

Ambivalence of Relative Clause Structure — a Diachronic View

Dora Maček
Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb

A view is taken of the relative clause as a structure that cannot be sharply defined, but rather whose borderlines run into coordinate structures at one end, and into compact noun phrases at the other. The explicitness that is lost along this line is made up for by the development of explicit connecting words. This is illustrated from the history of relative clauses in English, German, Swedish, Serbo-Croatian and Slovene.

1. The existence of synonymity and paraphrasability in language ensures successful communication in overcoming noise. On the other hand it also gives rise to ambiguity, which in sophisticated communication serves for variation of style, marking of register, etc.

Relative clauses are a good example of blurred borderlines between various structures, and conversely of a variety of structures within one (apparently) well defined structure. The phenomenon is even more prominent when regarded diachronically, following the shifts of usage.

Relative constructions are found even in the oldest written Indo-European languages, and according to Meillet (1965) can be considered to be of Proto-Indo-European origin. This paper deals with relative clauses and relative connectors, primarily in English and Serbo-Croatian, but also with illustrations from some other Germanic (German, Swedish) and Slavonic (Slovene) languages. The earliest texts from these languages (e.g., translations of the Bible) contain relative clause structures, so that their development can be followed throughout centuries of written documents.

Since language functions in a more complex way than is represented by rigorous linguistic abstractions, such as syntax or semantics, various aspects of

the structure i.e. grammatical, semantic and pragmatic, will be touched in this paper.

2. **Definitions** of the relative clause illustrate the different approaches in their linguistic analysis.

The simplest type of definition (typical of traditional textbooks) tackles mainly surface phenomena. It mentions grammatical dependence and the introductory connective words, order of clauses (e.g., a quotation in Simeon 1969, Barić et al. 1979). Their attributive function is often mentioned as well (e.g. Toporišič, 1976, Barić et al., 1979, Katičić, 1986). Relative clauses are said to "extend the content" of the (nominal) antecedent they "relate" to.

This definition is a step nearer a semantic definition of the relative clause "whose function it is to specify one particular member of a class of individuals" (Lyons, 1977: 180f). As a logical concept, relative clauses express predication to a "name" in the main clause.

The function of the relative clause in discourse (e.g., Quirk et al., 1972: 860f) is greater explicitness in attribution than is provided by other types of attributes. This fact can then be employed for stylistic purposes. From the point of view of the functional sentence perspective, the relative clause provides new information about the antecedent.

3. **New information.** There are many ways of expressing new information about a referent as can be seen from the following examples:

- (1) That year died Alfred. He was a reeve in Bath.
- (2) That year died Alfred, who was a reeve in Bath.
- (3) That year died Alfred who was a reeve in Bath.
- (4) That year died Alfred, a reeve in Bath.

In the first examples the new information provided by the second sentence carries the same weight as the "given" information. In the other examples its prominence diminishes reaching its lowest point in example (4). The sentences also show a diminishing degree of explicitness with an increase in "cohesion" (in Halliday and Hasan's sense, 1979).

There is yet another distinction (marked by punctuation in writing and intonation and rhythm in speech) between examples (1) and (2) on the one hand and (3) and (4) on the other. The distinction is a semantic one, where either additional information on a referent is provided (1 and 2), or a referent is specified among a number of similar referents (3 and 4).

At the explicit end of the relative clause "continuum", part of which are the above sentences, are cleft structures, whose discourse function is to emphasize and foreground information:

- (5) It was Alfred who was a reeve in Bath.

At the more opaque end, relative clauses fade into postmodifying phrases, eventually to become premodifying attributes (e.g., Ivir, 1983, Maček, 1984):

- (6) Reeve Alfred died that year.

