

# CLASSIFYING RELATIVE CLAUSES IN CONVERSATIONAL DATA

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## 1. Introduction

This paper discusses some of the problems inherent in applying traditional classifications of relative clauses to conversational data. After briefly outlining such classifications, I describe the data used in the study. Finally, I look at the problems encountered in its encoding, and describe a type of relative clause, which I call a Linking Relative Clause, found in the data, but not described in detail elsewhere.

## 2. Types of relative clauses

A relative clause is a subordinate clause that is generally linked to part or all of the main clause by an anaphor, that is, a relative expression, which relates the relative clause to its antecedent. In English, relative clauses can be introduced by a variety of relative expressions: Wh-words such as *which*, *who*, *when*, *where*, or *what*; the relativiser *that*; or a zero morpheme. A prototypical relative clause lacks a core argument, as exemplified by (1) (C&M:831)<sup>1</sup>, in which the verb *bought* has no object.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) And one of the things **that she bought** was this, sort of colour that you put in your hair.

There are several types of relative clause discussed in the literature [(Huddleston 1984; McCawley (1988)]: restrictive relative clauses, non-restrictive relative clauses, continuative relative clauses, fused (or 'free') relative constructions, and pseudo-relative clauses. These are outlined below.

### 2.1 Restrictive relative clauses

A *restrictive relative clause* (RRC) is one that restricts the denotation of its head NP, as in example (2) (C&M:1814).

- (2) An' so he knows a lot of teachers **that I know** in special field,

In example (2) *a lot of teachers* is the antecedent or head NP, and *that I know* is a restrictive relative clause, that is, one which identifies certain members of a set, in this instance, from the set of all teachers, it restricts those under discussion to only those that both *he* and the speaker know.

### 2.2 Non-restrictive Relative Clauses.

RRCs are often contrasted with *non-restrictive relative clauses* (NRCs), those that do not pick out a specific referent, but give additional, optional information about an antecedent NP, sentence, or piece of discourse, as shown in (3) (C&M:696).

- (3) C: I mean,  
C: we come home from church exhausted?  
M:..Which is not really the problem.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise specified, the examples used throughout this paper come from a corpus collected by the author. The letters specify the conversation from which the example was taken, and the numbers indicate the line where it is found in that text.

<sup>2</sup> The transcription system used throughout this paper is based on that of Du Bois, Schuetze-Coburn, Cumming & Paolino (1993). See Appendix for transcription conventions.

In (3) the NRC produced by M. modifies all of the immediately preceding sentence, uttered by C. It does not restrict the denotation of a head NP, but makes an optional comment. Unlike RRCs, NRCs can be non-embedded, as in (3), and can modify not only NPs or whole clauses, but also stretches of discourse. As shown above, they often modify an antecedent produced by a different speaker in spoken data.

### 2.3 Continuative relative clauses

*Continuative relative clauses* (CRCs) resemble NRCs in that they can modify NPs or sentential antecedents. However, a CRC does not make a parenthetical comment on its antecedent, but rather it establishes a temporal or logical link between two states of affairs, as in (4) below (M&C:2535).

- (4) M: While we were living in Sydney.  
C: Yes.  
C: **Which is when he gave,**  
C: **the ambulances their,**  
M: That's right.  
C: **equipment.**

The CRC in (4) creates a temporal link between M's residing in Sydney and *his* donation to the ambulance service. Since CRCs establish a temporal or logical link, unlike other relative clause types, the relative expression can be replaced by *and then*, *and that*, or *and he/she/it*. In (4), *and that* can replace *which*. CRCs are generally not omissible, and typically occur at the end of the matrix clause.

### 2.4 Fused relative constructions

*Fused relative constructions* (FRCs) are those where the two occurrences of the nominal referent, that is, the antecedent and the anaphor, are both incorporated into the meaning of the Wh-phrase rather than being separate entities as in (5) (P&P:245).

- (5) E: And apparently,  
E: w—  
E: **what I find,**  
E: **rather,**  
E: **amusing** is that um,  
E: the kids,

In (5) the Wh-phrase *what* could be replaced by an antecedent and anaphor in the form of a noun plus relative expression, such as *the thing that*.

### 2.5 Pseudo-relative clauses

*Pseudo-relative clauses* (PsRCs) resemble RRCs, but can be differentiated by two properties: the intrusion of parenthetical information is possible between an antecedent and a PsRC, but not between an antecedent and RRC; and, while information cannot be extracted from a RC construction, it is possible to do so from a PsRC (see McCawley (1988:428) for details). Consider (6) below (J&P:135).

- (6) J: There's there's different things **you can do**  
J: like exercise,

### **3.0 The conversational data**

In this section I discuss the methodology used to carry out a study on the distribution of RCs in conversational Australian English (Reid 1997). I describe the data sources, discuss the data collection procedure, outline the data transcription method used, and give the quantitative results only.

