

EQUIVALENTS OF PHRASE, CLAUSE AND SENTENCE IN FRENCH AND ALBANIAN

Dervish ALIMI¹

¹ *Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Philology, University of Tetova*

^{*} *Corresponding author e-mail: dervish.alimi@unite.edu.mk*

Abstract

The Albanian speakers and learners using the roman grammar terminology are facing a conceptual discrepancy and difficulty in translating the word 'clause' in their native language, considering its Anglo-Saxon terminology origin. In fact, the only word holding the meaning of the sentence in Albanian syntax is the word Fjalia, and consecutively there a Simple, Extended and Composed Sentence. Till here things are similar and very clear, but the troubles of the students begin when they meet the word 'clause', which is formally bigger than the English phrase or French Syntagma, but smaller than the Sentence, as described above.

Both clause and sentence have the common feature of having within it a lexical verb, which meets the required criteria for being a syntactic category bigger than phrase. But one of them is called clause, even though the clause must be a part of a sentence in the same time, because clause cannot stay alone and doesn't end by an orthographic stop point, as the sentence does. On the other hand a Simple sentence may have only one lexical verb, together with the subject, and the Extended sentence may have only one lexical verb in the function of the predicator, plus at least one of other sentence elements, whereas a Sentence must have more than one lexical verb, which means it must consist of two or more clauses, or otherwise called it must be composed, either compound or complex.

Mathematically said, we must deal with two clauses in order to call it a sentence, even though the sentence may consist of one lexical verb in Simple and Extended sentences, but this is not the case with the clause. Therefore, there are difficulties of translation because of their common semantic meaning on the one hand and their different orthographic and syntactical use on the other hand. How to translate the word Clause which is something in the source language that doesn't exist even as a phenomenon in the target language?! We may invent a name according to the way of use, but it cannot be equivalent for the native language of the foreigner. We may paraphrase it and explain with other words, but not with a specific one, even though there have been some attempts, like "sifjali", or "fjalizë", but this is not good enough. Or we may just borrow the word and naturalize it phonetically as Klauzë, but even then we cannot naturalize it semantically? What to do then? This is in fact the challenge of this paper, hoping to succeed, but not necessarily.

Key words: *Main clause, subordinate clause, simple sentence, extended and composed sentence, syntagma, phrase, fjali, fjalize, sifjali, etc.*

1. Structure of phrase, clause and sentence

These three structures are a common part of English, and are all composed of groups of words. Clauses, phrases and sentences are very similar, but they do have different roles. Learning the difference between them will help you make a lot more sense of English grammar, and will be very useful to improve one's written English.

a. What is a phrase?

Words can be grouped together, but without a subject or a verb. This is called a phrase. Because a phrase has neither subject nor verb, it can't form a 'predicate-r'. Phrases can be very short – or quite long. Two examples of phrases are:

“After dinner”

“Waiting for the rain to stop”.

Phrases can't be used alone, but you can use them as part of a sentence, where they are used as sentence elements.

b. What is a clause?

Clauses are groups of words that have both subjects and predicate(r)s. Unlike phrases, a clause can sometimes act as a sentence – this type of clause is called an independent clause but only within a Composed Sentence, where another clause can't be used on their own – these are called subordinate clauses, and they need to be used with an independent clause to complete their meaning. For it to be correct, it would need to be paired with another clause: *“When the man broke into the house, the dog barked at him.”*

An example of an independent clause is *“The dog barked at him”*

An example of a subordinate clause is *“when the man broke into the house”*

Altogether they make a Composed complex sentence:

“The dog barked at him/when the man broke into the house”

As we can see, while the independent clause could be used by itself as a sentence with complete thought, the subordinate clause could not.

c. What is a sentence?

A complete sentence has at least a subject and predicate, and can often be composed of more than one clause. As long as it has a subject and a predicate, a group of words can form a sentence, no matter how short it is.

e.g. “You ate fish.”

More complex sentences can combine multiple clauses or phrases to add additional information about what is described. Clauses may be combined using conjunctions – such as “and”, “but” and “or”.

*e.g. “He went out to dinner **but** didn't enjoy the meal.”*

This example is composed of two independent clauses, *“he went out to dinner”* and *“he didn't enjoy the meal”*, combined with a conjunction- *“but”*.

2. Difference between phrase and clause

A clause is a group of words with a subject-verb unit. So, the bus goes= is a clause. A phrase is a group of words without a subject-verb unit.

e.g. -He is playing in the field.

