

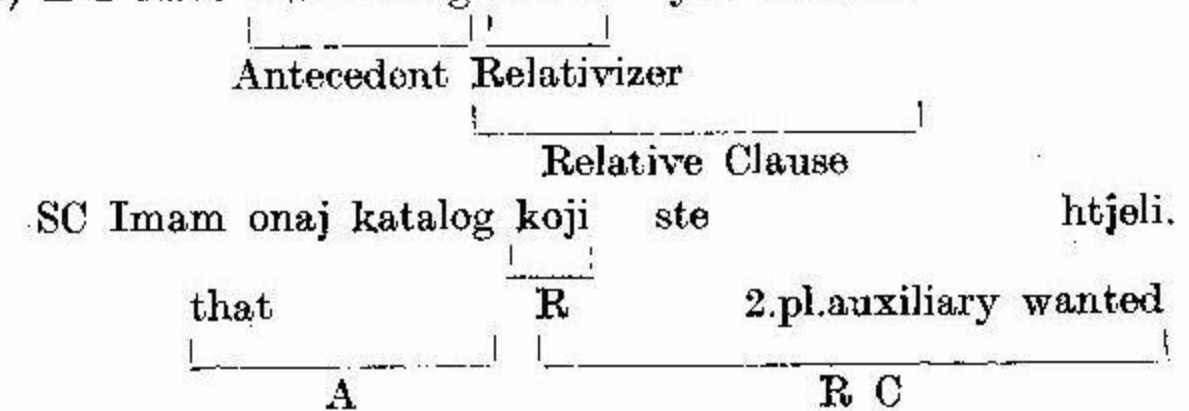
RELATIVE CLAUSES AND THEIR ANTECEDENTS
IN SERBO-CROATIAN AND ENGLISH:
MUTUAL RESTRICTIONS

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1.0. In English as in Serbo-Croatian, the major type of relative clause begins with a *relativizer*, and is associated with an *antecedent* preceding the clause.¹

(1) E I have the catalog which you wanted.



Antecedents can be adjectives, adverbials, or (in SC) quantity expressions, but here we will consider only noun phrase antecedents. Two different sorts of relativizers are observed. One is identical to one of the interrogative pronouns of the respective language:

¹ Both languages also have 'free relatives', clauses with no expressed antecedent:

- (i) *What he says* is true.
- (ii) *Tko pjeva, zlo ne misli.*
who sings evil not thinks
'One who sings thinks no evil'.

It should be noted that free relatives with *who*, though familiar from Shakespeare, are now archaic. An example like (iii) *Who loves me wears joans.* (Sign on car in Zagreb, 1979) creates an extremely odd stylistic effect. Further study of the limitations on free relatives in English and SC would be rewarding, but cannot be undertaken here.

(2) E	who	who?	SC	tko	tko? 'who?'
				(gen. kôga, dat. kôme, etc.)	(gen. kôga, dat. kôme, etc.)
	which	which?		koji	koji? 'which?'
				(fem. koja, neut.,koje, etc.)	(fem. koja, neut. koje, etc.)
				što	što? 'what?'
				(gen. čega, dat. čemu, etc.)	(gen. čega, dat. čemu, etc.)

these act syntactically like pronouns and thus deserve the name *relative pronoun*. We will refer to the *što* of (2) as *declinable što*. The other sort of relativizer, English *that* or *ø* (zero) and SC indeclinable *što*:

(3)	E	I have the catalog that you wanted.
		I have the catalog you wanted.
	SC	Imam onaj katalog što ste htjeli. ²

we will claim are *subordinating conjunctions* (or *complementizers*).

1.1. It is not always recognized that *that*, *ø*, and indeclinable *što* are conjunctions when they introduce relative clauses, but the arguments for this view are strong.

First, if these items were pronouns, they should have the syntactic value of noun phrases as pronouns do, and hence be able to appear in all noun-phrase positions within the relative clause. In fact, these relativizers cannot occur in prepositional phrases:

(4)	E	*I have the catalog <i>about that</i> you asked.
		*I have the catalog <i>about ø</i> you asked.
	SC	*Imam onaj katalog <i>o što</i> ste pitali. ³
		abt. asked

The true relative pronouns of (2) appear in this position without difficulty:

(5)	E	I have the catalog <i>about which</i> you asked.
	SC	Imam onaj katalog <i>o kojem</i> ste pitali.
		which, masc. loc. sg.

