

Simple Sentences

Nominal Sentences

These are sentences that have nominal (noun) predicates or some noun form in the predicate position. A beginning student would employ this sentence structure to offer information about one's occupation, nationality, or answer what-questions.

Below are some examples where the nominal predicate is underlined:

Titser si Mr. Ramos sa Science High School.

(Mr. Ramos is a teacher at the Science High School.)

Estudyante si Anna sa NIU. (Anna is a student at NIU.)

Abogado ang babae. (The woman is a lawyer.)

Amerikano ang lalaki. (The man is American.)

Aleman sina Baldur at Eva. (Baldur and Eva are Germans.)

Kartero siya. (She/He is a postman.)

Empleyado sila sa bangko. (They are employees at the bank.)

Bahay ko ito. (This is my house.)

Kabayo niya ito. (This is her/his horse.)

Adjectival Sentences

These are sentences that contain adjective(s) or descriptive word(s) in the predicate position. This sentence structure is used to describe someone or something. Here are some examples where the adjectival predicate is underlined:

Makulay ang bahaghari. (The rainbow is colorful.)

Maikli ang mga krayola. (The crayons are short.)

Matalino si Dan. (Dan is intelligent.)

Masaya sina Nora at Boyet. (Nora and Boyet are happy.)

Masarap iyan. (That is delicious.)

Maganda ang mga iyan. (Those are beautiful.)

Mabait siya. (He/She is nice.)

Masipag sila. (They are hardworking.)

Verbal Sentences

These are sentences that contain a verb or verb form in the predicate position. Some verbs require a complement(s); others do not. The verbal form of the predicate determines the role of the noun(s) following it. Depending on what the marker in the verb is (e.g. um, in, an, etc.) the nouns that follow are marked as being the actor, object, instrument, etc. (For a detailed discussion of the verb forms, go to the grammar section on verbs.)

Active Sentences

These are sentences that have the actor (doer) as the focus. The most common verbal affixes for this type of sentence are -um-, mag-, and ma-. Here are a few examples where the focused actor is italicized, and the verb forms are in bold. All verbs are in the perfective/completed form or "past tense". The verbal affixes are underlined.

Tumakbo *si Jose*. (Jose ran.)

Bumili ng kendi *ang bata*. (The kid bought a candybar.)

Nag-aral *si Lisa* sa aklatan. (Lisa studied in the library.)

Nagluto ng adobo *ang nanay*. (Mother cooked adobo.)

Natulog *siya* sa sofa. (He slept on the sofa.)

Nakinig *ang mga estudyante* sa guro. (The students listened to the teacher.)

The noun phrases (NPs), subject and complement(s), following the verb may be rearranged without changing the meaning of the sentence. Tagalog does not follow a very strict word order in this sense.

If you are unsure, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- 1) PCS = Predicate + Complement(s) + Focus
- 2) ProNP = Pronouns + Noun Phrases; and
- 3) Shorter pronoun(s) and/or particles before longer ones.

Non-active Sentences

There are a number of non-active sentences in Tagalog. The verb takes certain verbal affixes (um, in, etc.) to mark the focus of the sentence, i.e., either object, location/ beneficiary/ recipient, or instrument. Though a lot of linguistic literatures refer to these structures as "passives", they are not really passive in the true sense of the word, and the use of the term passive is confusing since the English equivalents of these sentences are not necessarily expressed in passive by speakers of English. Most of the time, the focus of a sentence in English is expressed not through markers but through emphatic vocal stress on the words in focus. Below are some examples of "non-active" sentences where the focus is italicized and the verb form in bold, all of which are in the completed or "past" form:

Object - Focus

Binasa ni Noel *ang libro*. (Noel read the book.)

Ininom ni Henry *ang kape* sa kusina. (Henry drank the coffee in the kitchen.)

Sinulat niya *ang tulang Buhay*. (She wrote the poem Life.)