-He is playing= is a clause (subject+verb) and in the field is a phrase, within the clause.

So, the phrase is a constituent whose units are ordered: - either around a noun, it is then a nominal phrase; e.g: small children; - either around a verb, it is then a verbal phrase; eg: eat very slowly (D. D. L.1976).

Derivatively results the name:

Phrasal verb

Is an idiomatic phrase consisting of a verb and another element, typically either an adverb, as in *break down*, or a preposition, for example *see to*, or a combination of both, such as *look down on*. A phrasal verb is a verb that is made up of a main verb together with an adverb or a preposition, or both. Typically, their meaning is not obvious from the meanings of the individual words themselves.

For example: She has always looked down on me.

Other examples:

Phrasal verbs are phrases that indicate actions. They are generally used in spoken English and informal texts. Examples of such verbs include: turn down, come across and run into.

Well, first we have to straighten out which is which. A phrase is the least complicated unit, followed by clause and sentence. A phrase is any set of words that seem to go together due to their continuous pronunciation within one rhythmical group. English speakers associate words in small groups according to the meaning, conveying a message, fact or information to the reader or co-speaker.

For example, in the sentence

-The red balloon drifted lazily into a bright, blue sky.

there are several phrases.

The word *balloon* is the subject, but the subject phrase is longer: *the red balloon*. Why is this a phrase? The words *the* and *red* are both modifying *balloon*; they belong to it. To a native speaker, it would feel natural to break *the red balloon* into one chunk of words, which we then call a phrase. The definition is really as simple as this: a group of words that go together make a phrase. These words do not need to express a complete idea and have no need to include both a subject and a verb.

There are several more phrases in the example sentence above. There is a verb phrase, “drifted lazily”, and a prepositional phrase, “into a bright blue sky”.

Other examples:

-Diligent students often study.

-Because it is raining, the weather has become so sultry.

-The playful child truly loved running fast in the wide outdoors.

3. Difference between clause and sentence

Both clause and sentence are made up of a group of words that contain a subject and a predicate-r. The **main difference** between clause and sentence is that a **sentence always conveys an independent meaning, whereas a clause does not always convey an independent meaning.**

a. What is a Clause

A clause is a group of words that contains both a subject and a predicate. Although a clause can sometimes act as a sentence since it contains both a subject and a verb, it is not necessarily a complete sentence. That is to say; not every clause is a complete sentence. There are basically two types of clauses: independent clauses and dependent clauses. An independent clause is one that can stand alone and convey a complete meaning. The clauses that cannot stand alone, and do not convey a complete meaning are known as dependent clauses.

b. Types of Sentence

A sentence is a group of words that expresses a complete thought. It contains a subject and a verb. A sentence can be a single clause or several clauses. A sentence which contains a single (independent) clause is known as a simple sentence. An extended sentence contains at least one more sentence element than a subject and a verb or predicator, such as object, adjunct, or complement.

A complex sentence is one that contains one independent clause and at least one dependent clause. A compound sentence contains two or more independent clauses whereas compound-complex sentence contains at least two independent clauses and at least one dependent clause.

As we can see, **Clause** is a building unit of a sentence.

Sentence is made up of one or more clauses.

According to the Role, **Clause** can act as a noun, adverb or adjective.

Sentence do not act as a noun, adverb or adjective.

4. The french phrase called syntagma

Est un groupe de morphèmes ou de mots qui se suivent avec un sens déterminé (ex. relire, sans s'arrêter). Ce groupe, formant une unité à l'intérieur de la phrase. Chez Saussure, toute combinaison, dans la chaîne parlée, de deux ou plusieurs unités consécutives (*re-lire, contre tous ; la vie humaine*).

La Définition de "Syntagme" n.m.

Chaîne syntaxique de mots qui fait partie d'une unité syntaxique plus grande. Une Expression consistant en un ou plusieurs mots formant un constituant grammatical de la phrase (ex. le groupe nominal est un groupe syntagmatique.)

LINGUISTIQUE

1. Combinaison de morphèmes ou de mots qui se suivent et produisent un sens acceptable. *La notion de syntagme s'applique non seulement aux mots, mais aux groupes de mots, aux unités complexes de toute dimension et de toute espèce (mots composés, dérivés, membres de phrase, phrases entières)* (SAUSS.1916, p. 172).

2. *En partic., LING. STRUCT.* [Le plus souvent déterminé par un adj. spécifiant la nature du noyau du syntagme] Groupe d'unités linguistiques significatives formant une unité dans une organisation hiérarchisée de la phrase.