² This example will sound artificial to many speakers, who would prefer *što ste ga htjeli* with the accusative personal pronoun *ga*; see discussion of (8). Common to all speakers is the construction with *koji* as in (1).

Second, *that* and *ø* and the *što* of (3, 4) are indeclinable, unlike pronouns in general. In English this is manifested in an inability to take the possessive 's:

- (6) *a man that's friend is here
*a man ø's friend is here

(cf. *who* and *which*, which add 's to make *whose*⁴); and in SC in an inability to be used in positions requiring any case other than the nominative or (sometimes, see note 2) accusative. Thus with *divim se* 'I admire' which takes the dative:

- (7) *onaj katalog što se divim.

The pronoun *što* of (2) indeed has a dative form *čemu*, but none of its forms can be used in sentences (3, 4, 5, 7) due to the nature of their antecedents, as we will see below.

Third: SC in fact has a way to express (7), namely by adding a third-person pronoun (agreeing in gender and number with the antecedent) in the required case. Here the antecedent *katalog* is masculine singular, and the verb *divim se* within the relative clause requires the dative:

- (8) onaj katalog što mu se divim
3.sg.dat.masc.

If we were to call *što* in (8) a relative pronoun, then in the same clause there would be two different pronouns referring to the same antecedent. Whether we claimed that *što* and *mu* occupied the same syntactic position within the clause or not, we would still be faced with an anomalous situation not found elsewhere in SC grammar.

Fourth, *that*, *ø*, and indeclinable *što* are subordinating conjunctions in the languages anyway, as in (9):

- (9) E I am glad that we are here again.
I am glad we are here again.
SC Radujem se što smo opet tu.
I-am-glad we-are again here

³ We can of course say *the catalog that/ø you asked about*; here the preposition and the relativizer are not in the same phrase. SC cannot leave prepositions without objects, so that we do not get the corresponding **onaj katalog što ste pitali o*.

⁴ Some speakers of English object to the now widespread use of *whose* as the possessive of *which*, and there has long been controversy among normativists as to its propriety. This finds an interesting parallel in SC *čiji* 'whose', which some speakers (particularly older grammarians) restrict to masculine singular human antecedents, although nowadays it is common with those of any number and gender and with non-human noun antecedents as well.

so that it is no great innovation to suggest that they can have the same function in another sort of subordinate clause, the relatives.⁵

2.0. In both languages, features of the antecedent restrict the choice of relativizer. Among these are one semantic feature: human referent or not, which we will write [\pm human], and one mixed (semantic-syntactic-morphological) feature, namely whether the antecedent contains a noun or not, which we write [\pm nomen].⁶ Noun-phrase antecedents not containing nouns have quantifiers, demonstratives, indefinites, or substantivized adjectives as their heads, as will be seen in the examples.

2.1. In English the first feature is primary: [+human] antecedents require *who* as relative pronoun, rejecting *which*. We find this for [+nomen] antecedents:

(10) This is the student wanted *who* to see you.
*which

(11) Mary, *who(m)* I wanted to see, remained here.
*which

as well as those which are [-nomen]:

⁵ *Što* in complement clauses appears only after certain factive main verbs and other expressions taking complements (like 'that we are here again' in (9)) whose content is presupposed true (Bibović 1971). This correlates well with the fact that some speakers reserve *što*-conjunction in relative clauses to those clauses used to help identify antecedents already known to the participants in the conversation; see Ivić 1973. Other speakers, true, use *što*-conjunction not only for this subset of restrictive relatives but for other restrictives and non-restrictives—just as an elegant variant of *koji*.

⁶ Personal pronouns go along with nouns as far as the feature [\pm nomen] is concerned. Their appearance as antecedents to relatives is however limited. In both languages they can take non-restrictive relatives:

(i) E he, *who(m)* I greatly admire, ...
SC on, *kojem se mnogo divim*. ...
much

but at least the 3rd person pronouns do not appear with restrictive relatives in SC; a demonstrative of the proper gender is used instead.

(ii) E he *who* must die
SC *on / onaj *koji* mora umrijeti
that-masc. must die

In English constructions like (iiE) are used only in a rather literary or archaizing style. More normal usage would have a pronoun *one*

(iii) the *one* who must die

or (in the plural) a demonstrative:

(iv) those who must die, the ones who must die.

