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EDCI 5543

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Class wrap-up

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**Chapter 9: Relative Clauses**

**Basic Forms**

* Relative clause - typically found after a noun phrase and provide some information about the person or thing indicated by that noun phrase. They are sometimes called adjective clauses.
  + Examples:
    - For the grammar clause, we need a new book.
    - I’m talking about a book that doesn’t make me fall asleep.
* Noun Phrase + relative clause (acts as an adjective and modifies noun phrase)
* A clause is a sentence imbedded within a sentence
* In some languages adjectives are put in front of a clause or a noun contrary to some other languages (Arabic, Thai, Spanish, etc.)
  + Examples:
    - For the grammar class, we need a new book. (Underlined is adjective)
    - I’m talking about a book that doesn’t make me fall asleep. (Underlined is adjective/relative clause)
* Relative pronouns are different than he or she
* Five relative pronouns: who, that, which, whom, whose (that is the most popular)
  + Examples: used in talking
    - I’m the kind of person who is always losing things.
      * Ask, “Who is always losing things?” = I am. It is a relative clause explaining who is always losing things.
    - Right now, I can’t find a book that I need for school.
* Subject relatives - relative pronoun is the subject in that clause
  + Examples
    - Did you see the man? The man was here.
    - Did you see the man who was here? (we call this subject relatives)
    - Did you take the book which was on the desk? (subject clause because which is the subject)
      * If you took out “which was on the desk” would the subject be ‘you’? No, “which was on the desk” is still the subject. It is an Object and Subject relation - O-S relation. It is a bit confusing, but it has to do with what we will discuss later. Which is the subject of the clause.
* In contemporary spoken (in America) English, ‘that’ is found much more often than ‘which’ in these constructions:
  + Examples:
    - I didn’t see the man *that* was here.
    - And I didn’t take the book *that* was on the desk.
* Object relatives (relative pronoun is the object in that relative clause)
  + Examples:
    - Did you like the woman? You met the woman.
    - Did you like the woman whom you met? (woman is object and whom is object, too = O-O relation)
    - Did you enjoy the film? You saw the film.
    - Did you enjoy the film which you saw? (O-O relation)
  + Side note: these are colloquial terms
* Some learners produce: \*Did you enjoy the film which you saw *it*? This is incorrect because it is repetitive. ‘It’ is not used at this position in English, but in some other languages. It is called a resumptive pronoun.
* A resumptive pronoun is a personal pronoun appearing in a relative clause, which restates the antecedent after pause or interruption.
  + Example:
    - This is the girl, that whenever *it* rains *she* cries. (You can only use ‘it’ when there is a pause. In this sentence the comma acts as a pause. This is also a colloquial saying).
* ‘That’ is frequently used as an object relative pronoun: I didn’t like the woman that I met.
* Or zero relative pronoun: I don’t want to talk about the woman (zero article here) I met.
* In object relative position, the forms whom and which are associated with more formal language than the *that* and zero article forms. The zero relative occurs most often in short object relatives with pronoun subjects.
  + Example:
    - I’m tired of talking about the film I saw. (This is colloquial, and you do not need to use relative pronouns)
  + African American Vernacular English often don’t use relative pronouns.
  + Usually professors use relative pronouns as a register.
* After-preposition relatives (this is what we learn in a professional setting to avoid using prepositions at the end; Dr. Wei doesn’t think it is necessary because it is not forbidden in APA format):
  + Examples:
    - Where is the person? You talked to the person.
    - Where is the person to whom you talked? (This is written because ‘whom’ is very formal)
    - Where is the hotel? You stayed in the hotel.
    - Where is the hotel in which you stayed? (very formal)
      * Informal: Where is the hotel you stayed in? Or Where is the hotel you stayed?
      * Awkward phrasing: Where is the hotel where you stayed?
* In these structures, the preposition ‘to’ and ‘in’ have been FRONTED along with the relative pronouns.
  + This is on position where the form ‘that’ cannot be used instead of ‘whom’ or ‘which’.
    - \*I can’t remember the hotel in that I stayed.
  + But it could be fine if the preposition ‘to’ and ‘in’ have been stranded at the end of the clause. They are called stranded preposition (These are usually used in British English and Dr. Wei’s class).
    - Examples:
      * Can I meet the person that you talked to?
      * Can we find the hotel that you stayed in?
* When a preposition is stranded, it is even more common to find clauses with zero relative.
  + Examples:
    - Mary knows the person (zero article here) I talked to.
    - She’ll remember the hotel (zero article here) we stayed in.
* Some grammar books or dictionaries still warn students not to end a sentence with a preposition. This is not forbidden in APA format.
* Possessive relative - whose (Can be used for inanimate objects - usually in British English)
  + Examples:
    - Did you talk to the girl? Her bag was stolen.
    - Did you talk to the girl whose bag was stolen?
    - Have you ever lived in a house? Its roof was leaking.
    - Have you ever lived in a house whose roof was leaking?
      * These examples sound awkward to Americans.
    - Have you ever lived in a house? The roof of the house was leaking.
    - Have you ever lived in a house the roof of which was leaking? (Still sounds awkward to Americans)
    - He had stomach pains the cause of which was unknown. (In American English, you can write: “He had stomach pains, the cause of which was unknown.”)
  + Side note: the possessive relative pronoun (whose) is different than possessive pronouns (its, his, hers)