En linguistique structurale, le terme de syntagme est suivi d'un qualificatif qui définit sa catégorie grammaticale, comme: le syntagme nominal, le syntagme verbal, le syntagme adjectival, etc.

Puis, Le syntagme est toujours constitué d'une suite d'éléments et il est lui-même un constituant d'une unité de rang supérieur; c'est une unité linguistique de rang intermédiaire (DUBOIS, 1973ds GILB. 1980). *Le syntagme est un constituant de la phrase dont les unités s'ordonnent: – soit autour d'un nom, c'est alors un syntagme nominal; ex.: les petits*

enfants; – *soit autour d'un verbe, c'est alors un syntagme verbal; ex.: mange très lentement (D. L.1976).*

Comment trouver un syntagme ?

Un syntagme nominal, ou groupe nominal, a pour noyau un nom. Outre le nom tête, il contient en principe obligatoirement un déterminant (un article, un déterminant démonstratif ou possessif, etc. y compris le déterminant Ø).

Les constituants du syntagme nominal?

1Le syntagme nominal est un mot ou un groupe de mots formant une unité syntaxique et sémantique à l'intérieur de la phrase.

Il se compose de deux éléments obligatoires que sont le nom et le déterminant. À ces deux constituants fondamentaux, s'ajoute souvent un autre appelé expansion ou modificateur.

Dans le syntagme nominal « un pantalon et une chemise parfaitement repassés », le noyau est double, constitué des syntagmes nominaux «un pantalon» et «une chemise», syntagmes coordonnés. L'unique **satellite** de ce syntagme est le syntagme adjectival « parfaitement repassés », épithète du double noyau.

Comment trouver la tête d'un syntagme?

Dans cette théorie, tout syntagme a une tête (obligatoire), un spécifieur (facultatif), des compléments (facultatifs ou obligatoires). Pour le français, le spécifieur est à gauche de la tête, les compléments sont plutôt à droite de la tête.

To conclude, the Roman terminology of French language differs regarding the name for the modifiers within a phrase, by using the names specifier, and complements. Despite the obligatory elements of the phrase such as the noun and the determiner, is often added another element called expansion or modifier, this one similar to English.

But the topic of Phrase is not widely used and explained in the French Grammar, books, as it is in the Albanian Grammar books, compared to the English grammar books, where the grammars have paid a great attention to this grammar category, due to the influence of generative and transformative linguistics of Noam Chomsky and others.

5. French phrase versus english sentence similar to albanian “fjali”

In the examples, the phrase in French is used with the same meaning and function as Sentence in English, similar to Fjali in Albanian.

Let's see some examples:

-Et l'astuce c'est d'utiliser une phrase simple et facile à lire sur laquelle le public peut se concentrer s'il est un peu perdu, puis d'utiliser des visuels qui plaisent à nos autres sens et nous permettent de mieux comprendre ce qui est décrit.

-And the trick is to use a simple, easy-to-read sentence that the audience can focus on if they're a bit lost, and then use visuals that appeal to our other senses and allow us to understand better. what is described.

-Dhe marifeti këtu është te përdosh një fjali të vetme të lexueshme që te koncentrohet audiencia nëse e ka humbur pakëz, dhe pastaj jep pamje vizuale që tërheqin edhe shqisat tjera dhe krijojnë një kuptim më të thellë për atë që flitet.

-Ce qui, dans un livre, nécessiterait de nombreuses phrases de description [...] peut souvent être exprimé en musique par une mesure ou un seul accord. ”

-What in a book would require many descriptive sentences [...] can often be expressed in music by a measure or a single chord. ”

-Ajo çka do të kërkonte fjali të tëra për t’u përshkruar në një libër. . . , në muzikë shpesh mund të transmetohet nga një masë e vetme muzikore ose nga një akord.»

6. The equivalent of clause in french

French Propositions instead of English clauses

The man [that I’m talking about] lives here. A subordinate clause, also known as une proposition dépendante, or a dependent clause, is one of three types of clauses in French, each of which contains a subject and a verb: the independent clause, the main clause, and the subordinate clause.

Main clauses – *Propositions principales*

A main clause is similar to an independent clause: normally it could stand alone, but there’s a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun attaching it to a subordinate clause. If you say just the green part, you still have a grammatically correct sentence, but the additional meaning or clarification provided by the subordinate clause is missing.