We here take for granted the distinction of restrictive and non-restrictive, familiar from school grammar. It is reflected in English and (recently) in SC orthography by the use of commas to set off non-restrictive clauses but not restrictive ones.

(12) Anybody who wants to see me should remain here.
*which

(13) Those who want to see me should remain here.
*which

(14) Everyone else, *who* still wanted to see me, remained.
*which

On the other hand, [-human] antecedents allow *which* and not *who*. This is clearly true for the [+nomen] ones: cf. (1, 5) and

(15) The catalogs, *which* were well printed, went well.
*who

Those carrying the feature [-nomen] similarly reject *who* but their association with *which* is more or less limited. With indefinites in...*thing*:

(16) nothing/anything/something/everything (?) *which* he has
that, \emptyset

which is possible but *that* is more normal, or \emptyset . *All* goes very unwillingly with *which*:

(17) all ??*which* he has
that, \emptyset

Demonstratives allow *which* fairly well in non-restrictive clauses, as in (18), but in restrictives *this* rejects all relativizers, cf. (19):

(18) *This*, *which* you may recognize, is a test tube, and *that*, *which* you haven't seen yet, is a hydrometer.

(19) *This* ??*which* you pointed out is surprising.
?that
? \emptyset

That as antecedent allows *which* but only in the literary style mentioned in note 6; see (20).

(20) *That* *which* he has written is an inspiration to us all.
?that
? \emptyset

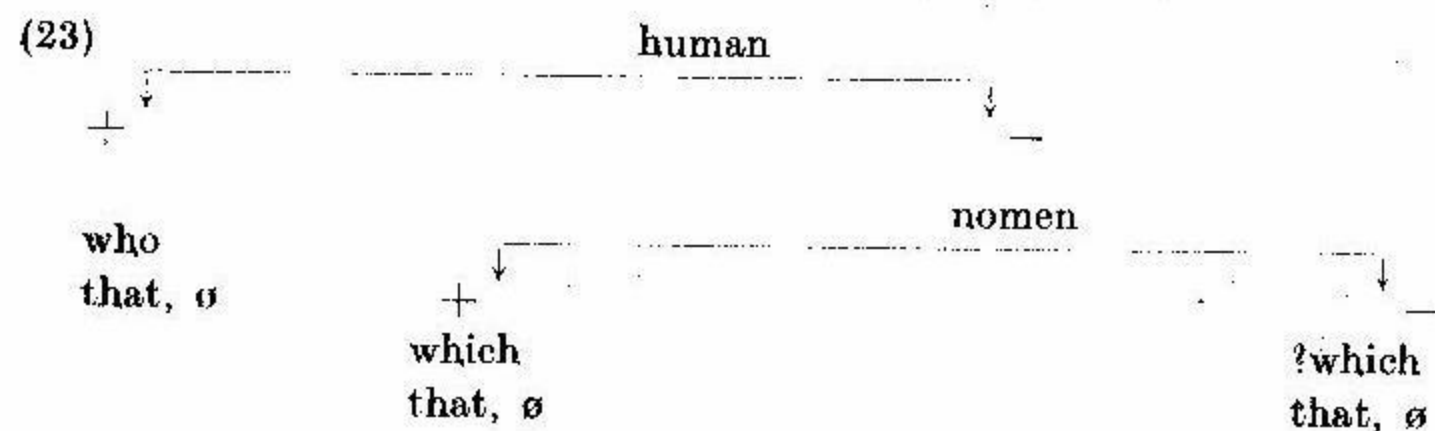
Substantivized adjectives tend to disallow *which*:

(21) He has shown you the best ??*which* he has.
that
 \emptyset

except for non-restrictives:

(22) The beautiful, which Plato describes, is...

Thus in English the choice of relative pronouns is conditioned by features of the antecedent; the conjunction strategy with *that* or \emptyset is allowable in restrictive relatives whatever the antecedent⁷, and in those with [-human, -nomen] antecedents is the only acceptable type (except for a sort of dissimilation effect with the antecedents *this* and *that*). Graphically:



2.2. In Serbo-Croatian the second feature is the primary division. Only nouns can be antecedents to *koji* (but see note 6); their humanness is irrelevant. Compare (1) and:

(24) Ovo je student koji Vas želi vidjeti.
 this is you wants to see
 'This is a/the student who wants to see you.'

