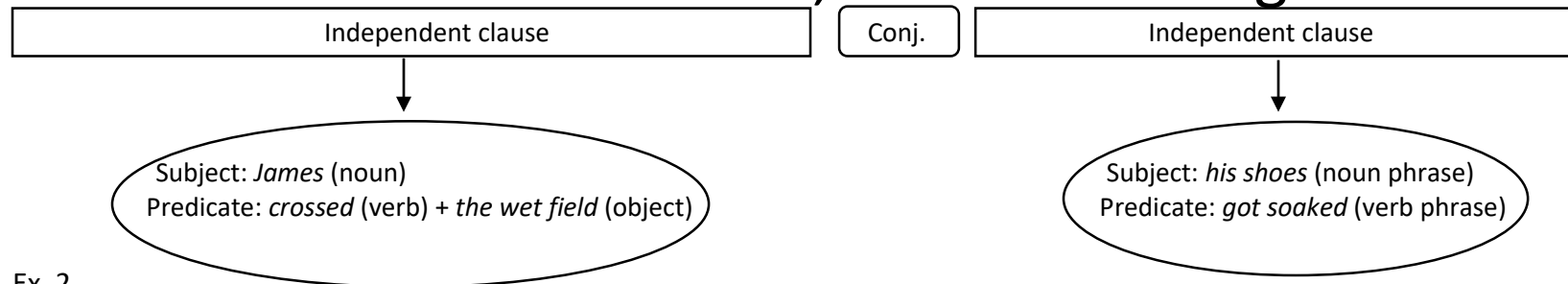
Subject: *James* (noun)
Predicate: *ran* (verb) + *across the wet field* (prepositional phrase)

2. Compound Sentence

A **compound sentence** contains two or more independent clauses linked by a coordinating conjunction

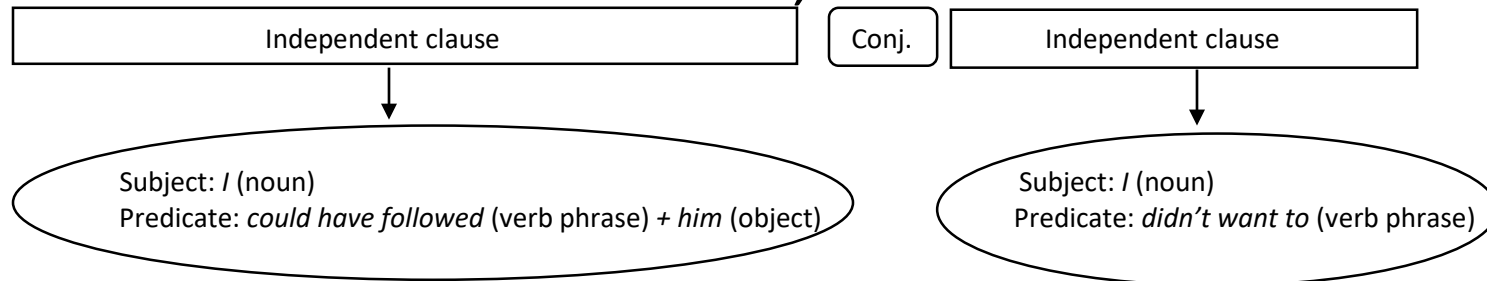
Ex. 1

James crossed the wet field, and his shoes got soaked.



Ex. 2

I could have followed him, but I didn't want to.