For example...

<i>Papa Noël vérifie la liste qu’il a dressée.</i>	Santa Claus is checking the list (that) he made.
--	--

<i>Je suis parti quand il a appelé.</i>	I left when he called.
---	------------------------

<i>Le livre que tu m’as prêté est sur la table.</i>	The book you loaned me is on the table.
---	---

<i>J’ai faim parce que je n’ai pas mangé.</i>	I’m hungry because I haven’t eaten.
---	-------------------------------------

<i>Si elle est prête, on peut commencer</i>	If she’s ready, we can begin.
---	-------------------------------

Subordinate clauses – *Propositions subordonnées*

A subordinate clause, also called a dependent clause, is just the opposite: it can’t stand alone because it begins with a subordinating conjunction or relative pronoun that attaches it to a main clause. If you say just the purple part, you can immediately tell that essential grammar and information, contained in the main clause, are missing.

Par exemple...

<i>Papa Noël vérifie la liste qu’il a dressée.</i>	Santa Claus is checking the list (that) he made.
--	--

<i>Je suis parti quand il a appelé.</i>	I left when he called.
---	------------------------

<i>Le livre que tu m’as prêté est sur la table.</i>	The book you loaned me is on the table.
---	---

<i>J’ai faim parce que je n’ai pas mangé.</i>	I’m hungry because I haven’t eaten.
---	-------------------------------------

<i>Si elle est prête, on peut commencer.</i>	If she’s ready, we can begin.
--	-------------------------------

7. Subordinate versus relative clause

A relative clause, also known as *une proposition subordonnée relative*, is a particular kind of subordinate clause that is introduced by a relative pronoun rather than a subordinating conjunction. These sentences contain relative clauses, indicated by the brackets: - L'actrice [qui a gagné] est très célèbre.

-The actress [who won] is very famous.

-L'homme [dont je parle] habite ici.

-The man [that I'm talking about] lives here.

a. Subordinate Clauses versus Relative Clauses

In French, there are three types of clauses, each of which contains a subject and a verb: the independent clause, the main clause, and the subordinate clause. The subordinate clause, which does not express a complete idea and cannot stand alone, must occur in a sentence with a main clause, and it may be introduced by either a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun. The relative clause is a type of subordinate clause that can only be introduced by a relative pronoun, never by a subordinating conjunction. A French relative pronoun links a dependent or relative clause to a main clause.

A subordinate clause, or *proposition subordonnée*, does not express a complete idea and cannot stand alone. It must occur in a sentence with the main clause and may be introduced by a subordinating conjunction or a relative pronoun. The main clause expresses a complete idea and could normally stand alone (as an independent clause) if it weren't for the subordinate clause dependent on it.

The subordinate clause is in brackets in the following examples:

-J'ai dit [que j'aime] les pommes.

-I said [that I like] apples.

-Il a réussi [parce qu'il a beaucoup travaillé].

-He succeeded [because he worked a lot].

-L'homme [dont je parle habite ici].

-The man [that I'm talking about] lives here.

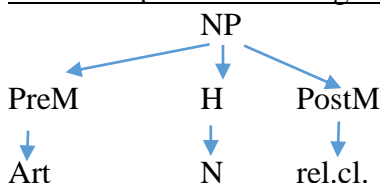
A subordinate clause, also known as *une proposition dépendante*, or a dependent clause, is one of three types of clauses in French, each of which contains a subject and a verb: the independent clause, the main clause, and the subordinate clause. Subordinating join dependent clauses to main clauses, as opposed to coordinating conjunctions, which join words and groups of words of an equal value. Coordinating: *J'aime les pommes et les oranges*. > I like apples **and** oranges.

Subordinating: *J'ai dit que j'aime les pommes*. > I said **that** I like apples.

b. Functions of Relative clause in English

P.S. In English The relative clause is usually in the position of a Postmodifier within a Phrase, even though the Phrase is usually a smaller syntactic category than the clause.

-The man [that I'm talking about] lives here



The relative clause as a type of a subordinate clause within a Complex sentence is in the function of the In-Direct Object clause as a Sentence Element, such as:

-I said [that I like] apples.

S O Ocl.

8. Semantics of phrase, clause and sentence

a. Meaning of Phrase

Noun

plural noun: **phrases**

a small group of words standing together as a conceptual unit, typically forming a component of a clause.

"'to improve standards' is the key phrase here"

verb

3rd person present: **phrases**

1. put into a particular form of words.