Such a variety of forms can be observed throughout the history of the languages observed, though the frequency of particular structures depends on the style of the epoch or individual writer, but also on the general character of the languages in question. Meillet (1965) says that in Proto-Indo-European apposition was the general type of sentence composition, for which purpose participial constructions were particularly suited and therefore frequent. Thus,

(7) That year died Alfred holding an office in Bath.

would be favoured, whereas modern Romance languages must resort to subordinate clause structure as in the following English sentence:

(8) That year died Alfred who held an office in Bath.

Example (7) was common in 17th and 18th century style in German and Swedish:

(9) In diesem Jahr starb Alfred ein Amt in Bath haltend.

but now they are avoided because of their ambiguity. The examples (7) and (9) can be interpreted in two ways, i.e. as "who held an office in Bath" and "while holding an office in Bath". The more explicit relative clause is thus better suited for general discourse purposes.

4. **Hypotaxis.** In many definitions of relative clauses they are classed among subordinate structures. This classification however is not quite unequivocal since there seem to be more subordinate and less subordinate structures. While sentences like (1) are obviously independent, even if punctuation and intonation is slightly changed to

(10) That year died Alfred, he was a reeve in Bath.

the sentences will be grammatically independent, paratactic clauses. Either of them can be left out without damaging the grammaticality of the other. This is not the case with sentences (2) and (3), though (2) seems to be less dependent than (3). This is borne out by the punctuation, but also by the fact that the relative clause can be left out without much damage for the completeness of information. If the relative clause is left out in sentence (3), information will suffer, since there will be no means of distinguishing between all the possible referents by the name of Alfred. Though the implications are not obvious when sentences are taken out of their context, the context of sentence (2) is such that discourse participants know, or assume, that a particular person they know is being talked about, whereas the context of sentence (3) requires the definition of the referent by the name of Alfred. If someone uttered the information:

(11) That year died Alfred.

it would probably elicit a question for further information, such as:

(11a) Alfred who?
Which one?

whereas no such additional information would be required in the context of example (2).

Grammatically speaking there are two types of relative clauses, a more independent or appositive relative clause and a more dependent or attributive clause. At the most dependent end of the scale of structures the relative clause melts with the main clause forming a part of it, the attribute. Semantically the two clause types are defined as non-restrictive and restrictive respectively.

Viewed diachronically, apposition or parataxis is regarded as the oldest type of sentence connection. The structure of relative clauses in the oldest texts of the languages under consideration here resembles parataxis more than hypotaxis, for which reason there are opinions that there are no relative clauses in, for instance, Old English.

Hypotactic structures are thus thought to be a later development, deriving from paratactic structures. This phylogenetic development of dependent clauses seems to be substantiated by their ontogenetic derivation as shown by transformational and generative procedures. The following two Old English sentences combine in the simplest way to give one sentence, where the second serves as a (postmodifying) attribute to the first, just as modern relative clauses do:

- (12) her on ðys geare gefor Ælfred. Ælfred wæs æt Baðum gerefa. → her on ðys geare gefor Ælfred wæs æt Baðum gerefa.

The only transformation required here is the deletion of the coreferent noun in the second clause. Since there is no overt subordination marking, the clause as a relative construction is ambiguous.

Another fact suggests the relative "novelty" of dependent structures, and that is the lack of relative clauses in pidgin languages and only rudimentary forms in creoles (Romaine, 1981). Observation of informal spoken style can also give the impression that syntactically simpler structures are preferred.

As mentioned earlier, dependent clauses are less explicit structures than independent clause, and their function is to downtone their information in relation to the information of the main clause. From the point of view of logical sentence structure, however, there is no sequence of sentences or clauses that is not interdependent (Paul, 1975: 145) if they are parts of a coherent text. As has been pointed out (e.g., Quirk et al., 1977: 552) in some implicit relationships, such as cause—result, even the order of two coordinate clauses is important since the reversal would cause a change of relationships as in example (13):

- (13a) He died and he was buried in the cemetery.
 (13b) He was buried in the cemetery and he died.

