Textbook: English Download
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RELATIVE CLAUSES

Read notes 1.4 to 1.7 below.

1 .4 Relative clauses

Relative clauses give us more information about the subject or the object of a sentence. They are introduced by the following relative pronouns:

who/that/whom	for people	• That's the girl who/that lends a hand with our garden. • The little girl who/that I look after during the day is adopted. • That's the girl to whom I was talking.
which/that	for things and animals	• The house which/that is on the corner is Martin's. • The laundry which/that is in the basket is filthy.
where	for places	• That's the cafe where we'll meet Dad. • That's the place where my parents first met.
why	for reasons	• He's the reason why she won't go to the party. • That is the reason why Joe is grumbling.
when	for times	• 2008 was the year when I got married. • That was the time when I had an argument with my brother.
whose	for possession	• That's the woman whose son has fallen out with Simon. • That's the lady whose daughter does our homework.

We can use that instead of who or which, but it cannot be used after commas.

- The man who/that live next door to is always grumbling.
- My tennis coach, who is very cheerful, makes lessons fun. (NOT that)

- The dog which/that I saw was a Labrador.
- Our dog, which is a Labrador, is two years old. (NOT that)

We can use that after superlative forms and words such as something, anything. none, all, etc.

- Miss Hill is the worst chemistry teacher that we've ever had.
- There's nothing that I wouldn't do for you!

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1.5 Defining relative clauses

Defining relative clauses give us important information which we need in order to understand the meaning of the main clause. They are introduced with who, whom, which, that, where, why, when or whose. We do not use commas to separate a defining relative clause from the main clause.

- The city where I live is near the sea. (The sentence would not make sense without where I live.)

When who, whom, that and which are the objects of a defining relative clause, they can be omitted.

- The book was written by my sister. I've just finished reading the book. (In the second sentence, the book is the object.)
- The book which/that I've just finished reading was written by my sister.
- The book I've just finished reading was written by my sister.

1.6 Non-defining relative clauses

Non-defining relative clauses give us extra information which we do not need in order to understand the meaning of the main clause. They are introduced with who, whom, which, where, when or whose. We must use commas to separate a non-defining relative clause from the main clause. We cannot use that in a non-defining relative clause and we cannot omit the relative pronoun.

- Penny, who complains a lot, isn't very popular.

1 . 7 Prepositions in relative clauses

There are often prepositions in relative clauses. They usually come at the end of the relative clause. They can also come before the relative pronoun, but this makes the sentence sound very formal.

The subject which I am speaking about next week is relationships.

The subject about which I am speaking next week is relationships (very formal)

We cannot use a preposition before who or that. We can use a preposition before whom, but only in formal sentences.

- The colleague who/that I worked with for many years is now my husband.
- The colleague with whom I worked for many years is now my husband. (very formal)

When the preposition is before the relative pronoun, we cannot omit the relative pronoun even if it is the object of the relative clause.

- Is this the song which/that you're famous for?
- Is this the song you're famous for?
- Is this the song for which you're famous? (which cannot be omitted)

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Exercise 1 (pg 11)
Choose the correct words.

Learning about relationships

The book *Impression Management,* (1) **which / that** is about the different relationships between people, was written by Barry R Schlenker, (2) **whom / who** is an American professor. The main reason (3) **why / which** Schlenker wrote the book was because he felt that people should have more information about relationships.

The main idea of the book, (4) **who / which** argues that people try to control how others see them in almost every social relationship, was not particularly popular in 1980, (5) **where / when** the book was first published. However, in the universities and colleges (6) **where / that** the book was taught, there were many students (7) **that / whom** felt that Schlenker's thoughts on relationships were important ones (8) **that / to which** people should learn about and discuss. Much of the support (9) **- / where** the book received, (10) **for which / that** Schlenker was very thankful, came from his own students. He was also very thankful to his wife, parents and colleagues (11) **- / whose** advice and encouragement helped him greatly. At the beginning of the book, Schlenker says that it was these people and these relationships (12) **why / which** made the production of *Impression Management* possible.

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