

RELATIVE CLAUSES IN MODERN IRISH

(Handout based on McCloskey, James, Transformational Syntax and Model Theoretic Semantics: A Case Study in Modern Irish, U. of Texas ms., 1978)

Relative Clauses:

- (1) Dhíol an fear an domhan. (1') an fear a dhíol an domhan
(sold the man the world) (the man COMP sold the world
'The man sold the world.' 'the man who sold the world'
- (2) Dhíol an fear an bád. (2') an bád a dhíol an fear
(sold the man the boat) (the boat COMP sold the man
'The man sold the boat.' 'the boat that the man sold'
- (3) Molann na mic-léinn an scríbhneoir.
(praise the students the writer)
'The students praise the writer.'
- (3') an scríbhneoir a molann na mic-léinn é (indirect relative)
(the writer COMP praise the students him)
'the writer whom the students praise'
- (3'') an scríbhneoir a mholann na mic-léinn (direct relative)
(the writer COMP praise the students)
'the writer whom the students praise'
- (4) an fear ar dhíol sé an domhan (indirect relative not possible)
(the man COMP sold he the world)
- (5) Tabharann tú an t-airgead don fhear.
(give you the money to-the man)
'You give the money to the man.'
- (5') an fear a dtabharann tú an t-airgead dó (indirect relative)
(the man COMP give you the money to-him)
'the man to whom you give the money'
- (5'') an fear a thabharann tú an t-airgead do (direct relative not possible)
(the man COMP give you the money to)
- (Note: In Galway the verb forms in (5, 5', 5'') would be tugann, dtugann, and thugann.)
- (6) Tá máthair an fhir sa bhaile.
(is mother of-the man (gen.) in-the home)
'The man's mother is at home.'
- (6') an fear a bhfuil a mháthair sa bhaile (indirect relative)
(the man COMP is his mother in-the home)
'the man whose mother is at home'
- (6'') an fear a tá máthair sa bhaile (direct relative not possible)
(the man COMP is mother in-the home)

(7) Direct: [(Det) Nom [_s aL ... ___ ... s]]

Indirect: [(Det) Nom [_s aN ... Pro ... s]]

(McCloskey, p. 9, 12)

(8) The morphology of the complementizers (McCloskey, p. 11):

	<u>non-past</u>	<u>past</u>
<u>/go/</u>		
<u>affirmative</u>	goN	gurL
<u>negative</u>	nachN	nárL
<u>/aN/</u>		
<u>affirmative</u>	aN	arL
<u>negative</u>	nachN	nárL
<u>/aL/</u>		
<u>affirmative</u>	aL	aL
<u>negative</u>	nachN	nárL

(L and N mark elements that induce Lenition and Nasalization respectively)

- (9) Deir sé go dtuigeann (nach dtuigeann, gur thuig, nár thuig) sé an scéal.
 (says he COMP understands (NEG-COMP understands, COMP understood, NEG-COMP understood) he the story)
 'He says that he understands (does not understand, understood, did not understand) the story.'
- (10) an fear a n-insíonn (nach n-insíonn, ar inis, nár inis) tú an scéal dó
 (the man COMP tell (NEG-COMP tell, COMP told, NEG-COMP told) you the story to-him)
 'the man to whom you tell (do not tell, told, did not tell) the story'
- (11) an fear a thuigeann (nach dtuigeann, a thuig, nár thuig) ___ an scéal
 (the man COMP understands (NEG-COMP understands, COMP understood, NEG-COMP understood) ___ the story)
 'the man who understands (does not understand, understood, did not understand) the story'

Long-distance relativization:

- (12) Thug sé léim aL dúirt sé nárl cheap sé aL thabharfadh sé ____
choíche.
(gave he leap COMP said he NEG-COMP thought he COMP would-give
he ____ ever)
'He took a leap that he said he didn't think he would ever take.'
- (13) an t-Aire aL deir siad aL dúirt ____ goN raibh an cogadh thart
(the minister COMP say they COMP said ____ COMP was the war over)
'the minister that they say said that the war was over'
(Cf. Deir siad go ndúirt an t-Aire go raibh an cogadh thart.
'They say that the minister said that the war was over.')
- (14) an t-úrscéal aL mheas mé aL thuig mé ____
(the novel COMP thought I COMP understood I ____)
'the novel that I thought I understood'
(Cf. Mheas mé gur thuig mé an t-úrscéal. 'I thought that I
understood the novel.')
- (15) an t-úrscéal aL mheas mé aL dúirt sé aL thuig sé ____
(the novel COMP thought I COMP said he COMP understood he ____)
'the novel that I thought he said he understood'
(Cf. Mheas mé gur dhúirt (go ndúirt in Galway) sé gur thuig
sé an t-úrscéal. 'I thought that he said he understood the
novel.')
- (16) Deir siad goN síleann an t-athair goN bpósfaidh Síle an fear.
(say they COMP think the father COMP will-marry Sheila the man)
'They say that the father thinks that Sheila will marry the man.'
- (16') an fear aL deir siad aL shíleann an t-athair aL phósfaidh Síle ____
(the man COMP say they COMP thinks the father COMP will-marry
Sheila ____)
'the man that they say the father thinks Sheila will marry'