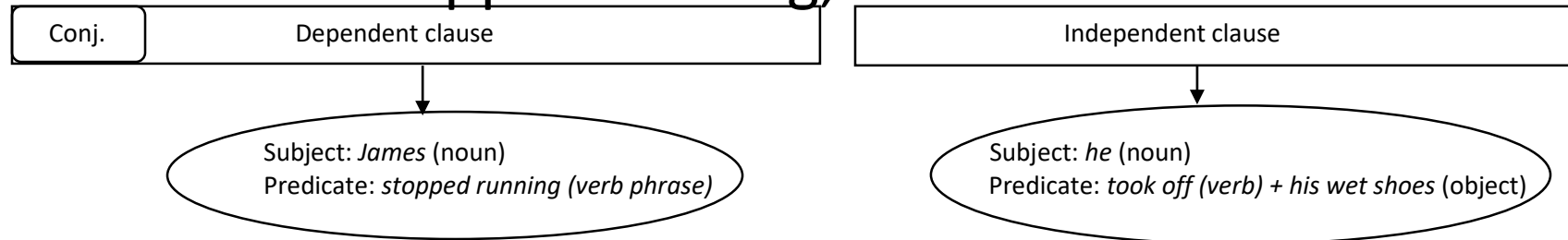


3. Complex Sentence

A **complex sentence** contains an independent clause combined with a dependent clause.

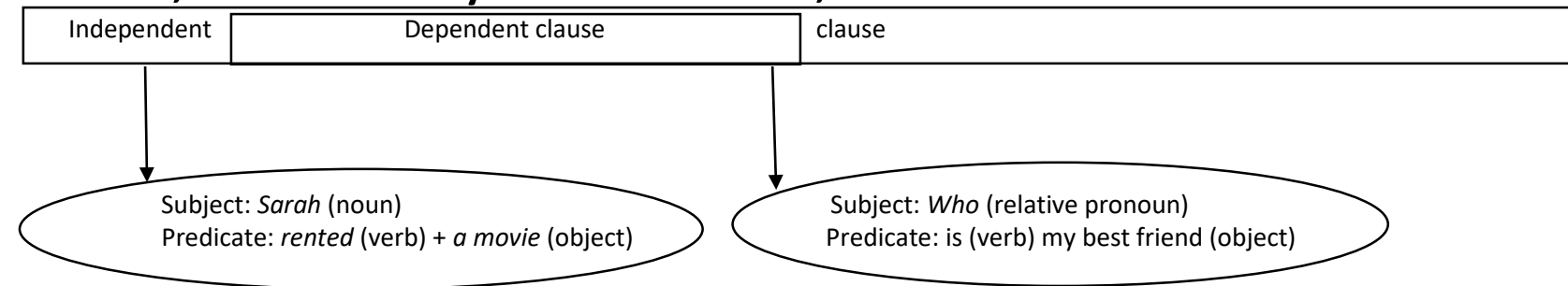
Ex. 1

After James stopped running, he took off his wet shoes.



Ex. 2

Sarah, who is my best friend, rented a movie.

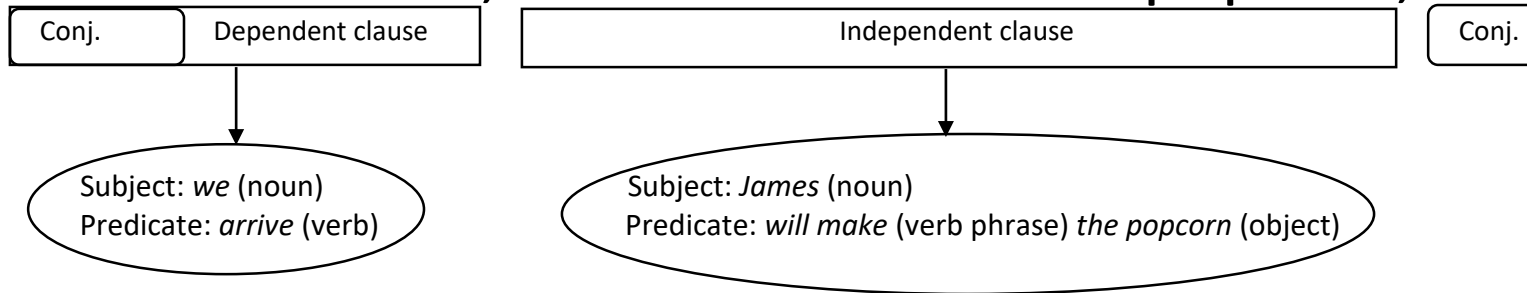


4. Compound-Complex Sentence

A sentence with two or more independent clauses and one or more dependent clauses.

Ex. 1

When we arrive, James will make the popcorn, and



Sarah will start the movie.

