

"Relative That": A Centennial Dispute

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## Relative *that* – a centennial dispute<sup>1</sup>

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### INTRODUCTION

But it would only be fair to add that there is still an essential difference between *the hope that never dies* and *the hope that it was all wrong*. (Van der Laan, 1929: 28)

It is unclear what the status of relative *that*, henceforth ‘R-*that*’, is. Jespersen started the debate a century ago in a school grammar (1885); he expressly avoided listing R-*that* as a pronoun and he drew attention to its similarity with the CONJUNCTION *that*. In the twenties, Jespersen explicitly stated that R-*that* WAS the conjunction and he was joined by Kruisinga and, to a lesser extent, by Deutschbein. Later, transformationalists devoted attention to the problem of the status of R-*that* and they soon agreed that R-*that* was a complementizer. As a matter of fact, EVERY grammarian of English, whatever his or her theoretical conviction, is confronted with the R-*that* problem. Thus the view that R-*that* is a complementizer is also found in Functional Grammar (Junger, 1981: 169–170). Conversely, the view that R-*that* is not a complementizer is found in Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech and Svartvik (1972: 730), Generalized Phrase Structure Grammar (Gazdar, 1981: 163), Realistic Syntax (Brame, 1980: 88), and in papers such as Bolinger (1972a) and Watts (1982).<sup>2</sup> In Sections 1–2 I discuss the arguments for the conjunction, particle, and complementizer hypotheses. In Section 3 I propose to treat R-*that* as a HIGHLY PRONOMINAL RELATIVIZER.

### 1. R-*THAT* IS NOT A RELATIVE PRONOUN, BUT A CONJUNCTION OR PARTICLE

Jespersen (1924: 85, 1926: 106–107, 1927: 165–168), Kruisinga (1924: 85, 1925: 164, 1927a: 29, 1927b: 199, 1934, 1935, 1937a, 1937b), and Deutschbein

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[1] This is an expansion of Van der Auwera (1984c). Thanks are due to the Berkeley Linguistics Society for allowing me to re-use that paper. For various reasons I am grateful to C. Braecke, J. Bruyndonx, X. Dekeyser, B. Downing, L. Goossens, A. R. Gregg, J. Kirby, R. Larson, M. Rydén, E. Smith and E. C. Traugott.

[2] Interestingly, Watts (1982) turns the hypothesis that R-*that* is a conjunction/complementizer upside down and claims that complement clause *that* is a pronoun. I do not think that this position is defensible, but it is a most forceful illustration of the way the *that* facts underdetermine their theories.

*et al.* (1926: 237) seemed to have independently<sup>3</sup> claimed that *R-that* was not a relative pronoun, as had been the traditional claim (Sweet, 1898: 80; Wendt, 1911: 213; Emerson, 1912: 335; and even Kruisinga, 1922: 453–455), but, in the words of Jespersen and Kruisinga, a conjunction, or, in the words of Deutschbein, a particle. In this section I discuss the original Jespersen–Kruisinga–Deutschbein arguments and whatever arguments and endorsements were given by later linguists in support of the Jespersen–Kruisinga–Deutschbein positions. I have tried to separate the arguments for the more general claim that *R-that* isn't a pronoun from the ones for the more particular claim that *R-that* is a conjunction or particle. Note that many of the facts that led Jespersen, Kruisinga, and Deutschbein to propose their non-pronoun hypotheses will only be dealt with up to the point that we can show these hypotheses to be INCORRECT. The CORRECT analysis will occupy me in Section 3.

### 1.1. *R-that* is not a relative pronoun.

In order to understand the claim that *R-that* is not a relative pronoun, one must know what a relative pronoun is or, better, what a relative pronoun is in present-day English. I take the following to be a fairly uncontroversial definition (cf. Lehman, 1984: 248–252) and I also claim that this is what the linguists to be discussed had in mind or presupposed. In present-day English a relative pronoun is a morpheme that fulfils three functions: (i) it signals subordination; (ii) it forms a noun or – I leave this open – a noun phrase out of the subordinate clause it signals or out of this clause and another noun (phrase) – its 'antecedent', which is to be the head of the 'higher' noun (phrase) (cf. Lehmann, 1984: 173); (iii) within the subordinate clause, it represents a noun phrase – the antecedent, if there is one – and it fulfils the syntactic function of a noun phrase (subject, direct object, etc.). Consider the sentence in (1).

- (1) The man *who* saw me was called Fred.

*who saw me* is subordinate; *who* combines *who saw me* with the noun (phrase) (*the*) *man* to give a new noun (phrase) (*the*) *man who saw me*; within *who saw me*, *who* represents *the man* and fulfils the function of subject. Hence this *who* is a relative pronoun. Consider now (2) and (3).

- (2) I believe *that* pronouns are useful.  
 (3) I met him in the street *where* I had met him before.

