

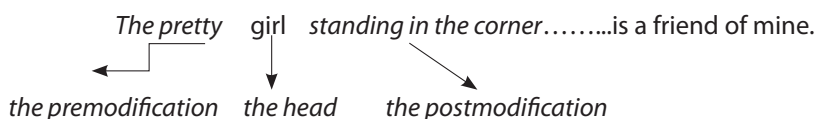
According to Quirk and Greenbaum, the subordination enables us to organize multiple clause structures and each subordinate or dependent clause may become superordinate or the main one to one or more other clauses, resulting sometimes in the sentence of great complexity.

A main clause is the one that doesn't depend on another clause, in other words, it can stay alone. The noun phrase can also be complex just as the sentence can. According to Merriam Webster dictionary a noun phrase is a phrase formed by a noun and all its modifiers and determiners, or it is any syntactic element (as a clause, clitic, pronoun or zero element) with a noun's function (as the subject of a verb or the object of a verb or preposition).

A complex noun phrase is composed of three components³:

- a) the head, around which other components cluster
- b) the premodification, which refers to all the items placed before the head
- c) the postmodification, refers to all the items placed after the head.

example:



A relative clause is a type of postmodification. This modification can be restrictive and non-restrictive. It means that the head can be viewed only through the modification that has been supplied.

2. Restrictive clauses

Restrictive clause describes the preceding noun by distinguishing it from other nouns of the same class. They are essential for a clear understanding of the noun and the overall sentence.

In the sentence:

A woman **who wears a blue dress** works together with my mother.

"...who wears a blue dress" is a restrictive or defining relative clause.

If we omit it from the sentence, the meaning results incomplete and it wouldn't be clear who is the *woman* we are talking about. It is important to say that these sentences are not separated with commas from the rest of the sentence. The easiest way to explain it is to give the example of two different sentences and the way they combine into one;

A girl was talking to me. Do you know her?

Do you know the girl **who was talking to me?** - **restrictive relative clause**

It can be noticed that by omitting this restrictive post modification the meaning would not be complete. **A girl** in this case is a subject of the sentence. Restrictive relative clauses can refer to the subject of the sentence as well as to its object; to both persons and things.

³ R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, A University Grammar of English, 1998, p. 375.

2.1. Restrictive relative clauses: PERSONS

2.1.1. Restrictive relative clauses; subject

They refer to subject by using the relative pronouns **WHO** and **THAT**.

A woman **who was sitting with you on yesterday's meeting** was my sister.

A boy **who was running around all the time** was Emily's son.

A relative pronoun **THAT** is also often used after **all, everyone, everybody, no one, nobody** and **those**.

Everyone **who/THAT** knew him loved him.

Nobody **who/THAT** watched her singing will ever forget it.

2.1.2. Restrictive relative clauses; object

They refer to the object of the sentence by using the relative pronouns: **WHOM, WHO** or **THAT**. Since the object form **whom** is considered very formal, relative pronouns **who** or **that** are frequently used in spoken language. The relative pronoun **that** is even more frequent in spoken language since it can refer to subject, object, to people and things, but it is also possible to omit the relative pronoun altogether.

A boy **whom we met** in front of the school handed me this notebook for my son.

It is also possible to say:

A boy **who** we met...

A boy **that** we met... or

A boy we met...

2.2. Restrictive relative clauses: THINGS

2.2.1 Restrictive relative clauses: SUBJECT

The relative pronouns **WHICH** and **THAT** are used to form these sentences.

This is the book **which/that caused such a popularity**.

The road **which/that leads to the village** is rather dusty and rugged.

2.2.2. Restrictive relative clauses: OBJECT of a verb

The relative pronouns **WHICH** and **THAT** to form these sentence or we don't use them at all (they can be omitted).

You gave me the book. The book was interesting.
object

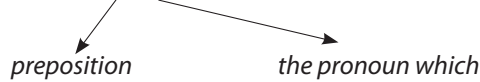
The book **which/that** you gave me was very interesting.

The book you gave me was very interesting.

2.2.3. Restrictive relative clauses: OBJECT of a preposition

The formal combination in this case is: **preposition + pronoun WHICH**, but the preposition can also be moved to the end of the clause and in this case relative pronouns WHICH or THAT are used (or completely omitted):

The boat **on which** we were sailing started to swing.



The boat **which/that** we were sailing **on** started to swing.



The boat we were sailing **on** started to swing.



3. Non-restrictive relative clauses: PERSONS

In non-restrictive clauses additional information is given which is not essential for identifying the head. (Quirk and Greenbaum). Non-restrictive relative clauses are therefore in writing enclosed by commas. Furthermore, Quirk and Greenbaum state that the “loose non-restrictive relationship is often semantically indistinguishable from coordination (with or without conjunction) or adverbial subordination”⁴. The use of pronouns in this case is limited to *wh*-items:

He met Jane, *who* invited him to a party.

Here is Jessica, *who(m)* I have already met...

We met in Venice, *which* was enveloped in fog.

when it was enveloped in fog.

We met in Venice, *which* he visited for the first time this year.

3.1. Non-restrictive relative clauses: SUBJECT

The relative pronoun WHO is used to introduce these sentences.

Mary, who has been very motivated lately, received a scholarship.

George, who has been working the whole day, suggested having a break.