A more explicit expression of relationship is achieved by particular connective words between the clauses. Some connectors, such as *and* in the above examples, are ambiguous themselves, a quality that can also be observed in relations expressed by relative clause connectors (relative pronouns, adverbs, particles, etc.).

5. Connection. Relative clauses are marked by characteristic connective words, though there is the so called asyndetic structure, where the connector is

absent (example 12).¹ Such relative clauses are nearest to paratactic clause connection, also without an overt connective element. This strategy is common in older Germanic texts, particularly in the simplest and most general type of relative clause, i.e. when the subject is relativized (Keenan and Comrie, 1977):

(14) her on by geare gefor Ælfred wæs æt Ba þum gerefa.

(15) die worhte ein smit hiez Volcan.

(it made a smith called Vulcan)

Such structures (Paul, 1975: 141) as the Old English (14) and the Middle High German (15), are found in all Indo-European languages and also in some other (e.g., Arabic). In modern developments of these languages the structure is still frequent but limited mainly to non-standard varieties as in English:

(16) he's a man can't see very well (Parry, 1972)

Such structures do not exist in Serbo-Croatian, though there is a closely similar paratactic type:

(17) Te je godine umro Alfred, bio je starješina u Bathu.

(that year died Alfred was reeve in Bath)

with a deleted non-obligatory (pronominalized) subject.

It is thought (Paul, 1975) that asyndetic connection developed spontaneously alongside other, more complete connecting strategies. It would seem even more appropriate to suppose that these structures have always been present in the spoken language, whereas explicit structures became more elaborate within written styles. The popularity of a particular strategy changes from period to period and from style to style, as already said.

The structure without an explicit connective word was present in Old and Middle English, particularly in poetry where it can be found up to the 14th century (Strang, 1970). It is, however, difficult to decide whether the elided element is a relative or a personal pronoun, and thus whether the structure is a coordinate or a subordinate one:

(18) I fonde þere freris, alle þe foure ordres, Preched to þe peple.

(I found friars of all four orders who/they preached to the people)

Towards the end of the 16th century, the structure is found in literary prose as well (Mustanoja, 1960). Rydén (1966) however, finds no difference between various kinds of texts, but finds the structure infrequent and avoided in translations from Latin. There seem to be individual preferences for the structure among various authors.

According to Keenan and Comrie's rule (1977) sentences like (16) are at the top of the hierarchy by which elements of sentence structure are relativized. If

1. Other subordination markers, such as word order in Germanic languages, will not be treated here.

relativization operates, then it will first operate on a subject. Relativized subjects in clauses without an overt connecting word (as 14, 15, 18) are common in early English and German texts.

Psycholinguistic experiments have also shown that such relative clauses are easiest to comprehend (Sheldon and Offir, mentioned in Romaine, 1981: 24). The reason seems to be the nearness of the relativized subject and its antecedent which facilitates them being brought in relation with each other by the listener. No specific connector is needed, and when the relativized subject is elided the coreferent antecedent is understood to extend its function into the relative clause.

Of the modern standard Germanic languages only English and Swedish (as well as the other Scandinavian languages not considered here) have kept the asyndetic clause construction. There is a constraint, though, on the relativization of the subject (not operating in non-standard varieties as mentioned earlier). Only relativized objects are accepted. This is the reverse of the Middle English practice, where relative clauses without a connector were more frequent if the subject was relativized than with relativized objects (Rydén, 1966). The obligatory subject rule, common to all Germanic languages, has here in a way become predominant too, demanding overt expression of the relativized subject. An exception to this rule is found in English "focus constructions", emphatic structures with the relative clause in focus, e.g.

(19) There's none can dodge Father Time.

One of the explanations for the obligatory subject in Germanic languages is the reduction of inflections. It is interesting to note, however, that it is the least inflected Germanic languages that occasionally have subject elision in a relative clause. In the most flexive modern Germanic language, i.e. German, there is no asyndetic connecting of relative clauses, not even with a relativized object. There is no asyndetic connecting of relative clauses in such flexive languages as the Slavonic languages either, where the possibilities for ellipsis of the subject are considerable (see example 17).