#### **3.1 Data Sources.**

The participants involved in this study are ten adult Australians, all of whom were born in Australia of English speaking parents, and who have always resided in this country. Their ages range from 39 to 45 years, and all are personal friends of the researcher. Eight of the participants are female, and two are male. Of the females, one is a primary school teacher, three are clerical workers, two are members of the Australian Regular Army, and two are homemakers. Both males are also members of the Australian Regular Army.

There are three reasons for using the chosen participants. The first is obvious — availability. The second is that the author's familiarity with them provides a good opportunity of tapping natural, relaxed conversation. The final reason is that many linguistic studies are carried out using university students or graduates. However, university students and graduates only represent a small proportion of a society, and perhaps are not representative of the main stream.

If occupation and address can be used to loosely characterise people, it could be said that the subjects are a typical group of upper working class/lower middle class Australians. However, because the number of participants used in the study is not large enough to make generalisations, the findings should not be generalised to this stratum of Australian society, but may be indicative of what other studies of similar groups may yield.

#### **3.2 Data collection procedure**

The data was collected in November and December, 1993. Each participant was paired with a friend of long-standing, in the hope that this would be conducive to more natural conversation than an interaction involving a stranger. In order to give the participants a more natural setting for their conversation, the data collection was carried out in either the researcher's home, or the home of one of the participating subjects. A video camera was set up to observe the conversation, the participants were given refreshments, and then left alone to talk for one hour. Although some participants commented on the presence of the video being present, it is obvious that the conversation became natural and uninhibited within minutes.

#### **3.3 Quantitative results**

RRCs are the most frequently occurring type with 414 tokens from an overall number of 906, that is, 46%. However, there is a similar number of FRCs (398), which account for 44% of the RCs found in the data. The high number of occurrences of these two types contrasts with the lower numbers for the other four types. NRCs number only 52, PsRCs occur 29 times, CRCs occur 10 times, and there are only three LRCs.

### **4. Relative clause coding**

After careful consideration of the data, certain salient characteristics were identified, and then used to classify the RCs in the corpus. These are outlined below. Differentiating between FRCs and other subordinate Wh-word clauses often proved to be a challenge. Therefore, FRCs are discussed in some detail. Furthermore, another type of RC, only briefly mentioned in the literature, occurs in the corpus. I have called these Linking Relative Clauses (LRCs), and they are also discussed in detail.

#### 4.1 Continuative relative clauses

CRCs meet the following criteria.

1. CRCs establish a temporal or logical link between two states of affairs, hence the relativiser can be replaced by *and then*, *and that*, or *and he/she/it*.
2. CRCs look like NRCs, but do not make a parenthetical comment, and, therefore, cannot be omitted.
3. CRC constructions cannot be expressed by one proposition.  
CRCs occur at the end of the matrix clause.  
CRCs lack a core argument.

The following CRC from the corpus (M&C:1047) is typical.

- (7) C: A lot of those elderly people are in the same boat.  
M: Of course no pension entitlements.  
M: Paying full tax.  
C: [Which brings you]--  
M: [Isn't it unbeliev]able.  
C: **Which brings you to health care.**

#### 4.2 Non-Restrictive relative clauses

NRCs meet the following criteria.

1. NRCs do not limit the denotation of the head, but add extra, optional information.
2. NRCs can be omitted.
3. NRCs can be non-embedded.
4. NRCs can modify whole clauses, or stretches of discourse.
5. NRCs cannot be introduced by *why*.
6. NRCs lack a core argument.

The following NRC from the corpus (J&P:708) is typical.

- (8) P: Coz Katie's out,  
P: well she's usual- usually out Monday night with her small group.  
J: Hm.  
P: **Which is a breakaway from the,**  
P: **..her youth group.**

These criteria for determining a NRC do not include the NRC being in a separate intonation unit from its antecedent, or being introduced by a Wh-word, and not *that*. The first is omitted because a RRC can be, and, in spoken Australian English often is, spread over more than one intonation unit, as in (9) (J&P:802).

- (9) P: 'N' she said but how could,  
P: if Noah had an ark big enough anyway,  
P: if he had such **a huge ark,**  
P: **that would fit,**  
P: **two elephants,**

J: [Yeah].  
P: **two [giraffes],**  
P: **two lions,**  
P: **two tigers,**  
P: **and two of every animal,**  
P: **ya know,**  
P: **male and female.**

In this example, the RC is clearly restrictive, the RC being used to explicitly identify the size of the ark. An even better example is given in (10), where M. produces a RRC to modify C.'s undefined antecedent *this thing* (M&C:1435).

(10) C: ..That I,  
C: @@<@it's going to be **this thing**,  
C: [XX@> @@@]  
M: [**That needs all this**] care.