⁴ R. Quirk, S. Greenbaum, A University Grammar of English, 1998

3.2. Non-restrictive relative clauses: OBJECT

The relative pronoun **WHOM** is used to introduce these sentences. In these sentences, the **relative pronoun cannot be omitted**. Sometimes, in the spoken English, the pronoun **who** can also be found.

*Jonny, **whom everyone avoided**, turned out to be a nice guy.*

*The use of the possessive pronoun **WHOSE** is also possible (both in restrictive and non-restrictive relative clauses).

*Marry, **whose** children you are going to teach in school, is my best friend.*

*This is Tom, **whose** dog we found yesterday.*

4. Non-restrictive relative clauses: THINGS

4.1. Non-restrictive relative clauses: SUBJECT

The relative pronoun **WHICH** is used to introduce these sentences. The pronoun *that* is not used in this case.

*The bus for Zadar, **which is usually very punctual**, has been late.*

4.2. Non-restrictive relative clauses: OBJECT

We use the relative pronoun **WHICH** to introduce these sentences (in this case it cannot be omitted like in the case of restrictive relative clauses). *The pronoun THAT cannot be used here.*

*She gave me the scarf, **which** she had knitted herself.*

*We ate an ice cream, **which** was delicious.*

*The use of the relative pronoun **WHOSE**

The relative pronoun **WHOSE** is generally used to refer to things and animals.

*His house, **whose heating did not function**, was very cold.*

5. Common mistakes among the second language students

1. Commas are not required in writing in restrictive relative clauses.

Mary is a CEO of the corporation which produces a wide range of products on international level. (correct)

Mary is a CEO of the corporation, which produces a wide range of products on international level. (incorrect)

The most important rule is that commas are not used to separate a restrictive clause from the rest of the sentence since its meaning is essential to its correct understanding.

2. The incorrect use of commas may lead to incorrect meaning.

The students *who have regularly attended the lectures* can take the written exam. (restrictive)

The students, *who have regularly attended the lectures*, can take the written exam. (non-restrictive)

The restrictive relative clause tells us that only those students *who have regularly attended the lectures can take the written exam*. The sentence implies that there were also other students who haven't regularly attended the lectures and that they cannot take the exam.

The non-restrictive relative clause tells us that *all the students* (mentioned earlier in the context) *can take the written exam* since they all have regularly attended the lessons. That is the message understood by the non-restrictive clause, which by its definition gives extra information to the sentence because even if it gets omitted, the meaning remains the same.

3. We do not repeat the subject (personal pronoun or noun) after a relative clause.

The man who was sitting next to me ~~he~~ had a blue jacket.

The man who was sitting next to me had a blue jacket.

4. A relative clause can have only one direct object, when a relative pronoun is the object of the relative clause, we don't need another object in the relative clause.

He lent me his book, which I found ~~it~~ very interesting.

He lent me his book, which I found very interesting.

5. When a relative pronoun is the object of the relative clause, **we need a subject** (pronoun or noun) in the relative clause.

You handed me the book ~~that was~~ looking for yesterday.

You handed me the book **that I** was looking for yesterday.

6. **That** cannot be used in a non-restrictive relative clause, just the relative pronoun who can refer to person in the subject position, while we use which if we refer to thing in the subject position.

A student, ~~that was~~ awarded a scholarship, will receive 10000 kn.

A student, who was awarded a scholarship, will receive 10000 kn.

7. Only the relative pronouns **which** and **that** can refer to subject in the restrictive relative clauses (in this case these relative pronouns can also be omitted).

The car ~~what~~ I bought was...

The car that I bought...

The car which I bought...

The car I bought was...

8. A relative sentence **must always follow the noun** to which it refers.

My office is about hundred metres from the centre, *which I share with my colleague*. (incorrect)

My office, **which I share with my colleague**, is about hundred metres from the centre. (correct)

6. Conclusion

It may be concluded that at a certain point of language learning, a student needs to take a look at one correct usage of certain grammatical forms, like the form of relative clauses in this case in order to become more self-confident in the use of language. Relative clauses modify a noun to which they refer, ensuring in that way semantic clarity and richness of language and causing at the same time difficulty to second language learners of the English language. Couple of suggestions have been given in this article to help students understand the basic use and the most frequent mistakes in the use of relative clauses as well as to which changes on a sentence level their incorrect usage may lead.

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Sažetak

UOBIČAJENE POGREŠKE U KORIŠTENJU ODNOSNIH REČENICA U ENGLSKOM JEZIKU MEĐU STUDENTIMA VELEUČILIŠTA U ŠIBENIKU

Odnosne rečenice u korištenju engleskog kao drugog jezika vrlo se često smatraju jednim prilično jednostavnim dijelom gradiva, no unatoč tome, posvećeno im je jako malo vremena tijekom procesa učenja engleskog jezika i to uglavnom na samom kraju učenja jezika. Jedan od mogućih razloga je činjenica da je nužnost za njihovu ispravnu uporabu znatno naglašenija u pisanom, nego u govornom jeziku, a poznato je da je za pismeno izražavanje potrebna viša razina poznavanja engleskog jezika, a greške koje se obično događaju tiču se uglavnom tog pismenog dijela gdje su one i najuočljivije i mogu znatno utjecati na samo značenje rečenice. Relativna rečenica je u govoru označena uglavnom po promjeni u intonaciji. Pravilno razumijevanje određenih odnosnih rečenica može pomoći studentima kod njihove primjene u engleskom jeziku.

Ključne riječi: *odnosne rečenice, pisani jezik, glavna rečenicam, zavisne rečenice, modifikacija.*