Beneficiary/Recipient/Location-Focus

Binilhan ni Fidel ng bulaklak *si Imelda*. (Fidel bought flowers for Imelda.)

Binigyan niya *ako* ng regalo. (She gave me a gift.)

Pinuntahan ng pasyente *ang doktor*. (The patient went to the doctor.)

Instrumental - Focus

Ipinambili niya ng damit *ang pera*. (She used the money to buy clothes.)

Ipinansulat ni Lita *ang lapis*. (Lita used the pencil for writing.)

Existential Sentences

These are sentences that express the existence of something or the state of having something and are marked by the existential particle *mayroon*. This particle takes the linker suffix *-(n)g* when it precedes a noun/noun phrase. In this format, it functions like a modifier just like adjectives modify nouns and is usually shortened to *may*. The existential phrase occupies the predicate position. Here are some examples:

Mayroong kapatid na babae si Rosa.

May kapatid na babae si Rosa. (Rosa has a sister.)

Mayroong bagong damit si Tina.

May bagong damit si Tina. (Tina has a new dress.)

Mayroong dalawang libro ang estudyante.

May dalawang libro ang estudyante. (The student has two books.)

Mayroong tao sa bahay.

May tao sa bahay. (There's someone in the house.)

Mayroong konsyerto sa plasa mamayang gabi.

May konsyerto sa plasa mamayang gabi.

(There's going to be a concert at the plaza later tonight.)

Mayroon akong lihim. May lihim ako. (I have a secret.)

Mayroon siyang trabaho. May trabaho siya. (He/She has a job.)

When *mayroon* is followed by a pronoun, it functions like the phrase "to have something." The linker *(-ng)* is attached to end of the pronoun (e.g. *ako + ng = akong*). The pronoun comes directly after *mayroon*.

When the shortened form *may* is used, the pronoun comes after the noun or noun phrase.

The negative equivalent of a *mayroon/may* sentence is marked by the particle *wala* which means "there is not (something)"; "the absence of (something)"; or "not having (something)." Here are the corresponding negative equivalents of the preceding examples:

Walang kapatid na babae si Rosa. (Rosa does not have a sister.)

Walang bagong damit si Tina. (Tina does not have a new dress.)

Walang libro ang estudyante. (The student does not have a book.)

Walang tao sa bahay. (There is no one in the house.)

Walang konsyerto sa plasa mamayang gabi.

(There is no concert at the plaza tonight.)
Wala akong lihim. (I don't have a secret.)
Wala siyang trabaho. (He/She doesn't have a job.)

Notice again that when a personal pronoun occurs with wala, it comes after the negator wala, and the linker is attached to it.

Prepositional Sentences

These are sentences with a prepositional phrase in the predicate position. It must be noted, however, that the term preposition as used here is not the same as preposition in English. In Tagalog, the main function of a preposition (usually sa or nasa) is to indicate location or direction. Some Tagalog grammar books refer to these words as location/direction markers. Here are a few examples:

Nasa bahay si Jose. (Jose is at home.)
Nasa opisina si Susan. (Susan is at the office.)
Nasa Amerika ang presidente. (The president is in the US.)
Nasa kotse ang tatay. (Father is in the car.)
Nasa mesa ang pagkain. (The food is on the table.)
Nasa dingding ang orasan. (The clock is on the wall.)
Nasa ilalim ng upuan ang aso. (The dog is under the chair.)
Nasa likod ni Jose ang TV. (The television is behind Jose.)
Sa bahay ni Pina ang salu-salo. (The party is at Pina's place.)
Sa Batangas beach ang piknik. (The picnic is at Batangas beach.)

AY-Sentences

These sentences are referred to as inverted sentences in some grammar books, and the word AY is referred to as a sentence inversion marker. The word order of this sentence type (Focus + AY + Predicate) is the reverse of the simple predicative sentence (Predicate + Subject). Here are some examples :

Sentence Simple Predicative, Inverted/AY-Sentence

Nominal:

Nars si Eva. Si Eva ay nars. (Eva is a nurse.)
Estudyante siya sa UP. Siya ay estudyante sa UP. (She is a student at UP.)