Furthermore, NRCs can occur in the same intonation unit as their antecedent, as in (11) (P&P:3517).

(11) A: Our sort've main,  
A: ethnic groups around,  
A: **Frankston where I live.**

The antecedent *Frankston* is a unique identity, not modified by a determiner. The RC *where I live* is optional information, not required to define the antecedent. As such, this cannot be classified as a RRC, only as a NRC, even though it is in the same intonation unit as its antecedent. The second criterion, the use of a Wh-word and not *that* to introduce a NRC, is omitted because of counter examples in the corpus. Consider (12) (P&P:193).

(12) A: You actually do become,  
A: part **of the UN**,  
A: **that does all those things**,  
A: but.

It is clear from the context that the antecedent *the UN* is a unique identity, even though it is modified by a determiner. The RC is optional, and non-defining, and, as such, is a NRC. This example contains a NRC introduced by *that*, hence introduction by a Wh-word is not a defining criterion for NRCs.

The omission of these two criteria means that the NRCs and RRCs in this study are differentiated on semantic grounds. This is not without precedent: Jacobsson (1994:184) defines a NRC as one where 'the antecedent is uniquely identified or sufficiently defined in the preceding discourse or in the context of situation'. The distinction between RRCs and NRCs is a contentious issue at this time, and Jacobsson (1994:184) notes that 'no two analysts will draw the line of demarcation [between RRCs and NRCs] in exactly the same way'. However, the criteria given above serve the purpose for this study.

### 4.3 Pseudo-relative clauses

PsRCs meet the following criteria.

1. PsRCs look like RRCs.

2. PsRCs allow parenthetical information to intrude between them and their antecedents.
3. PsRCs often begin with *there* plus the verb *to be*.
4. PsRCs sometimes have no relativiser.
5. PsRCs lack a core argument.
6. PsRCs can be Presentational Relative Clauses (see Lambrecht (1988) for details), that is, they may be of the form [[NP V NP] [VP]], where the first clause is either a *there* construction, or contains the predicate *have* or *got*, and the postverbal NP is indefinite; and the second clause is tensed, with a gap in place of the subject pronoun.

The following PsRC from the corpus (J&P:135) is typical.

- (13) J: There's there's different things **you can do**  
 J: like exercise,  
 P: [Hm].  
 J: [and],  
 J: diet and,  
 J: and all sorts of things that you can try,  
 J: if it is arthritis.

#### 4.4 Restrictive relative clauses

RRCs meet the following criteria.

1. RRCs restrict the denotation of the head noun.
2. RRCs lack a core argument.
3. RRCs can substitute *which* for *that* or *zero*.
4. RRCs allow a preposition to be preposed with the relativiser, or to be left stranded.
5. RRCs can only occur in a noun phrase.

The following RRC from the corpus (J&P:802) is typical.

- (14) P: **two tigers,**  
 P: **and two of every animal,**  
 P: **ya know,**  
 P: 'N' she said but how could,  
 P: if Noah had an ark big enough anyway,  
 P: if he had such a huge ark,  
 P: **that would fit,**  
 P: **two elephants,**  
 J: [Yeah].  
 P: **two [giraffes],**  
 P: **two lions,**  
 P: **male and fe[male].**  
 J: [Hm].

#### 4.5 Fused relative constructions

The following characteristics classify the FRCs in the corpus, and differentiate between them and other subordinate Wh-word clauses.

##### 4.5.1 Typical fused relative constructions

Typical FRCs meet the following criteria.

1. The relativiser can be replaced by a combination of NP plus relativiser, or a *Wh*-word suffixed with *-ever*.
2. FRCs that function as subject cannot be extraposed.
3. FRCs lack a core argument.
4. The RE in a FRC cannot be followed by a possessed noun.

- (15) J: So,  
J: you,  
J: you've gotta,  
J: ya know you've really gotta jump in there  
J: and make sure you know **what you're doing**,  
J: I think.

The FRC in (15) (J&P:205) is typical. It should be noted that not all FRCs can utilise the *-ever* suffix. Consider (16) below, (P&P:245).

- (16) E: And apparently,  
E: w—  
E: **what I find**,  
E: **rather**,  
E: **amusing** is that um,  
E: the kids,  
E: picked up Arabic,  
E: so well,  
E: that they didn't like to speak English,  
E: 'n' **what they**,  
E: **had to do** was get an interpreter,  
E: to speak to their mother.

(17) shows that neither FRC can utilise the '-ever' suffix. However, both instances of *what* can be replaced by the NP plus relativiser *the thing that* as seen in (18)..

