

Complement clause

A complement clause is a clause introduced by a complementizer like *that* or *whether*. A complement clause is attached to a preceding noun, adjective or verb. In the sentence 'The news that she was dead shocked us all', 'that she was dead' is a noun complement clause attached to the noun *news*. In 'I am sure that she is coming', 'that she is coming' is an adjective-complement clause attached to the adjective *sure*.

In 'My mother suggested that I should consult a doctor', 'that I should consult a doctor' is a verb-complement clause attached to the verb *suggested*.

In some cases the complementizer may be optionally omitted.

I am sure she is coming. OR I am sure that she is coming.

My mother suggested I should consult a doctor. OR My mother suggested that I should consult a doctor.

Note that a noun-complement clause is different from a relative clause, even though the two often look similar.

Complementizer

The label complementizer refers to that part of speech which includes the words which introduce complement clauses. Examples are *that* and *whether*. *If* is also a complementizer when it means *whether*.

She said that she wasn't coming.

I don't know whether she will come.

She asked me if I was coming.