⁷ T. Zabrocki (Fisiak et al. 1978 : 164) suggests that *that* cannot be used when the antecedent is [+human] and plural. This leads him to star the perfectly acceptable example

(i) The boys *that you met there.

Through some slip, he offers *which* instead of *who* as a corrected variant. *That* here is comparatively uncommon, but does occur. A count of *that*-relatives in the Zagreb version of the Brown Corpus (see below) reveals that only ca. 5 out of 165 plural-antecedent examples have the feature [+human], which is much less than the proportion of human nouns to nouns in general. But the examples found, as well as constructed examples like those in this paper, seem quite normal to native speakers. Here are the 3 clearest instances:

(7863) ... the Southern Negro is becoming conscious of quality and does not wish to be associated with radio which is in any way degrading to his race; he tends to shy away from the hooting and hollering personalities that originally made Negro radio programs famous.

(13938) ... the unhappy pilot, pushing his luck, begged the postal officials that met him to find a safer landing place, preferably on the flat-topped hills across the Winooski River.

(15409) The last two writers introduce strong political bias into their works, and not unlike the union leaders that we will discuss soon, see folklore as a reservoir of protest by a downtrodden and publically silenced mass. (The Corpus is available in Zagreb; see Filipović 1971b, 36-43).

(25) Marija, koju ste željeli vidjeti, ostala je tu.
 fem. sg. acc. wanted remained aux.
 'Mary, who(m) you wanted to see, remained here.'

The [\pm human] distinction shows up only among the remainder of the antecedents, the indefinites, demonstratives, and other non-nouns (in the sense of note 6). The [+human] ones take *tko* as their relativizer:

(26)	nitko /netko /svatko /onaj	}	tko je tu
	no one someone everyone that one		who is here
	jedini /posljednji		*koji
	the only one the last one		*što ⁸

and are the only words to do so.

The [-human] words take the relative pronoun *što* (declined); here is the indefinite set, all neuter.

(27)	nešto /ništa /sve	što je tu
	something nothing all	is here
		*koje (neuter)
		*tko

To show that we have the pronoun and not the indeclinable *što*, we give the same set with a verb in the relative clause which requires the dative.

(28)	nešto/ništa/sve	čemu se divim
		that I-admire
		*što mu
		*kojem (neut. sg. dat. of <i>koji</i>)
		*kòmu (dative of <i>tko</i>)

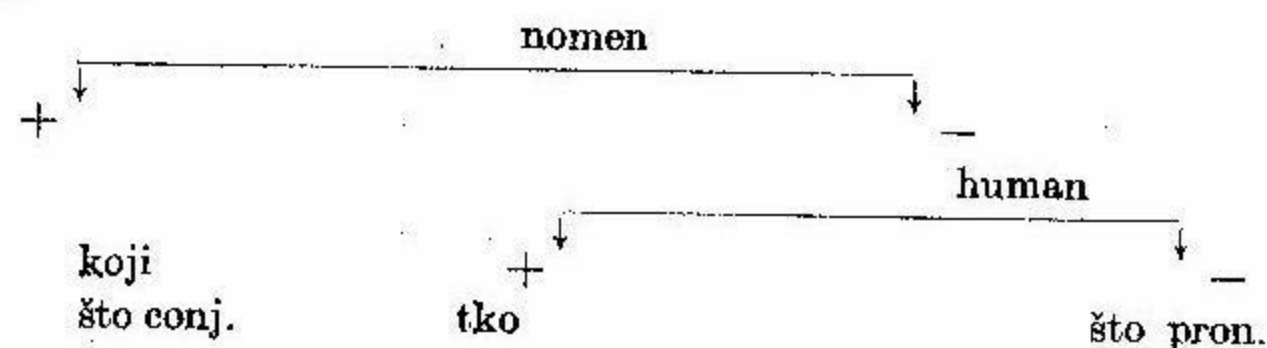
The ungrammaticality of *što mu* shows that we have only the pronoun *što* and not the subordinating conjunction. We find the same facts with the neuter demonstratives and substantivized adjectives:

(29)	ovo/to /onō	}	što je tu
	this this, that that		*koje
	jedino /prvo		*tko
	the only thing the first thing		čemu se divim
			*što mu
			*kòmu

⁸ *Onaj koji* is also found, but we interpret it as the result of leaving out a noun under the influence of context: *onaj student / katalog / čovjek* 'man' etc. ... *koji*. The indeclinable *što* might be used here by some speakers, but not the pronoun *što*, as we can show by trying to use a case form:

(i) nitko/netko/svatko/onaj *čemu se divim.