- (17) E: And apparently,  
E: w—  
E: **\*whatever I find**,  
E: **rather**,  
E: **amusing** is that um,  
E: the kids,  
E: picked up Arabic,  
E: so well,

- E: that they didn't like to speak English,  
 E: 'n' **\*whatever they**,  
 E: **had to do** was get an interpreter,  
 E: to speak to their mother.
- (18) E: And apparently,  
 E: w—  
 E: **the thing that I find**,  
 E: **rather**,  
 E: **amusing** is that um,  
 E: the kids,  
 E: picked up Arabic,  
 E: so well,  
 E: that they didn't like to speak English,  
 E: 'n' **the thing that they**,  
 E: **had to do** was get an interpreter,  
 E: to speak to their mother.

Huddleston (1984:402) suggests that FRCs in subject position trigger subject/verb agreement. His examples, reproduced below, contain a Wh-word determiner with a noun.

- (19) **What errors** remained were of a minor nature.  
 (20) **What money she gave him** was quickly spent.

But note that FRCs that begin with the non-determiner relativisers *what*, *whatever*, *whichever*, *however* or *whoever*, and function as subject are, at best, odd with a plural verb.

- (21) **What(ever)/whichever I choose** is/?are for you.  
 (22) **Whoever came late** is/\*are rude.  
 (23) **However he is** is/\*are irrelevant.  
 (24) **However they are** is/\*are irrelevant.

As (22)—(24) show, *whoever* and *however* can only occur with a singular verb, and the other relativisers are, for me, also only acceptable with a singular verb. Hence, it appears that FRCs do not trigger subject/verb agreement when they function as subject, but rather it is the noun that is modified by the relativiser acting as a determiner that does so.

#### 4.5.2 Adverbial fused relative constructions

Adverbial FRCs (Adv FRCs) have the qualities of both adverbial clauses (AdvC's) and FRCs. Typically, AdvC's are mobile and optional, as illustrated by examples (25)—(27).

- (25) **Because he was running late**, Evan missed the bus.  
 (26) Evan missed the bus **because he was running late**.  
 (27) Evan missed the bus.

The Adv FRC in example (28) is from my corpus (M&C:1770). Example (29) illustrates its mobility, and (30) shows its optionality.

- (28) He wasn't healing properly **when he's cut 'n scratched himself**.  
 (29) **When he's cut 'n' scratched himself**, he wasn't healing properly.  
 (30) He wasn't healing properly.

As with most other FRCs, the relativiser, in this instance *when*, can be replaced by either a relativiser suffixed with *-ever*, that is, *whenever*, or a NP plus a relativiser, such as *the times that*.

(31) He wasn't healing properly **whenever he's cut 'n'** **scratched himself**.

(32) He wasn't healing properly **the times that he's cut 'n'** **scratched himself**.

It is the substitution of an NP plus relativiser that best differentiates a FRC from other WhC's. Clearly the subordinate clause in (28) is both an AdvC and a FRC. Note that a NP plus a relativiser cannot be substituted for the subordinating conjunction which introduces the AdvC in (25), as (33) illustrates.

(33) \***The reason that he was running late**, Evan missed the bus.

When I attempted to find a finite AdvC that was introduced by a Wh-word, but did not meet the criteria for a FRC, I was unable to find or formulate any such example. It appears that *the time/day/moment that* or *the place where*, or a Wh-word suffixed with *-ever* can be substituted for *when* or *where* in finite AdvC's. Consider the following examples.

(34a) The members of the committee, **when they read his report**, demanded his resignation. (Greenbaum, 1991:133)

(34b) The members of the committee, **the day that they read his report**, demanded his resignation.

(34c) The members of the committee, **whenever they read his report**, demanded his resignation.

(35a) You should go to **where they tell you to go**.

(35b) You should go to **the place where they tell you to go**.

(35c) You should go to **wherever they tell you to go**.

There are some instances where the NP plus relativiser that substitutes for the Wh-word needs to be preceded by a preposition. Consider the following example from my data (J&P:1038).

(36) J: Oh but there's so many things in the Bible,

J: and I'm saying look,

J: it was written so long ago,

J: ya know,

J: people misinterpret things,

J: and **when it's written down**,

J: it gets changed and,

J: and you don't know.

The following illustrates that either *whenever* or *at the time that* can be substituted for *when* in (36).

(37) J: people misinterpret things,

J: and **whenever/at the time that** it's written down,

J: it gets changed and,

J: and you don't know.

But in some instances, only a preposition plus NP plus relativiser can be substituted for the Wh-word. Consider the following example, also from my data (M&C:1526).

- (38) M: And,  
 M: as **when Barbara developed glandular fever**,  
 M: and she caught glandular fever in hospital with  
 M: Carol-Anne?

Here both *whenever* and *the time that* are inappropriate, but *with the time that* renders an acceptable sentence.

- (39) M: And,  
 M: as *with the time that*/\**whenever*/\**the time that*  
 M: **Barbara developed glandular fever**,  
 M: and she caught glandular fever in hospital with  
 M: Carol-Anne?