**Basic Structures** - We will talk about two positions: medial and final

* Medial and final position
  + Examples:
    - The man has a cat.
    - The man lives next door.
    - The man *who lives next door* has a cat. (subject relative because the subject pronoun is in the middle).
    - The woman has a large dog.
    - The man wants to marry the woman.
    - The woman *that the man wants to marry* has a large dog. (Object relative clause modifying the woman; *that* is the object and the *woman* is the subject = O-S relation).
  + Conclusion of the examples above: Relative clauses tend to occur in the medial position when there is a subject-subject (S-S) and a subject-object (S-O) relationship between the antecedent noun and the relative pronoun.
  + Examples:
    - The man has a cat.
    - The cat likes the large dog.
    - The man has a cat that likes the large dog. (cat = subject; that = object O-S relation)
  + Conclusion of the examples above: When a relative clause occurs in final position, the relationship tends to be object-subject (O-S) or object-object (O-O) between the antecedent noun and the relative noun.
  + Note: we always look at the relation between the noun we are modifying. Most of the time they are together, but sometimes, rarely, they are separate.
  + Examples:
    - The woman has a large do.
    - The cat likes the large dog.
    - The woman has a large dog that the cat likes.
  + Conclusion of the examples above: Object-object relation (O-O)
* Two relative clauses in the same sentence:
  + Example:
    - The cat has started to sleep with the dog *that belongs to the woman that the man wants to marry.*

**Restrictive and Nonrestrictive**

* What we talked about until now are all restrictive clause.
* They are also called ‘defining’ relative clause because they define or restrict the reference of antecedent noun.
* There is another kind of relative clause called ‘non-restrictive’ clause (which means you are going to separate the np from the relative clause). They give extra information about antecedent.
  + Examples:
    - My neighbor, who is an English speaker, plays very loud music.
    - The man — whose name is Johnny Jensen — also like to have weekend parties.
    - These parties (which are very rowdy) seem to go on all night.
  + All commas, dashes, brackets, and pauses here are generally called separation markers.
  + These are okay to use in APA formatting.
  + Examples:
    - My friend, *who’s a Japenese*, is coming. (non-restrictive because of the commas; it is considered not necessary information to the reader)
    - My friend *who’s a Japanese* is coming. (restrictive)
    - Mrs. Smith, w*ho is the librarian,* reported that some books were missing.
    - Someone said that I took the books, *which was not true*. (the relative pronoun must modify the whole phrase before; if it is used to modify the word ‘books’ then you cannot use the comma unless it is the middle of the sentence and you use two commas).
      * What is the antecedent of this sentence? This is an interesting sentence that is an exception to the rule: NP + relative pronoun. This one is actually modifying the whole main clause.
      * An antecedent can only be an NP (noun phrase).
      * A question asked was, “Is ‘which was not true’ modifying ‘someone said’ or ‘that I took the books’?”
        + The answer is that the context depends. It could be talking about the fact that the whole thing is not true and that someone didn’t even said anything about it. The most important part is the verb (we will learn more about this in Pragmatics EDCI 5545?)
    - I had never touched the books, *most of which were in German*.
* The relative pronoun ‘that’ and the zero relative are typical features of restrictive relative clauses.
* With antecedents such as *anyone, any person, everyone,* and *everything*, a restrictive relative clause is typically used to identify more specifically who and what is being talked about.
* It would be unusual to find a non-restrictive relative clause after any of those general antecedents.
  + Examples:
    - Is there anything *you can’t do*? (no relative pronoun)
    - Well, I can’t help every person *who needs help*. (‘who needs help’ modifies ‘every person’ = more general)
    - But those *that you help* are usually satisfied. (S-O relation)
    - I’m sure there are some people *who are never happy*. (no relation)
* See box 9.3 Restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses on p. 249

**Linguistic Distance**

* As we have noted elsewhere, more linguistic distance conveys a much looser connection. The restrictive comes first, closest to the antecedent noun.
  + Example:
    - The person *who left this bag, who must be very careless*, will probably come back for it. (extremely abnormal because two relative clauses are used; this is a S-S-S relation).