"it's important to phrase the question correctly"

But in Albanian, its meaning is mostly: **fjalë të kota**, meaning useless words
phrases, verbalism

b. Meaning of Sentence

As we said in Grammar has the meaning of a Phrase and Clause and has not one and specific equivalent name Sentence, even though the word Sentence comes directly from Latin *sententia* "thought, way of thinking, opinion; judgment, decision," also "a thought expressed; aphorism, saying".

More French words for sentence:

le jugement *noun*

judgment, trial, decision, ruling, opinion

le verdict *noun*

verdict

But in French Grammar, instead of Sentence is used Phrase, which has nothing to do with the English Phrase, as we saw previously, such as:

conditional sentence-phrase conditionnelle

affirmative sentence-phrase affirmative

sentence structure-structure de phrase

complex sentence-phrase complexe

simple sentence-phrase simple

c. Meaning of Clause

As a noun

1. section; plural noun: **sections**

-any of the more or less distinct parts into which something is or may be divided or from which it is made up.

"I unscrewed every section of copper pipe, from the roof tank to the hot-water cylinder"

noun

2. segment; plural noun: **segments**

-each of the parts into which something is or may be divided.

"a large segment of the local population"

3. part; plural noun: **part**

-an amount or section which, when combined with others, makes up the whole of something.

"divide the circle into three equal parts"

-an element or constituent that is essential to the nature of something.

"I was part of the family"

-a manufactured object assembled with others to make a machine; a component.

"the production of aircraft parts"

4. component; plural noun: **components**

-a part or element of a larger whole, especially a part of a machine or vehicle.

"an assembly plant for imported components"

*adjective: component

-constituting part of a larger whole; constituent.

"the component elements of the armed forces"

noun

5. Division

the action of separating something into parts or the process of being separated.

"the **division** of the land **into** small fields"

6. piece; plural noun: **pieces**

-a portion of an object or of material, produced by cutting, tearing, or breaking the whole.

"**a piece of** cheese".

Conclusion

The equivalent of English Phrase and French Syntagma in Albanian is Togfjalesh. It's composed by 2 words tog+fjalesh meaning heap of words or word cluster and is broadly accepted and used and this is a fortunate invention of a symbiosis of 2 meanings, which is including within it the definition of the French Syntagma, meaning phrase, expression, formule, locution. In my opinion, *the most acceptable Equivalent of English Clause and French Propositions is the word Segment (fjalie) in Albanian,* considering the common meaning of the clause signifying a part of a whole, which more acceptable to be used in Albanian grammar books, since the word **Sifjali** means: This looks like a sentence, but it is not, which is not semantically close to the original meaning and the definition of the phenomenon.

On the other the word **Segment** is a broadly used scientific word, even in Albanian, and it looks like the French Syntagma by appearance and pronunciation. Therefore for these similarities I strongly suggest this word to be used as a substitution of clause, merely for practical reasons and for grammar learning methodology aims. *The equivalent of English Sentence is word Fjali,* even though this word is not used in French grammar, and we are lucky to have created an original and very meaningful word, as a derivation of the word **Fjalë**, similar to the word formation in Slavic languages: Reç+enica! As a matter of fact, the Albanian grammar terminology has adopted the Roman languages terminology, under the influence of the neighboring Slavic and Italian language, therefore there are some gaps and difficulties in perceiving some parts of Anglo-Saxon grammar terminology. But the trends and influences change and we change with them too.

References

- [1]. Van Gelderen, Elly. "An Introduction to the Grammar of English: Syntactic Arguments and Socio-Historical Background." John Benjamins, 2002, Amsterdam.
- [2]. Ballard, Kim. "The Frameworks of English: Introducing Language Structures," 3rd ed. Palgrave Macmillan, 2012, Basingstoke, UK, New York.
- [3]. Declerck, Renaat; Reed, Susan, and Cappelle, Bert. "The Grammar of the English Tense System: A Comprehensive Analysis." Mouton de Gruyter, 2006, Berlin, New York.
- [4]. Hurford, James R. "Grammar: A Student's Guide." Cambridge University Press, 1994, Cambridge.
- [5]. Biber, Douglas; Conrad, Susan; and Leech, Geoffrey. "Longman Student Grammar of Spoken and Written English." Longman, 2002, London.
- [6]. <https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/phrase>
- [7]. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/phrase>
- [8]. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phrase>
- [9]. <https://www.thoughtco.com/phrase-grammar-1691625>