Lesson Name : 24

Lesson Title : Independent and Dependent Clauses

Course Name : English 2 Part 3 [Honors]

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 Essential Instruction

Use your digital notebook to keep notes on new grammar concepts that you may need to reference later.

Today, let's look at some punctuation guidelines for **independent** and **dependent (subordinate) clauses**. More specifically, let's look at the rules governing **comma usage** with **independent** and **dependent clauses**.

As you probably know, you can use a **comma** and conjunction to separate two **independent clauses** in the same sentence.

> **Examples:**
>
> Nathaniel wanted to order a pizza, *but* Lisa wanted to make spaghetti.
>
> Nathaniel wanted to order a pizza, *and* Lisa agreed to pay for it.

Notice, however, that you do not need a **comma** with a compound predicate. In other words, you should only use a comma if the *subject* of the clause changes.

> **Example:** Nathaniel ordered a pizza *and* searched for his emergency $20 bill.

There's no **comma** here because this is a compound predicate, and the *subject* of the clauses (Nathaniel) is the same.

Now, let's discuss a trickier aspect of this topic. If your sentence has *both* a **dependent** and **independent clause**, you must figure out whether the **dependent clause** is **restrictive** (essential to the meaning of the sentence) or **non-restrictive** (not essential to the meaning). A **restrictive clause** does not take a **comma**, but a **non-restrictive clause** does.

> **Examples:**
>
> **Restrictive** (essential): The politician who won the recent election was sworn in last week.
>
> **Non-restrictive** (non-essential): The politician, who won the recent election, is now vacationing in Barbados.

In the first example, we need to know which politician we're discussing. In the second example, our main point is the politician's vacation; the recent election victory is *extra* information.

> **Examples:**
>
> **Restrictive** (essential): The dress that Maria is wearing was designed especially for her.
>
> **Non-restrictive** (non-essential): Maria's dress, which is covered in sequins, was designed especially for her.
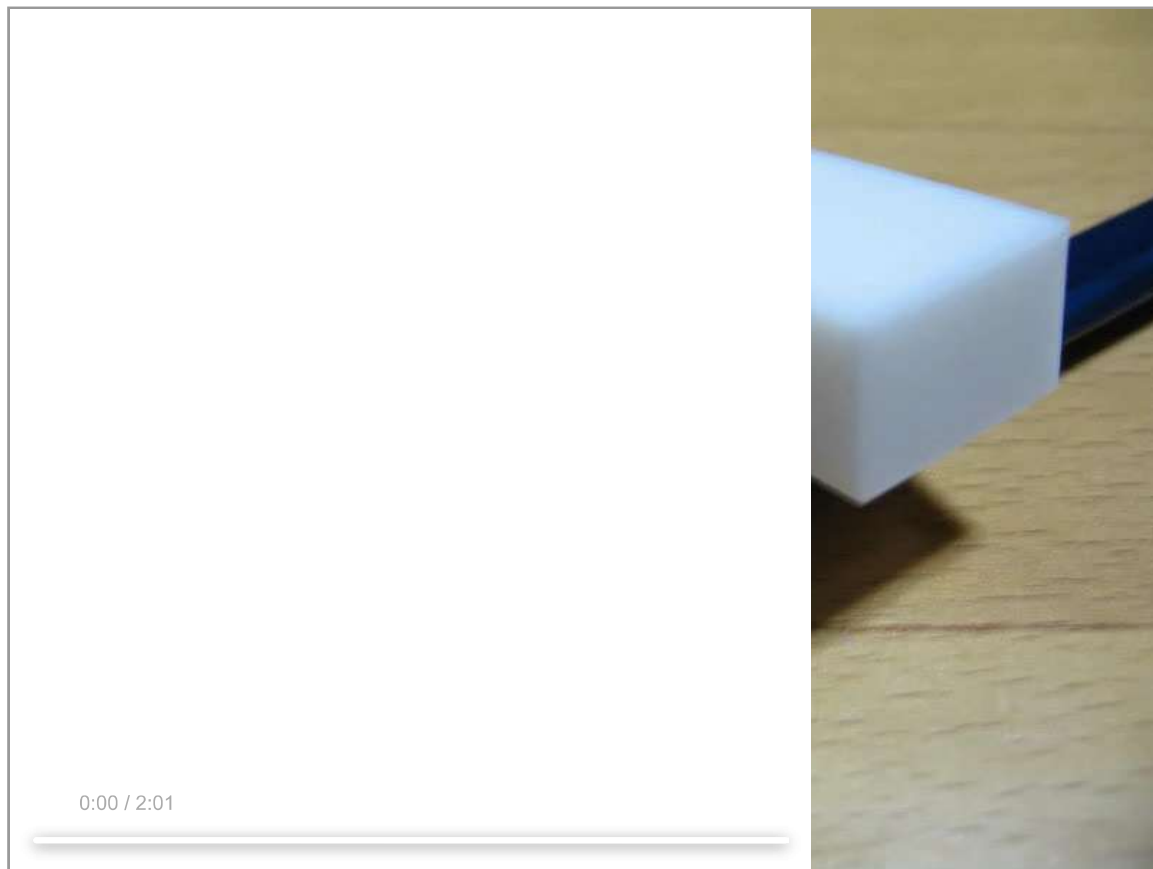
Again, in the first example, the **clause** is essential, because we need to know which dress we're discussing for the sentence to make sense. In the second example, the information about the sequins is *extra* information that is not essential to the meaning of the sentence.

Here's a quick summary of what we've just discussed:

Restrictive clause = essential = no comma(s)

Non-restrictive clause = not essential = comma(s)

Note: The word *that* should only be used to introduce restrictive clauses, while the word *which* should only be used to introduce non-restrictive clauses. These words are not interchangeable.

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