



Based on clauses, there are four **sentence structures**: **simple**, **compound**, **complex**, and **compound-complex**. Let **I** stand for independent, **D** stand for dependent, and **cc** stand for coordinating conjunction.

FOUR SENTENCE STRUCTURES

SIMPLE: **A one-clause sentence**

I *A rogue elephant crashed through the fence.*

COMPOUND: **A sentence with two or more independent clauses**

I,ccI *The rogue elephant crashed through the fence, and we ran to the compound for safety.*

I;I *The elephant had escaped; we feared the worst.*

COMPLEX: **A sentence with an independent clause joined to a dependent clause. The dependent clause often begins with a subordinating conjunction (*if, as, since, when, because, and many others*).**

ID **A complex sentence with the independent clause first.**
We do not put a comma between the clauses in this case.
He was eccentric because he had lived alone for so long.

D,I **A complex sentence with the dependent clause first.**

There must be a comma after the introductory dependent clause.

Because he had lived alone for so long, he was eccentric.

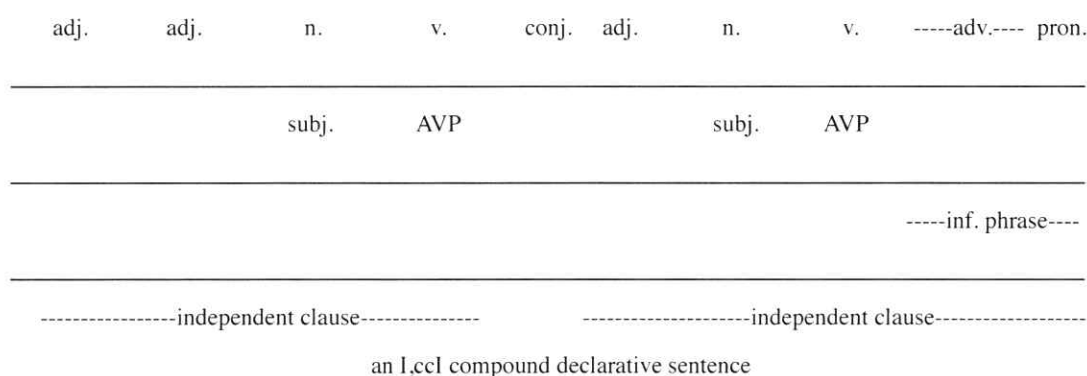
COMPOUND-COMPLEX: **Combines compound and complex structures**

Joe and I drove to the dock and met the sailors who were to take us out on the expedition when suddenly the wind kicked up, and the sky turned black.

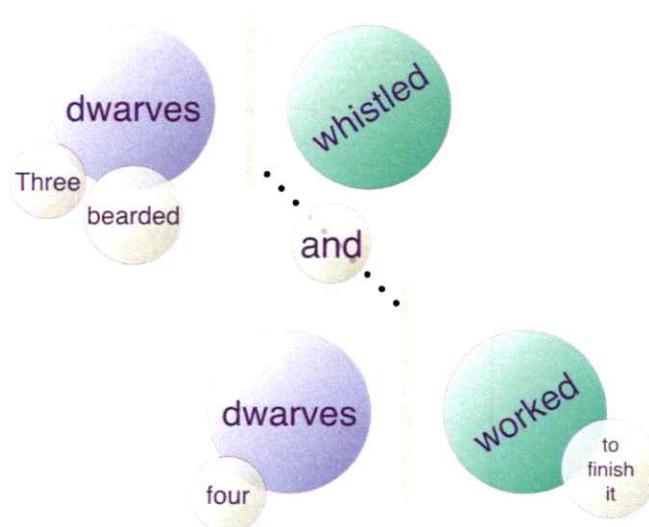


I,ccI compound sentence: Often we connect two (or more) independent clauses together into a **compound sentence**. The clauses can be connected either with a comma and coordinating conjunction (I,ccI) or with a semicolon (I;I). Here is an example of an I,ccI compound sentence. This code means **independent—comma—coordinating conjunction—independent**. Unlike a complex sentence, a compound sentence has two equally important clauses.

Three bearded dwarves whistled, and four dwarves worked to finish it.



Note that the coordinating conjunction *and* that joins the two independent clauses is not part of either clause; it is only glue.



The other version would be: *Three bearded dwarves whistled; four dwarves worked to finish it.* We would identify that as an I;I structure. An I,ccI compound sentence must have a comma before the coordinating conjunction to avoid being a **run-on sentence**.