5.1. The simplest overt relative linking word is the uninflected particle whose function is to mark cohesion and the organization of two sentences into a coherent succession of two clauses. Such relative clause formation is widespread (Romaine, 1981, The Chicago Which Hunt, 1972), but in languages with full nominal inflections it may be accompanied by a resumptive anaphoric pronoun carrying the form and function of the relativized noun.

In Gothic and Old Slavonic translations from Greek the relative (and anaphoric) Greek pronoun *ὁ* is rendered by the relative particle *ei* and *že* respectively. They occur as enclitics together with demonstrative or personal pronouns (mostly the 3rd person of the latter): *isei*, *sei* (Gothic, 4th century), *iže* (Old Slavonic, 9th century). The Slavonic form remained in use in ecclesiastical texts up to the 14th century. In Old English (texts of the 10th to the 11th century) the relative particle *þe* is used alone or reinforced in a similar way by the demonstrative: *seþe*. Particles are used in Old High German (to the 12th century), i.e. *the*, *de* and in combination with the demonstrative pronouns *sô*. Old Norse

(until the 13th century) *er, es* is often preceded by demonstratives: *sā er, sū es*, etc, and in later texts the uninflected *sum* and *sem* are used.

English retains a relative particle also in later periods, in the form *that* (a contamination of the particle *þe* and the neuter demonstrative *þat*). From the 12th to the 15th century the uninflected *that* was the most frequently used connector in English. Its application was universal in all kinds of relative structures. Early Modern English (16th to 17th century) agrees with the Middle English practice, although the usage of other forms is on the increase. Due to the disappearance of inflections from the nominal system, no accompanying (resumptive) pronoun is required. 18th century English normative advice discouraged the use of *that* on an erroneous assumption that it was a newfangled form (e.g. Joseph Addison in the *Spectator*).

In 12th century Serbo-Croatian usage there is the form *što* used first in the demonstrative and later in the relative function. It is not inflected and if an oblique case is required to mark the syntactic function of the relative particle in the relative clause, an appropriate personal pronoun in the relevant form is used. The meaning of the connector *što* is said to be similar to the demonstrative in a coordinate clause or to an anaphoric pronoun (Rječnik JAZU, 1880—1961):

- (20a) Te je godine umro Alfred, a *taj* je bio starješina u Bathu.
(That year died Alfred, and that one was a reeve in Bath)
- (20b) Te je godine umro Alfred, a *on* je bio starješina u Bathu.
(That year died Alfred, and he was a reeve in Bath)

V. S. Karadžić (quoted in Rječnik JAZU, 1880—1961) also maintained that it was, a popular, spoken form, much more “Serbian” than other relatives. Belić (1972) gives examples of (relatively) modern popular usage where no resumptive pronoun occurs in an oblique case, e.g. the instrumental, as in the following example:

- (21) lopata *što* se žito veje for
lopata *što* se *njome* žito veje
(a shovel that wheat is winowed with / it)

In modern standard Serbo-Croatian the usage of uninflected *što* with an obligatory resumptive pronoun in oblique cases is felt as being “bookish”, or even poetic. This qualification does not apply to dialectal usage, where particularly in the čakavian and kajkavian dialects, uninflected particles (*ča* and *kaj* respectively) with a resumptive pronoun are common in spoken usage, e.g.

- (22) To je zubatac *ča* san *ga* čapal.
(This is the dentex that I caught)
- (23) To je telica *kaj* sem *ju* prodal.
(This is the calf I sold)

In written and spoken standard Slovene the present usage prefers an uninflected form *ki*, accompanied by a resumptive pronoun if an oblique case is relativized. The form *ki* is an old uninflected form of the interrogative pronoun, in

Serbo-Croatian used until the 16th century and now only in the čakavian dialect. Slovene *ki* in

- (24) To je knjiga *ki* smo *jo* pogrešali.
(This is the book that we lacked)

like Serbo-Croatian *što* (*ča* and *kaj*), is of interrogative origin, *što* being ultimately a combination of interrogative and demonstrative form (*č-to*).