The idea of positing a preposition before FRCs is not without precedent. McCawley (1988:458) does just this when discussing the analysis of FRCs as NPs, arguing that FRCs such as that in example (40) can be analysed as NPs if they are treated as the object of an understood preposition such as *at*.

- (40) I'll put my books **wherever you put yours**.

In essence, I am following a similar line of argument. When a NP plus relativiser is substituted for the Wh-word, the need for an overt preposition becomes apparent. While McCawley (1988:458) argues that the covert preposition is necessary to show that the FRC can be analysed as a NP, I argue that an overt preposition is required to allow the acceptable substitution of a NP plus relativiser. Unlike non-fused RCs, where the preposition comes between the head and the relativiser, in this instance, the preposition comes before the head NP.

However, non-finite AdvC's such as the following cannot substitute a NP plus a relativiser, or a Wh-word suffixed with *-ever*.

- (41a) **When asked to speak**, he complained about the poor service. (Greenbaum 1991:133)  
 (41b) \***The time when asked to speak**, he complained about the poor service.  
 (41c) \***Whenever asked to speak**, he complained about the poor service.

The unacceptability of a NP plus a relativiser is to be expected since no non-finite RC can take a subject unless it is introduced by *for*, and clearly these cannot be introduced by *for*.

Let us consider (41a). The non-finite subordinate clause *when asked to speak* could be paraphrased by the finite subordinate clause *when he was asked to speak*, since the expected meaning of this clause is that someone asked *him* to speak, that is, it is a passive construction.

So, just as a non-finite RRC, such as that given in (42a) can be paraphrased by a finite RRC containing a relativiser, as in (42b), so too can a non-finite FRC, like that in (43a), be paraphrased by a finite FRC, as in (43b).

- (42a) She bought icing **to decorate the cake**.  
 (42b) She bought icing **which she decorated the cake with**.  
 (or)  
 She bought icing **with which she decorated the cake**.  
 (43a) **When asked to speak**, he complained about the poor service.  
 (43b) **When(ever) he was asked to speak**, he complained about the poor service.

I have classified subordinate clauses like these as FRCs because, in the same way that a non-finite RRC can be paraphrased by finite RRC, a non-finite FRC can be paraphrased by a finite FRC. This extends to non-adverbial FRCs as well.

#### 4.5.3 *How(ever)* fused relative constructions

McCawley (1988:457) notes that *how(ever)* can introduce what he refers to as *free relatives*, or what, following Huddleston (1984:402), I am calling FRCs. However, not all subordinate clauses introduced by *how(ever)* are FRCs (for example, *How(ever) did you manage to find it?*).

FRCs can function as NPs, AdvPs and AdjPs, and this is true of subordinate clauses introduced by *how(ever)*, as shown by my examples (44)—(46) respectively.

(44a) I like **how it looks**.

(44b) I like **its appearance/whatever takes my fancy at the time**. (NP)

(45a) You should behave **however you feel is appropriate**.

(45b) You should behave **badly/whatever way you like**. (AdvP)

(46a) My lawyer will be **how ruthless their lawyer is**.

(46b) My lawyer will be **cunning/whatever he needs to be**. (AdjP)

(47) You should behave **however/the way that they tell you to behave**.

(48) I like **how it looks/the way that it looks**.

(49) My lawyer will be **however ruthless their lawyer is**.

*How(ever)* clauses can be finite or non-finite, as seen in examples (48) and (50) (P&P:3146) respectively, and, like FRCs that begin with *whoever*, *how(ever)* clauses, can only occur with a singular verb. Note that in FRCs, *how* can be replaced by a NP plus relativiser or *however*, as examples (50)—(52) illustrate.

- (50) E: But,  
E: ya know,  
E: she hasn't had,  
E: actually looked,  
E: looked at anything,  
E: **how to go about it**.

(51) **How(ever) it looks** is acceptable.

(52) \***How(ever) they look** are acceptable.

I am assuming the most important test for FRCs is their ability to be replaced by either a NP plus relativiser, or a relativiser suffixed with *-ever*, and so include these clauses as FRCs.

#### 4.5.4 *Why* fused relative constructions

McCawley (1988:457) notes that '*why* is allowed as a relative pronoun but \**whyever* cannot introduce free relatives'. He gives (53) as an example of a RC introduced by *why*.

(53) the reason **why I wouldn't help him**

My claim is that *why*, like *what*, *when* and *where*, can also introduce FRCs. Consider the following example from my data (P&P:94).

(54) That's **why I want languages**.

Firstly, the *why* clause can be replaced by a NP plus relativiser, as shown in (55), and, like other FRCs, it can function as a NP, as illustrated by (56).

(55) That's **the reason that I want languages**.

(56) That's **why I want languages/the reason**.