Adjectival:

Mayaman si Jose. Si Jose ay mayaman. (Jose is rich.)
Palakaibigan ang bata. Ang bata ay palakaibigan. (The kid is friendly.)

Verbal:

Nag-aaral ang estudyante sa laybrari.

Ang estudyante ay nag-aaral sa laybrari. (The student is studying in the library.)

Bumili ako ng lapis sa tindahan kahapon.
Ako ay bumili ng lapis sa tindahan kahapon.
(I bought a pencil from the store yesterday.)

Existential:

May konsyerto ang mang-aawit sa Maynila.
Ang mang-aawit ay may konsyerto sa Maynila.
(The singer has a concert in Manila.)
May trabaho si Ana tuwing Sabado at Linggo.
Si Ana ay may trabaho tuwing Sabado at Linggo.
(Ana has work every Saturday and Sunday.)

Prepositional:

Nasa ilalim ng upuan ang pusa.
Ang pusa ay nasa ilalim ng upuan. (The cat is under the chair.)
Nasa Amerika si Noel.
Si Noel ay nasa Amerika. (Noel is in the US.)

Focusless Sentences

The following set of sentences in Tagalog may be viewed as focusless, i.e., ang phrases (focused phrases) do not necessarily occur in this set of sentences.

Gusto sentences are usually focusless when the word gusto is followed by an actor focus verb.

Gusto kong kumain.

Kumain is an actor focus* verb.

* Ordinarily an actor focus verb would have the actor of the verb be in focus. However, notice that in this sentence the actor (kong) is not in focus. This is because of the rule that states that a sentence with gusto can never have an actor that is in focus.

Other actor focus verbs include those verbs with affix mag-, um, and ma.

Gusto sentences are also focusless when they are followed by a ng phrase and by another ng phrase (ng + object).

Gusto ko ng mansanas. (I like apples.)

Phenomenal Sentences may consist of a group of verbs and adjectives stating certain acts of nature or natural phenomena. The verb may occur without any complement (predicate). Usually adverbial or locative complements follow these adjectives or verbs. To form a Phenomenal sentence the –um affix is added on to nouns of natural phenomena.

araw (sun) - umaraw (sun shining); Umaaraw. The sun is shining.
ambon (drizzle) - umambon (drizzling); Umambon. It is drizzling.

These verbs inflect for aspect.

Completed: Umaraw. (It was sunny.)

Incompleted: Umaaraw. (It is sunny.)

Contemplated: Aaraw. (It will be sunny.)

Ma – adjectives referring to natural phenomena such as the following are also focusless. They are followed by adverbial or locative complements.

Dilim – darkness; Madilim sa bahay. (It is dark in the house.)

Ginaw or Lamig – cold; Malamig sa labas. (It is cold outside.)

Init – heat; Mainit ngayon. (It is hot now.)

Liwanag – brightness or light; Maliwanag sa loob. (It is bright inside.)

Ka marks a recently completed action of the verb. Ka sentences are also focusless. Ka verbs are followed by the adverbial particle lang. The recently completed aspect is formed by the affix ka followed by the reduplication of the first consonant vowel or first vowel of the verb base.

Kain – kakakain ko lang. (I just ate.)

Aral – kaaaral lang niya. (He just studied.)

Laro – kalalaro lang ng bata. (The child just played.)

These sentences occur with nouns indicating time or seasonal events followed by adverbs of time.

Bukas na. (Tomorrow instead.)

Lunes kahapon. (Yesterday was Monday.)

Pasko sa Disyembre. (Christmas will be in December.)

Disyembre sa susunod na buwan. (It is December next month.)

Nobyembre ngayon. (It is November now.)

Exclamation sentences that are introduced by kay, anong, and anong pagka do not have any words that are marked as being in focus.

Kay buti nila! (How good they are!)