In Middle High German two relative particles appeared, but their frequency increased only later. The particles are *so* and *und*. Since they are used as conjunctions in other types of constructions, they can be ambiguous, e.g. (Paul, Moser, Schröbler, 1979: 446):

- (25) nū sīt mir willkomen ze dem *und* ich nū haben mac
(now be welcome to that and I now can have)

One interpretation is “be welcome to that which now I can have” and the other “be welcome to how I can have it now”. The ambiguity is said to be between a relative and a modal sentence (Paul, Moser, Schröbler, 1979: *ibid.*), but moreover there is a fuzzy borderline between a relative and a coordinate structure, similar to Serbo-Croatian, where *što* can be interpreted as *and that*.

Such uninflected connectors obviously belong among the simpler structures, a transition between coordinate and the more complex subordinate clauses. Because of their simplicity they have been perpetuated even in relative clause structure in all the languages mentioned here. When the original relative particle was lost, it kept being replaced by other words of conjunctive or adverbial origin. Thus there are such other relative connecting words as English *when*, *where*, *as*, Swedish *dar*, German *wann*, *wo*, *da*. Serbo-Croatian *kada*, *gdje*, *da*, Slovene *kar*, and others, e.g.

- (26) I don't remember the name of the place *where* Alfred was a reeve.
(27) There was no man *as* did not grieve for Alfred.

5.2. The most explicit connecting words are relative pronouns proper, since their form combines all the functions relevant in a relative clause structure, i.e.: connecting, anaphora and syntactic function marker. Depending on how complete their inflectional paradigm is, relative pronouns agree with their antecedents in gender (masculine, feminine, neuter, or personal / non-personal distinction) and number, explicitly stating their anaphoric relationship. The case of the relative pronoun marks its function in the relative clause.

As mentioned earlier, there is no such pronoun in the Indo-European languages that would serve only as a relative pronoun. The relative function is performed by personal or demonstrative pronouns as anaphoric pronouns par excellence. Later, in texts that seem to follow the Latin writing style, interrogative pronouns are found.

In Old English the connecting function of the relative particle *pe* was supplemented by the demonstrative *sē* (*sēō*, *pat*), which added the anaphoric quality needed to relate the second clause to a particular element in the preceding clause. A similar strategy is seen in the Gothic combination of particle and

demonstrative pronoun and the Old Slavonic particle and personal pronoun, or the later *što* (interrogative) followed by a personal pronoun (in an oblique case), similarly Slovene *ki* and personal pronoun (in an oblique case).

In modern German the demonstrative set of pronouns *der* (*die, das*) still serves as the relative set too. Since Old High German it has been used in relative constructions, either in combination with a particle or without it, and particularly since the 17th and 18th centuries when the use of the particle decreased. The transition here was from two coordinate clauses, the second of which was introduced by a demonstrative (anaphoric) pronoun, to a subordinate relative clause structure in which the demonstrative is an unstressed connector. Relative pronouns (or particles) are distinguished from other word classes, whose form they share, by the lack of stress. The following sentences are thus a string of similar constructions:

- (28) In diesem Jahr starb Alfred. *Dieser* (*der*) war Richter in Bath.
 (That year died Alfred. This one was a reeve in Bath)
 (29) In diesem Jahr starb Alfred, *der* Richter in Bath war.
 (That year died Alfred, who was a reeve in Bath)

The recourse to a word with both connecting and anaphoric functions shows a trend towards explicitness. The style of Latin texts might have prompted or merely reinforced the extension of the function of interrogative pronouns to relative. Their advantage over particles was a more complete inflectional paradigm and relatively little possibility of misinterpretation, thanks to their unambiguous sentence initial position, and intonation of interrogative structures.