Like *whoever*, and *how(ever)* clauses, *why* clauses can only occur with a singular verb, as illustrated below.

(57) **Why I want languages** is/\*are my business.

Although both *how(ever)* and *why* clauses may seem somewhat peripheral as FRCs, since they only account for 4% and 2% of the total number of RCs respectively, I have included in my analysis of FRCs those that pass the NP plus relativiser test.

#### 4.6 Linking relative clauses

While coding the data I found several instances of a RC that does not fit neatly into classifications found in the literature, possibly because, as Miller (1988:117) notes, 'written and spoken English have different systems of relativisation'. For the purpose of this discussion I will call this a *linking relative clause* (LRC). Consider the bolded clauses in the following examples, from three different speakers (M&C:103(CS); L&C:1324(CD); and M&C:1541(MB) respectively).

(58) C: ..But I specifically went with the intent of the tax

C: deduction.

C: And you know the,

C: ..the twenty year,

M: Hm.

C: ..Called them up,

C: ..he said they were out of stock,

C: so I won't charge you for them.

C: <@And I wanted to pay money@>,

C: I wanted to spend money.

C: So he just gave me those last two pairs.

C: Because they're outa stock,

C: he obviously can't,

M: They musta been [spares],

C: [charge].

M: that,

C: above and be-,

C: they musta <?counted them wrong?>.

C: XXX.

M: Or,

M: been issued more than that.

C: Well I got sucked in cause you showed your ID,

M: Hm.

C: So I showed mine,

C: coz I thought you were in civvies?

M: Hm.

C: Took it out of my,

- C: ... pay,  
 C: **which I was going to pay cash.**  
 M: Uh huh.
- (59) L: [Yeah].  
 C: **which I think,**  
 C: **Naomi's was a lunch.**
- (60) M: as when Barbara developed glandular fever,  
 M: and she caught glandular fever in hospital with  
 M: [Car]ol-Anne?  
 C: [Ooh].  
 M: And she thought she had post-natal depression.  
 M: ..And that's all they treated her for.  
 M: And so that was 16<sup>th</sup> of October Carol-Anne was born.  
 C: I expect the symptoms would be very similar.  
 M: Hm.  
 C: Absolutely.  
 C: [Hav]ing had glandular fever.  
 M: [And]--  
 M: wasn't diagnosed,  
 M: until the long weekend in January,  
 M: **which she had actually glandular fever at that time.**

Note that in examples (58), (59) and (60) there is no missing argument in the embedded clause. The LRC in the first example is repeated below in (61).

- (61) Took it out of my,  
 ...pay,  
**which I was going to pay cash.**

Within the LRC, the subject of the verb *go*, *I*, is present, as is *cash*, the object of the verb *pay*. The complement of the verb *go* is sentential, that is, *to pay cash*. It seems that, unlike a typical relativiser, *which* does not represent a missing argument. Indeed, here *which* can most easily be replaced by a coordinating conjunction, such as *and*. This is not typical of relativisers in general. Hence, it appears that the relativiser in this example does not have an NP function within the RC.

- (62) Took it out of my,  
 ... pay,  
**and I was going to pay cash.**

This same line of reasoning can be used with the other two examples, shown briefly below, where (a) shows the syntactic functions of the various elements in the example LRC, and (b) shows the substitution of a conjunction for *which*.

- (63a) So she said,  
 she would've liked it to have been in the afternoon.  
**which [Isubj1] [thinkV1],**  
**[[Naomi'ssubj2] [wasV2] [a lunchcomp V2]obj1].**

(63b) So she said,  
she would've liked it to have been in the afternoon.

**And I think,  
Naomi's was a lunch.**

And,

(64a) as when Barbara developed glandular fever,  
(10 lines)  
And—  
wasn't diagnosed,  
until the long weekend in January,  
**which [she<sub>subj</sub>] [had<sub>v</sub>] [actually<sub>adv</sub>] [glandular fever<sub>obj</sub>] [at that time<sub>adv</sub>].**

(64b) And—  
wasn't diagnosed,  
until the long weekend in January,  
**and she had actually glandular fever at that time.**

The three clauses under discussion have several characteristics in common. In all three examples, there is no *missing* argument in the RC, hence *which* does not have a syntactic function within the RC. This is a unique feature for a RC, since the missing argument is generally considered to be one of the defining features of a RC. However, I propose that these are a type of RC because *which*, as in many NRCs, does serve to link the embedded clause to an earlier proposition, as will be demonstrated below.