Long-distance indirect relatives:

- (17) Measann sibh goN bhfuil an eochair insa doras.
(think you (pl.) COMP is the key in-the door)
- (17') an doras aL mheasann sibh aN bhfuil an eochair ann
(the door COMP think you (pl.) COMP is the key in-it)
'the door that you think the key is in'
- (18) Deir siad goN measann sibh goN bhfuil an eochair insa doras.
(say they COMP think you COMP is the key in-the door)
'They say that you think that the key is in the door.'
- (18') an doras aL deir siad aL mheasann sibh aN bhfuil an eochair ann
(the door COMP say they COMP think you COMP is the key in-it)
'the door that they say you think the key is in'

Another pattern:

(19) NP [aN ... [₃ gON ... Pro ...]] (Cf. McCloskey p. 212)

(20) Mheas sibh uilig gurL briseadh bád an fhir.
(thought you all COMP broke boat of-the man (gen.))
'You all thought that the man's boat was wrecked.'

(20') an fear arL mheas sibh uilig gurL briseadh a bhád
(the man COMP thought you all COMP broke his boat)
'the man whose boat you thought was wrecked'

(21) Shíl me gurL mharaigh an fear a athair.
(thought I COMP killed the man his father)
'I thought that the man killed his father.'

(21') an fear arL shíl mé gurL mharaigh sé a athair
(the man COMP thought I COMP killed he his father)
'the man that I thought killed his father'

(21'') *an fear aL shíl mé arL mharaigh sé a athair
(the man COMP thought I COMP killed he his father)
(See McCloskey fn. 5 pp. 144-5 for remarks.)

Islands (cf. McCloskey pp. 35-42):

(22) Ghoid mé an leabhar aL cheannaigh an fear ____
(stole I the book COMP bought the man ____)
'I stole the book that the man bought.'

(22') *an fear aL ghoid mé an leabhar aL cheannaigh ____
(the man COMP stole I the book COMP bought ____)
'the man who I stole the book that bought'

(23) Níl a fhios agam an bpósfadh duine-ar-bith an bhean.
(NEG-is its knowledge at-me Q would-marry anyone the woman)
'I don't know whether anyone would marry the woman.'

(23') *bean.nachN bhfuil a fhios agam an bpósfadh duine-ar-bith ____
(a-woman DEG-COMP is its knowledge at-me Q would-marry
anyone ____)
'a woman who I don't know whether anyone would marry'

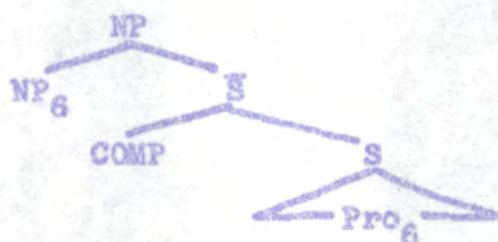
(24) Bíonn a fhios agat i-gcónaí caidé aL bhuaifidh an píobaire ____
(is its knowledge at-you always what COMP will-play the
piper ____)
'You always know what the piper will play.'

(24') *an píobaire aL bhíonn a fhios agat i-gcónaí caidé
aL bhuaifidh
(the piper COMP is its knowledge at-you always what
COMP will-play ____)
'the piper that you always know what will play'

Indirect relatives and Islands:

- (22") an fear aL ghoid mé an leabhar aL cheannaigh sé
 (the man COMP stole I the book COMP bought he
 'the man who I stole the book that he bought'
- (23") bean nachN bhfuil a fhios agam an bpósfadh duine-ar-bith í
 (woman NEG-COMP is its knowledge at-me Q would-marry anyone her)
 'a woman that I don't know whether anyone would marry her'
- (24") an píobaire aN mbíonn a fhios agat i-gcónaí caidé aL
 bhuaillfidh sé
 (the piper COMP is its knowledge at-you always what COMP
 will-play he
 'the piper that you always know what he will play'
- (25) Mheadh meas agam ar dhuine-ar-bith aL tá ábalta an teanga
 a labhairt.
 (would-be respect at-me on anyone COMP is able the language
 to speak)
 'I would respect anyone who can speak the language.'
- (25') Sin teanga aN mbeadh meas agam ar duine-ar-bith aL tá ábalta
 í a labhairt.
 (that's language COMP would-be respect at-me on anyone COMP
 is able it to speak)
 'That's a language that I would respect anyone who could speak
 it.'

Relative deletion (McCloskey, pp. 33-4, et passim):



SD:	X	[NP _j	Y	Pro _k	Z]	W
	1	2	3	4	5	6
SC:	1	2	3	∅	5	6

- Conditions:
- (i) obligatory if term 4 is subject in its clause,
 - (ii) optional if term 4 is direct object in its clause,
 - (iii) inapplicable if term 4 is neither subject nor object in its clause,
 - (iv) j = k.

("The rule of Relative Deletion is an unbounded extraction rule and is therefore subject to island constraints." (McCloskey, p. 40-1))