The subordinate interrogative clause of indirect questions is, however, a borderline construction, not always easily distinguished from the relative clause, e.g.

- (30) They did not know *who* they should call.
 (30a) They did not know: *who* should they call?
 (30b) They did not know the person *who* they should call.

An ambiguous example in Serbo-Croatian traditional poetry, quoted as a transitional interrogative-to-relative structure by V. S. Karadžić (*Rječnik JAZU*, 1880—1961) is the following:

- (31) Da ja poznám *koga* je vojvode klobuk.

which can be interpreted in two ways, similar to example (29):

- (31a) Da ja poznám: *koga* je vojvode klobuk?
 (for me to recognize: of which knight is the hat,)
 (31b) Da ja poznám vojvodu, *koga* je klobuk
 (for me to recognize the knight whose hat it is)

In translations from Latin, the Latin *quis, qui* are translated by various forms in the languages under consideration. In Old English *swā hwæt swā* (all what) occurs as a generalizing pronoun that is thought to have developed from some types of indirect questions:

- (32) hi sceolon geseon æt ðam miclan dome hwæne hi gewunodon (Ælfric)
(they shall see at the Last Judgement where they lived)

From the generalizing pronoun a relative function proper develops which allows the connector-pronoun to refer to a particular antecedent. A transitional and ambiguous sentence is the following:

- (33) he wite hwæt he dede
(he knew what he did — i.e. he knew that which he did)

From the 11th century on this interrogative has a proper relative function mostly after such antecedents as *all* or *nothing*.²

Which has also been recorded from early Middle English, increasing in frequency in 15th century usage. Towards the end of the 16th century it was specialized to refer to non-personal antecedents, which function it has retained to the present.

Who is rare in texts before the 15th century, though the genitive form *whose* and the dative/accusative *whom* are found in early Middle English. This is understandable since in oblique cases the need to mark the case overtly is greater than in the nominative, where an inflectionless particle can serve the purpose of connecting well enough. The nominative form *who*, however, became established in the 16th century, though with considerable variation in the styles of individual authors.

All the new forms are often accompanied by *that* or *the* to eliminate possible misunderstanding of the forms as interrogative. A mannerism deriving from the need to be more explicit is the attributive usage of the relative pronoun:

- (34) a womman ... *which* wommanis dou3tir hadde an ...

The structure is found in other languages that use interrogatives as relative connectors, so in Serbo-Croatian:

- (35) žena ... *koje* žene kći je imala ...
(a woman ... which woman's daughter had ...)

The explicitness of this example is even greater than of the English sentence since in Serbo-Croatian both the pronoun and the noun are fully inflected and the relative pronoun (attributive) agrees with the noun in number, gender and case, whereas the English pronoun is in its nominative form.

In Serbo-Croatian the newer interrogative pronoun *koji*, (*koja*, *koje*) superseded the older *ki*, (*ka*, *ko*) in relative function in the 13th century. It corresponds to the Latin *qui* (*quae*, *quod*) and has very early become the relative pronoun with the widest application. The other two interrogatives *tko* and *što*³ (Latin *quis*, *quid*) when used as relatives have a much more restricted usage

2. Most examples are taken from the literature listed in the References.

3. This *što* is inflected, and generally speaking refers to inanimate referents. In form and function it is different from the *što* discussed in 5.1.

(Maček, 1985). The form *koji*, on the other hand, though originally “selective” in meaning, is used in restrictive as well as non-restrictive clauses and with all kinds of antecedents. This form is peculiar to Serbo-Croatian; since most Slavonic languages use a form akin to the Slovene *kateri* for “selective” reference.