All the examples are finite and begin with *which*, which, when used as a subordinating conjunction, introduces only RCs. At first glance they appear to be NRCs, since not only do they contain what seems to be extra, optional information, but they appear to modify a stretch of discourse. Furthermore, like NRCs, these RCs are omissible. For example, when the last two lines of (59) are omitted the utterance is still interpretable. Indeed, the LRCs in the corpus bear a close resemblance to NRCs, and may even be thought of as a subset of NRCs. But, although they do have several characteristics in common with NRCs, three features (the absence of a missing argument in the RC, their reiteration of earlier information, and their conjunctive nature, which allows *and* to replace *which*), serve to distinguish them from NRCs, and other RC types.

Another feature that distinguishes LRCs from many NRCs is that, if the LRC is omitted, the information contained in it is not all lost. This is because, in all instances in the corpus, the LRC loosely reiterates an earlier piece of information given by the same speaker, linking the immediately preceding stretch of discourse to the earlier statement. Therefore, the LRC is not only linked to the immediately preceding discourse as a RC which modifies that discourse, but it also acts as a link between the latter and an earlier piece of discourse. This is illustrated below, where the reiterations involved in the example LRCs are individually described. In each case, the RC links the current discussion back to an earlier point that the speaker has made.

1. In (58) the RC *which I was going to pay cash* (M&C:103(CS)) reiterates the information that C. wished to pay in cash, given in an earlier intonation unit, *and I wanted to pay money* (M&C:83(CS)).
2. The RC in (59), *which I think, Naomi's was a lunch* (L&C:1324(CD)), also repeats information in an earlier intonation unit, namely that Naomi too had her function in the same restaurant, found in the intonation unit *That's where um, Naomi had hers* (L&C:1197(CD)).

3. In (60), the RC *which she had actually glandular fever at that time* (M&C:1541(MB)) reasserts the information that Barbara had had glandular fever, found in the intonation unit *as when Barbara developed glandular fever* (M&C:1527(MB)).

Hence, it seems that a LRC serves a reiterative function. Unlike typical RCs, LRCs do not have an antecedent in the same sentence, nor is the immediately preceding sentence or piece of discourse their antecedent. The unique function of a LRC is to loosely repeat information given in the discourse at a prior point, not simply to refer back to it.

I have classified the function of the relativiser in the LRC as *conjunctional*. The relativiser does not represent an argument of the verb, or an adverbial, but it can be replaced by the coordinating conjunction *and*. This classification of a relativiser as a *relative conjunction* is not new. According to Miller (1988:117), the change from pronoun to conjunction is typical of Indo-European languages. There is also much discussion in the literature relating to the status of relativisers like English *that*, and Serbo-Croatian *sto*, which can be classified as relative conjunctions in some instances (cf. van der Auwera & Kucanda 1985; Miller 1988:116). A conjunctional function of *which* has been attested in English since at least the Eighteenth century, as Kjellmer points out its usage in the writing of Jonathon Swift (Kjellmer 1988:158). Indeed, in a discussion on some semantic aspects of English RCs, Grannis (1978:26) notes that NRCs can be thought of as variations on independent sentences, these being conjoined to the clauses containing the head noun.

This conjunctional use of *which* also seems to occur in several varieties of English. For example, Miller cites the following example from Scottish English (Miller 1988:116).

- (65) you can leave at Christmas if your birthday's in December to February which I think is wrong like my birthday's March and I have to stay on to May **which when I'm 16 in March I could be looking for a job.**

Miller notes that the second occurrence of *which* 'functions like a conjunction, signalling a connection between the preceding text and following text, and it is widespread in Scottish English' (1988:116).

The next example is from Kekalainen's study of the Suffolk dialect (1985:354).

- (66) we'd go in the meadows or in the park, **which it used to be a lot of holly an' mistletoe in there.**

Kekalainen mentions this example because it expresses the locality twice. However, Shorrocks (1982:339), in his study of the Farnworth and District dialect, noticed that '*which* often appears simply to link clauses — sometimes in a rather loose manner — having a value similar to conjunctions such as *and, for, since, because, that* or *as*' for example:

- (67) And when we had to go to tell him one of the looms had gone wrong, he had a stock phrase: "Let it so-and-so-well stop," he always said that, you see. **Which it had to stop because it was broken down.**

In the three examples from the corpus, a coordinating conjunction can be substituted for *which*. However, this is not always the case when a RC has no missing argument. Consider the following example of the Farnworth dialect of England (Shorrocks 1982:340).

- (68) And then [they] used to call at that afternoon, **which he weren't open at the first thing of a morning when they used to call.**

Although this RC meets all the other requirements of a LRC, no coordinating conjunction can be substituted for *which* in (68), as (69) illustrates.

- (69) \*And then [they] used to call at that afternoon, **and/but/or he weren't open at the first thing of a morning when they used to call.**

However, the subordinating conjunction *because* can be substituted for *which* in (68), as (70) shows.

