

Here is another sentence from *Pride and Prejudice* that illustrates the *subject* = *subject complement* sentence structure: “The sight of Miss Lucas was odious to her.” In this case, however, the subject is equated to an adjective, the great classic adjective *odious*. When the subject complement is a noun or pronoun, we call it a predicate nominative, but when the subject complement is an adjective, we call it a predicate adjective. We will use the term *subject complement* as our main term.

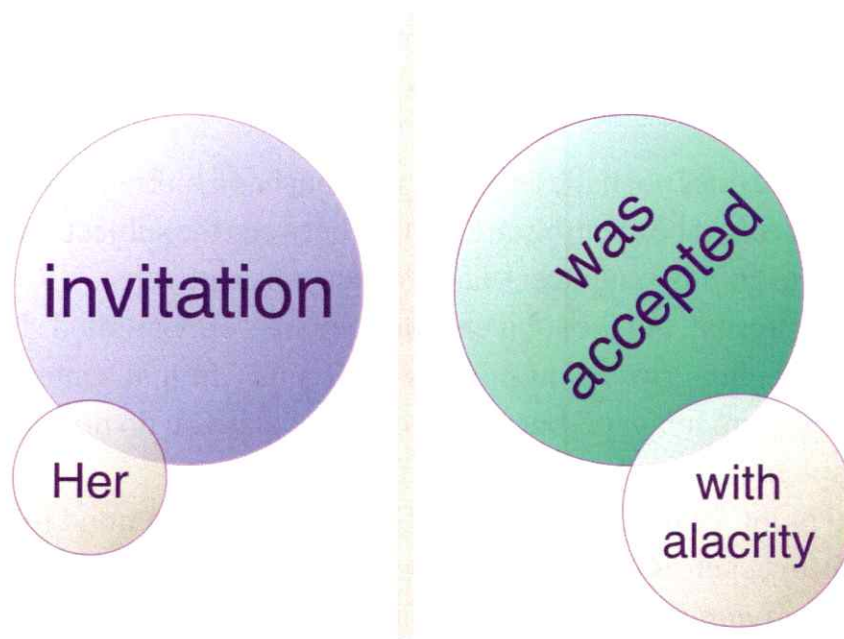


Let us look at another fine example of the subject complement structure—yet another sentence from Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. In this case we see a compound subject complement: “She is all affability and condescension....” Instead of being equated to something, the subject is now equated to two things.



We see that this sentence is a kind of algebra: $a = b + c$. Here is the crucial realization: It does not matter what book we quote from or which sentence we pick; the basic structures will always be the same. Every sentence will have a subject, and every sentence will have a verb, and most of the time the verb will be action or linking. Those are the two main ways that we think.

There is one sentence structure that sometimes muddies the water because it resembles a subject complement equation. It happens when there is a passive voice action verb. Look at this sentence from Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*:



In this case the verb is not *was*; it is *was accepted*. An action verb can be voiced in two ways: active voice and passive voice. I can say that *the tiger attacked the lion*, or I can say that *the lion was attacked by the tiger*. The first instance is active voice because the subject is attacking, and the second instance is passive voice because the subject is being attacked.

The problem is that sometimes *was* stands alone as a linking verb, and sometimes *was* is part of a passive voice action verb. You simply have to study the sentence and see if it is making an equation or not. This sentence is not.