German and Swedish developed such relative pronouns relatively late. In German *wer*, first in a generalizing function and then relative (corresponding to *who*) and *welcher* (corresponding to *which*) are found since Early New High German (14th to 17th centuries). These forms are now either limited to archaic styles or are regional (southern dialects). In Swedish the form *hvilikin* (which) is recorded from the 14th century, *hvars* (whose) from the 18th. The 19th century forms *vars* (whose), *vilken*, *vilket* (who, which), *vad* (what) etc. have since declined in use.

5.3. Though the repertory of relative pronouns, as well as the history of their development, shows many similarities in the languages in question, there is considerable variety in the preference for one or the other type of relative connector.

In English the generally used relative connectors are *who*, *which* and *that*, and asyndetic clauses when objects are relativized. The only other language that shows even a greater preference than English for the “late” and “literate” interrogative form is Serbo-Croatian, although being fully inflected it has the least need for explicit connecting words. The surface structure seems here to have prevailed, demanding agreement in the nominal phrase, and eliminating forms that cannot exhibit appropriate inflections.

German is the only language which shares with English the demonstrative form in relative use, i.e. English *that*, though uninflected, can be tentatively compared to German *der*. The full inflection of the German demonstrative-relatives, on the other hand, is much more reminiscent of the inflection of the Serbo-Croatian interrogative-relative *koji*, since both show gender, number and case distinctions.

Absolute preference for uninflected forms is found in Swedish and Slovene. While the Swedish *som*, like English *that*, does not require a resumptive pronoun, the Slovene *ki* does, for the same superficial reason as the one mentioned above for Serbo-Croatian. The Swedish *som* is peculiar, since in the modern language its form is found in the adverbial of comparison “like”, which is another transitional connector in ambiguous modal or relative clauses in English and other languages, e.g.

(36) It is the same superficial reason *as/that* (was) mentioned before.

English and Swedish are the only languages in this group that have asyndetic relative clauses. What is perhaps surprising about this is that a language with a very old tradition of literacy, like English, preserves the simplest spoken structure — the asyndetic clause, while the language with the shortest history of literacy, Serbo-Croatian, uses even in the spoken language the most literate and elaborate form of the relative clause connector — the interrogative.

6. Concluding remarks. The relative clause is a construction with a complex communicative function as well as a complex form, for which reason it is sometimes ambiguous. Its present form and function reflect many of the former stages of its development. Moreover, many of the older forms are still present. The complexity can thus be seen as a result of a constant elaboration leading towards greater explicitness.

To sum up the relationships that are expressed in the relative clause as a whole and in the connecting word, the following can be pointed out:

There is the pragmatic relationship of connecting utterances into coherent strings and the syntactic connecting by means of parataxis and hypotaxis. The semantic relationships cover anaphora and coreference of the relative connector and its antecedent. Some connectors underline the local or temporal and modal relations of the main and subordinate clause (e.g., various adverbials as mentioned in 5.1.). Finally, some relative connectors are specialized to express specification (English *that* and *asyndetic* clause). More general semantic or pragmatic relations such as predication, new information or foregrounding can be expressed by the relative clause structure as well as by a number of other syntactic structures.

In Latin and early English grammars, “relative name” was the term used for pronouns in general, thus pointing out their function. The present term “relative pronoun” suggests that its relating or anaphoric function was prominent in the grammarian’s mind. At closer range, however, other functions, most of all the connecting one, seem just as important.

The complexity and ambiguity of forms and functions in relative clause structures are not only their peculiarities. It seems to be the outcome of an extension of meaning of forms or constructions to be followed by an extension of form and structure to remove possible ambiguities of function. Elaboration of this sort with a need for explicitness opens infinite possibilities for such a trend of further development in the syntax of relative clauses.