Anong ganda ng bundok! (How beautiful is the mountain.)

Anong pagka – expresses the strongest exclamation when prefixed to the adjective root, and the root word is repeated.

Anong pagkaganda-ganda ng babae!

Kay, anong, and napaka all seem to be similar to the exclamation that uses the focus marker ang. For example:

Ang ganda ng babae! (How beautiful the woman is!)

Ang laki ng bahay! (How big the house is!)

Despite the fact that kay, anong, and napaka do not have any words marked as in focus, they could perhaps be seen as alternative ways of conveying the same sense as the exclamations that use ang.

Exclamatory sentences can also use interjections or one word construction, usually a noun or verb.

Interjections: Nakupu! - My God! Ay! Oh! Aray! Ouch!

Nouns: Sunog! Fire! Magnanakaw! Thief!

Verbs: Layas! Go! Labas! Go out!

The prefix napaka- expresses an intensified sentence. It is also followed by a word base, usually adjective.

Napakatapang niya! How brave he is!

Napakaganda ni Nicole. How beautiful Nicole is.

May/Mayroon (there is) or wala (negative of may) sentences are often used to express the existence or absences of the noun that follows.

May tao sa bahay. There is someone in the house.

Mayroon klase bukas. There's class tomorrow.

May sentences may occur with or without complements. They also become focusless when followed by actor focus verbs (-um, mag-, and ma)

Walang tao. There's no one. (There is also a linker -ng in wala)

May tumatakbo sa labas. There is someone running outside.

With goal focused verbs (verbs with affix I-, -in, -an) following may, mayroon, or wala, actor-topics appear in the sentences.

May kakainin ako. I have something to eat.

(-in verb) (actor-topic)

Walang gagawin si Ben. Ben does not have anything to do.

Negation

The Negator HINDI

HINDI is generally used to negate nominal (NOM), adjectival (ADJ), and verbal (VBL) sentences. This is done by placing HINDI before the predicate, the structure being:

Negative (HINDI) + Predicate + Subject + Complement(s)

Here are some examples illustrating this structure:

NOM Hindi Amerikano ang bisita. The visitor is not an American.

NOM Hindi abogado ang lalaki. The man is not a lawyer.

ADJ Hindi maganda ang panahon. The weather is not good.

ADJ Hindi malayo ang bahay ko sa opisina. My house is not far from the office.

VBL Hindi umuwi si Rey kahapon. Rey did not come home yesterday.

VBL Hindi nag-aral para sa eksamen si Art. Art did not study for the exam.

When the subject or object or both are pronouns, they come immediately after the negator. If there are two or more pronouns, the shorter pro-form precedes the longer one(s). Otherwise, the complement(s) comes before the subject. Here are some examples:

NOM Hindi siya Amerikano. He/She is not an American.

NOM Hindi siya abogado. He is not a lawyer.

ADJ Hindi ito maganda. This is not good.

ADJ Hindi ito malayo sa opisina. This is not far from the office.

VBL Hindi siya umuwi kahapon. He did not come home yesterday.

VBL Hindi siya nag-aral nito. He did not study this.

The Negator WALA

WALA is generally used to negate existential and prepositional sentences. They imply the non-existence or absence of someone or something. This is done by using the negator WALA in place of the existential particle MAY/MAYROON or in place of the "preposition" NASA. In the case of the prepositional sentence, it more complex than this, but for our purpose, this should do for now.

EXISTENTIAL SENTENCES

Walang tao sa bahay. There's nobody home.

Walang pera si Josie. Josie has no money.

Walang klase ngayon. There is no class today.

Wala akong panahon para mag-aral. I don't have time to study.

PREPOSITIONAL SENTENCES

Wala sa klase si Noel kanina. Noel was not in class earlier today.

Wala sa kwarto ang libro mo. Your book is not in the room.

Wala sa akin ang susi. I don't have the key (with me).

Wala rito si Lina. Lina is not here.