**Basic Meanings**

* The forms w*ho, whom,* and *whose* are strongly associated with human or humanlike entities (e.g. pet).
* *Which* tends to be reserved for non-human entities.
* *That* is used with both human and non-human antecedents. (If you don’t know which one to use, use ‘that.’)
  + Example:
    - She has a crazy dog who makers her laugh. (This can change based on the culture: is your dog part of the family? If so, you use a human entity).

**Who, which, that**

* Who: the most common subject relative
  + Example:
    - The man *who* knocked me down just ran away. (S-S relation: the man is subject)
* It isn’t necessary that the agents should be specifically identified.
  + Example:
    - I get tired of people *who* are always complaining.
* Sometimes ‘who’ is not used for human reference when collective nouns are used as antecedents.
  + Examples:
    - I was part of the crowd which was waiting for the bus. (use can use *that*, and *who* can replace *which*)
    - There was a small group which kept pushing to the front.
    - I think they were part of a teenage gang which just wanted to cause trouble.
* Similar antecedents: *audience, class, club, committee, government.*
* They can have *that* instead of *which.*
* ‘Who’ is preferred when we want to emphasize the human or human-like aspect of a referent.
  + Example:
    - My sister has a baby *that* cries all night.
* Speakers use *that* in relative clauses when there is no need to mark the referent as having special properties.
* *That* neutralizes the normal distinction between *who* and *which.*
* The forms *that* and zero relative are sued when no crucial meaning content has to be indicated by the relative pronoun.
  + Examples:
    - That’s near the town *where* I was born.
    - I grew up in an atmosphere *where* everything was easy.
    - The problems started during the period *when* I was a teenager.
    - That’s probably the major reason *why* I left that place.

**Where, when, why**

* *Where, when*, and *why* are sometimes described as relative adverbs because they appear to take the place of adverbial expressions.
* Perhaps because they convey their meaning content so explicitly, they can in fact be used without antecedents.
* Are these S-O relations? They don’t have antecedents so they will have no relation.
  + Examples:
    - That’s near *where* I grew up. (No NP, so no relation)
    - I can remember *when* I was a small child. (‘the time’ is deleted and that is the NP, so no relation)

**Meanings of relative pronouns**

* See Box 9.4 on p. 253 - explains when to use *who, which, that/zero, where, when, why*
* There is an interesting preference in English for *who* and *which*, rather than *that* (and zero), when other linguistic material comes between the antecedent and the start of the relative clause.
  + Examples:
    - I met a *student* yesterday over the cafeteria *who said he knew you.* (this is bad for talking and writing: it sounds awkward).
    - I wanted to talk about *problems* in my class and in the office generally *which really bother me*. (Again, this is awkward and confusing)
    - Note: Tree diagrams will help with this issue, specifically sorting out the meaning of sentences.

**Meanings in context**

* The basic organization of English sentences containing relative clauses can be best explained in terms of information structure. In final position, the relative clause is typically used to introduce new information. In medial position, the relative clause is used to make a connection with already established or given information.

**Introducing new information**

* See p. 255 for examples where the new information is always at the end

**Connecting with given information**

* In terms of information structure, relative clauses in medial position are used to identify what is already assumed to be known or given.
  + Examples:
    - The computer which I have is a Macintosh.
    - The person who did this will be punished.
    - That book you were looking for is in the library.
      * That book is in the library.
      * What are you looking for? The book.
* The process in the example shown is called “grounding”: the relative clause provides a way of connecting the referent to information already established. It is treated as part of the ‘common ground’ shared by speaker and listener.
  + In some countries, people say, “My husband, David,....” and then they continue to use ‘David’ instead of ‘my husband’ in the rest of the stories.

**End-weight**

* There is a strong tendency in English to put longer chunks of information at the end of a sentence.
* Longer relative clauses in final position are more often introduced by *which* or *who* than by *that* or zero relative.