A graphical presentation shows the opposite order of features from English:
(30)



3.0. We can propose a (partial) explanation for the 'forbidden' combinations of antecedent and relativizer in our two languages, but not for the different hierarchy English and SC show among the two features—that seems to be part of the irreducible variation that can exist among languages. A relative clause referring to a noun antecedent presumably has, in its underlying structure, an anaphoric pronoun (or anaphoric repetition of the noun). Several circumstances, particularly in SC, support this. One is the *što mu* construction, as in (8), where an anaphoric pronoun is present on the surface as well. Another is seen in conjoined relative clauses, where there is only one relativizer for more than one clause:

- (31) zemlja o kojoj znamo malo ali je smatramo važnom land abt. which we-
know little but it we-consi- import- a country which
der ant we know
little about but which we consider important'

Here, as argued in Browne 1971, *kojoj* represents the relativizer for the first relative clause plus its anaphoric element (referring to the antecedent *zemlja*); the relativizer of the second clause can be left out, since it is identical to that of the first clause, and then the anaphoric element surfaces by itself in the shape of the 3rd person singular personal pronoun *je* 'it' (acc. sg. fem.).

We can see anaphoric nouns surfacing in some non-restrictive clauses, both in English and in SC:

- (32) E an accident on the road, in which accident several persons were injured
SC nezgoda na cesti, u kojoj nezgodi je ozlijeđeno više ljudi
several people
accid. on road in which accid. aux. injured

The non-nomen antecedents mentioned above, demonstratives, indefinites and the like, do not take part in the system of reference and anaphora in the same way that nouns do. From a logical point of view they may lack referents; from a textual point of view, a repetition of an indefinite (*anybody... anybody...*) cannot have the second occurrence co-referential with the first as is typical

for nouns; and grammatically they may fail to pronominalize in the same way as nouns. This last is especially clear in SC, where at least the neuters *nešto*, *ništa*, *sve*, *ovo*, *to*, *ono*, *jedino*, *prvo* etc. cannot be referred to by the usual 3rd person anaphoric pronoun *ono*, gen. *ga*, dat. *mu*, acc. *ga* etc. 'it'. Rather, the demonstrative *to* must be used.

- (33) Vidiš li sve ovo? Baci to/*ga!
you-see interrog. all this Throw that/it
'Do you see all this? Throw it away.'

We regard this as directly connected with the failure of these words to relativize with *koji*. Our tentative hypothesis is that *koji*, which as an interrogative modifies a noun and asks for the identity of the referent, plays a similar role in the underlying structure of relative clauses, that of modifier specifying the reference of a repeated anaphoric nominal.

3.1 In English the content of sentences and predicates can be referred to as *it* and relativized with *which* (such relatives are always non-restrictive):

- (34) a. Several people were injured. I didn't expect it.
b. Several people were injured, which I didn't expect.

Again SC must use *to* instead of the anaphoric pronoun to refer, and the declined *što* to relativize:

- (35) a. Ozlijeđeno je više ljudi. Nisam to očekivao. (*ga)
injured aux. sev. people. I-did-not that expect.
b. Ozlijeđeno je više ljudi, što nisam očekivao. (*koje)

The choices observed in (34) and (35) are just what we expect on the basis of our treatment. A sentence antecedent, since it is not human nor a noun, has the features [—nomen, —human]. It excludes restrictive relatives for a semantic reason, which we can try to sketch: sentences (predicates) do not mark out sets of things in the mental or physical world in the way that noun phrases do, and so we cannot add a restrictive which would narrow down such a set or pick out one of its members.

In English the [—human] feature rules out *who* as a relativizer and makes us look at the value of [nomen]; this is minus, leading us to expect *that*, *a*, or (especially in non-restrictives) *which*. Since we have only non-restrictives, *that* and *a* are not possible and only *which* remains. In SC the value [—nomen] rejects *koji* and *što*-conjunction, and leads us to the [human] feature; [—human] selects the pronoun *što* as a relativizer, and, as in (33) above, requires the demonstrative *to* as an anaphor rather than *ga*. To see that *što* here is the pronoun, we give another example with a verb *čudim se* 'I am surprised at' taking the dative:

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