

Week 7: Constructing Relative Clauses

0. Review: passives, questions, and imperatives

→ trees

-> hw questions

→ quiz 1

1. Restrictive relative clauses = dependant clauses that function as adjectives.

We make a relative clause by taking a sentence and replacing one of its NPs (usually subject or object) with a relative pronoun (who) or a relative determiner (that). We then place the sentence so modified into another sentence.

→ there are two types of clauses: **independent = can stand on their own = sentences**
dependent = cannot stand on their own (e.g. “that Cookie is fat”)

--> a relative clause embedded into an NP is part of the same constituent as the NP.

Here is an example. Consider these two sentences:

The labor arbitrators examined the problem

The problems had caused a strike

Now, let’s embed one inside the other:

The labor arbitrators examined the problem

THAT
~~The problems~~ had caused a strike

RESULT: The labor arbitrators examined the problem THAT had caused the strike

Let’s identify the grammatical relations in the resulting sentence, i.e. subject, predicate, direct object

note the original object “the problem” now includes the relative clause.

→ We can do the same thing with the subject:

The man ran a marathon

The man won a big prize

The man WHO ran a marathon won a big prize

→ What is the subject of the resulting sentence?

→ notice, the relative clause functions as an adjective, i.e. it describes/ modifies the NP

→ see p. 148 for a structure of an REIClause

2. Different relative pronouns for different NPs

→ we use different relative pronouns for different NPs:

→ “who” and “whom” replace NPs that refer to people. “Whom” replaces the object, but often “who” is used instead of “Whom”

The man whom/who I saw

→ which can be used to replace subjects OR objects that are non-human:

The fires which burned for days terrified Angelinos

The restaurant which/we visited yesterday is owned by a friend of mine

→ “that” can be used for subjects/ objects; with animates and inanimates alike:

The man that came last night left with a package

The fires that burned for days terrified Angelinos

The restaurant that we saw yesterday is owned by a friend of mine

→ “whose” replaces a GenN

*Susan Morton is an instructor **whose** HW assignments I often use in this class*

→ In some cases, the relative pronoun can be deleted:

The man I saw
The restaurant we visited

It is not always possible though:

?? The fires burned for days scared us
?*/* The man came to dinner

-> Finally, relative clauses can be embedded within other relative clauses:

We visited a restaurant [that is owned by my friend [whom you met yesterday]]

Practice ex.