REFERENCES

- BARIĆ, E. et al., *Priručna gramatika hrvatskoga književnog jezika*, Zagreb, Školska knjiga, 1979.
- BELIĆ, A. *Istorija srpskohrvatskog jezika*, vol. II part I, Beograd, Naučna knjiga, 1972⁵.
- BERGMAN, G. *Kortfattad svensk sprakhistoria*, Stockholm, Prisma, 1970.
- GLOVACKI—BERNARDI, Z. *Prilog sintaksi ranonovovisokonjemačkoga*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Zagreb, Zagreb University, 1980.
- HALLIDAY, M.A.K., R. HASAN, *Cohesion in English*, London, Longman, 1976.
- KATIČIĆ, R. *Sintaksa hrvatskoga književnog jezika*, Zagreb, Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti — Globus, 1986.

- KEENAN, E.L., B. COMRIE, "Noun Phrase Accessibility and Universal Grammar", *Linguistic Inquiry* vol. 8, no. 1, 1977, pp. 63--100.
- KRAHE, H., W. MEID, *Germanische Sprachwissenschaft*, Sammlung Göschen vol. 780, Berlin, Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1969.
- LYONS, J., *Semantics I*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- MACEK, D., *A Contrastive Analysis of Relativization in English and Serbo-Croatian*, New Studies, publication of the English-Serbo-Croatian Contrastive studies Project, ed. R. Filipović, Zagreb, 1985.
- MEILLET, A., *Introduction a l'étude comparative des langues indoeuropeennes*, in translation, Uvod u uporedno proučavanje indoevropskih jezika, Beograd, Naučna knjiga, 1965.
- MICHAEL, I., *English Grammatical Categories and the Tradition to 1800*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- MUSTANOJA, T.E., *A Middle English Syntax I*, Helsinki, Société néophilologique, 1960.
- PARRY, D.R., "Anglo-Welsh Dialects in South-East Wales", *Patterns in the Folk Speech of the British Isles*, ed. M. Wakelin, London, Athlone Press, 1972.
- PAUL, H., *Prinzipien der Sprachgeschichte*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1975⁸.
- PAUL, H., H. Moser, I. Schröbler, *Mittelhochdeutsche Grammatik*, Tübingen, Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1975²¹.
- QUIRK, R. et al., *A Grammar of Contemporary English*, London, Longman, 1972.
- RJEČNIK JAZU (Rječnik hrvatskog ili srpskog jezika) vol. V, ed. P. Budmani, Zagreb, Jugoslavenska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, 1880--1961.
- ROMAINE, S. "Towards a typology of relative clause formation in Germanic languages", Manuscript, 1981.
- RYDÉN, M., *Relative Constructions in Early 16th Century English*, Acta Universitatis Uppsaliensis, Uppsala, 1966.
- SIMEON, R., *Enciklopedijski rječnik lingvističkih naziva*, Zagreb, Matica hrvatska, 1969.
- STRANG, B., *A History of English*, London, Methuen & Co., 1970.
- STREITBERG, W., *Gotisches Elementarbuch*, Heidelberg, Carl Winter, 1910.
- The Chicago Which Hunt*. Papers from the Relative Clause Festival. ed. P. M. Peranteau et al., Chicago, Chicago Linguistic Society, 1972.
- THORELL, O., *Svensk grammatik*, Stockholm, Prisma Magnum, 1982⁷.
- TOPORIŠIĆ, J., *Slovenska slovnica*, Maribor, Založba obzorja, 1976.

AMBIVALENTNOST STRUKTURE ODNOSNIH REČENICA -- IZ DIJAKRONIČKE PERSPEKTIVE

Relativne rečenice se promatraju kao struktura koja se ne može oštro definirati, čije se granice stapaju s nezavisno složenim rečenicama na jednom kraju i s kompaktnim imenskim frazama na drugom. Nedvosmislenost izraza koja se gubi na toj relaciji nadoknađuje se eksplicitnim vezivnim riječima. Ovo se ilustrira poviješću odnosnih rečenica u engleskom, njemačkom, švedskom, hrvatskom ili srpskom i slovenskom jeziku.