- (70) And then [they] used to call at that afternoon, **because he weren't open at the first thing of a morning when they used to call.**

As a RC requiring a subordinating conjunction rather than a coordinating one does not occur in the corpus under discussion, a LRC is defined in part as one where a coordinating conjunction can be substituted for *which*, and I leave open the questions of whether or not RCs like that in (68) are a sub-type of LRC, and whether or not the definition should be altered to allow the substitution of subordinating conjunctions as well as that of coordinating conjunctions. Miller & Weinert (1996:7.2.4.4) note that 'the complementizer *that* developed from the pronoun *that*, a typical IE source of complementizer', and that '*which* is going the same way'. However, it appears that conjunctive *which*, and the RC it introduces, have not previously received formal classification.

LRCs appear to be quite widespread in Australasia, as the following examples show. Although they cannot be subjected to all of the tests discussed above, because I do not have their contexts, they do provide evidence that this type of RC is reasonably common in conversational English (Barry Blake (p.c.)).

- (71) Unless you get 88 **which some universities are not going to give those marks.**  
(JB, Head of a School at LTU)
- (72) Going on his run in the Doncaster **which most of these couldn't get a run in the Doncaster.** (At Caulfield races, 23 April, 1994)
- (73) I'm taking them to Kangaroo Ground **which hopefully they won't have too much culture shock over there.** (Post Grad, School of Linguistics, LTU)

These clauses all begin with *which*, have no missing NP in the relative clause, are finite, contain extra, optional information, are omissible, and *which* can be replaced by the coordinating conjunction *and*. However, I cannot tell whether or not they modify a stretch of discourse.

However, not all *which* clauses that have no missing argument are LRCs. Pawley (p.c) collected the following examples.

- (74) He had some songs there — **which he wanted to find out what they were about.**
- (75) Now this is a French clock **which I really have a lot of**      **respect for those French movements.**
- (76) They've developed a specific series of linguistic textbooks      **which we haven't used any of them so far.**
- (77) This flight goes to Hilo **which I'm not sure if it**      **goes in**      **the summer.**
- (78) .. got it from a map **which I've seen lots of them.**

All of these examples begin with *which* and have no missing argument, are finite, contain extra, optional information, and are omissible. In (74) and (75), *which* can be replaced with *and*. In (76) and (77), although *and* is odd, the coordinating conjunction *but* can be used. However, for me, in (78), not only *and* and *but* are odd, but also subordinating conjunctions such as *because*, *since*, and *as*. This is because (78) is not a LRC, but a case of resumptive

pronoun use, that is, where a pronoun occupies the position that a relative pronoun would occupy prior to being moved to the complementizer position (McCawley 1988:444).

The characteristics of these LRCs can be summarised as follows:

1. They begin with *which*.
2. They are all finite.
3. They are omissible.
4. They contain extra, optional information.
5. They elaborate on a stretch of discourse.
6. There is no missing argument in the RC.
7. The information contained in the LRC is a reiteration of earlier information supplied by the same speaker, hence a LRC has a *reiterative* function.
8. The relativiser has a *conjunctive* function in the LRC, and may be replaced with a more prescriptively acceptable coordinating conjunction, such as *and*.

## 5. Conclusion

As all linguists know, language is constantly changing. The categorisation of spoken data becomes problematic when one encounters a construction that is undergoing change, as seems to be the case with relative clauses. It is no longer possible to say unequivocally that a restrictive relative clause occurs in the same intonation unit as its antecedent, or that a non-restrictive relative clause occurs in a separate intonation unit from its antecedent. Furthermore, in this data, non-restrictive relative clauses are now being introduced by the relative expression *that*, previously excluded from introducing such clauses.

FRCs are common in my corpus, accounting for 44% of the data, yet there has been little discussion about them in the literature. As I have shown, they can be introduced by a wide variety of relative expressions, including *why*.

Finally, another type of relative clause, the LRC, occurs in conversation. Given that the relativiser that introduces LRCs is behaving like a coordinator rather than a subordinator, it is possible that *which* may be evolving into a new coordinating conjunction. However, this requires more thorough investigation before any claims can be made.

## Appendix

### Data Transcription System

The transcription system used throughout this paper is based on that of Du Bois et al. (1993).

| Symbol                | Meaning                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| New line              | New intonation unit              |
| Hyphen (-)            | Truncated word                   |
| Double hyphen (--)    | Intonation unit not completed    |
| Comma (,)             | Continuing intonation unit       |
| Full stop (.)         | Completed intonation unit        |
| Question mark (?)     | Question                         |
| @ @ @                 | Laughter, one symbol per pulse   |
| Square brackets [yes] | Simultaneous speech              |
| Two dots ( .. )       | Brief pause, 0.2 seconds or less |
| Three dots ( ... )    | Medium pause 0.3 - 0.6 seconds   |
| Capital X             | Indecipherable syllable          |
| <@ speech @>          | speech made while laughing       |
| <? speech ?>          | unclear speech                   |

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