The *that* of (2) is not a relative pronoun, since it fails on the third criterion.

[3] On the independence of this claim, Kruisinga (1927b: 199) notes that 'It [= the claim that *R-that* is a conjunction] is evidently an idea that has been "in the air" for some time.' Jespersen's school grammar (1885) was written in Danish and didn't get any international attention, although it was a Nordic success (8 Danish editions and 2 different Swedish translations).

Even though it subordinates and makes a new noun (phrase), it does not have the syntactic function of a noun phrase. The *where* of (3) isn't a relative pronoun either. Though *where* subordinates and though it may perhaps be said to build a higher noun (phrase), it does not have the syntactic function of a noun phrase, but of a PREPOSITIONAL phrase (... *in the street* IN WHICH ...). This *where* can be called a 'relative ADVERB'. Both relative pronouns and relative adverbs are 'RELATIVIZERS'.

According to these three criteria, *who*, *whom*, *what*, *whose* and *which* are unquestionably relative pronouns. Of the nine arguments to be discussed in this subsection, four (Arguments 1, 6, 8, and 9) can be interpreted to deal with the question whether R-*that* fulfills the third criterion. The remaining arguments focus on what I take to be non-essential differences between R-*that* and WH-pronouns.

*Argument 1.* With certain relativized prepositional objects, relative clauses can start with the preposition immediately followed by the WH-relativizer or they can start with the WH-relativizer and have the preposition later on. In modern terminology, WH-relativizers allow both PIED PIPING and PREPOSITION STRANDING.

- (4) (a) This is the candidate *about whom* I have spoken.
- (b) This is the candidate *whom* I have spoken *about*.
- (5) (a) This is the book *in which* the paper has appeared.
- (b) This is the book *which* the paper has appeared *in*.

R-*that* only allows preposition stranding.

- (6) (a) \*This is the candidate *about that* I have spoken.
- (b) This is the candidate *that* I have spoken *about*.
- (7) (a) \*This is the book *in that* the paper has appeared.
- (b) This is the book *that* the paper has appeared *in*.

One assumes that a pronoun should be able to follow a preposition. Therefore the fact that R-*that* can't suggests that R-*that* isn't a pronoun. (Jespersen, 1924: 85, 1926: 106; Kruisinga, 1924: 142-143, 1925: 164, 1935: 296; Deutschbein, 1953: 223; Erades, 1955: 53; Lehmann, 1984: 107).

*Counterarguments.* First, from the fact that R-*that* can't follow prepositions, it doesn't follow that R-*that* isn't a relative pronoun AT ALL (Araki, 1958: 90; cf. also Horn, 1923: 72-73; Smith, 1982: 77). It may be the case that R-*that* isn't a relative pronoun IN ALL RESPECTS. More particularly, the third criterion requires R-*that* to act like a noun phrase. Perhaps R-*that* usually does that (viz. as subject, direct and indirect object, and prepositional object with a stranded preposition), but not always. Assuming that the use of notions like squish, fuzzy categories, prototype is sufficiently supported (see Karlsson (1983) for general defence and Lehmann (1984) for an application to the problems of relatives), one could say that R-*that* is not a perfect or

prototypical English relative pronoun or that it is not fully pronominal, though perhaps still highly pronominal. This is the point of view I will defend in Section 3. Second, the data about the distribution of prepositions and relativizers must be handled with care. If present-day English pronominal relativizers are to allow both pied piping and preposition stranding, then one should say that the WH-relativizers of infinitival and independent relatives are not pronominal. In infinitival relatives, Emonds (1976: 192) claims, only pied piping is allowed.

- (8) (a) I found an usher *from whom* to buy tickets.  
 (b) \*I found an usher *whom* to buy tickets *from*.

And Helgander (1971: 207–209, 268) has pointed out that independent relatives only allow preposition stranding.<sup>4</sup>

- (9) (a) They liked *whatever* they went *to*.  
 (b) \*They liked *to whatever* they went.

Third, Scholten (1934: 121–122) has drawn attention to the fact that no Dutch linguist would doubt that *die* and *dat* are relative pronouns, even though they cannot be preceded by prepositions.

- (10) (a) De man *die* me zag liep weg.  
 the man who me saw ran away  
 (b) De man *die* ik zag liep weg.  
 the man whom I saw ran away  
 (11) (a) Het boek *dat* me boeide was uitverkocht.  
 the book which me interested was sold out  
 (b) Het boek *dat* ik las was uitverkocht.  
 the book which I read was sold out  
 (10) (c) \*De man *aan die* ik het boek gaf liep weg.  
 the man to whom I the book gave ran away  
 (11) (c) \*Het boek *in dat* ik de foto vond was uitverkocht.  
 the book in which I the picture found was sold out

Instead of *aan die* and *in dat* Dutch requires the WH-forms *aan wie* or *waaraan* ‘whereto’, and *waarin* ‘wherein’.

- (10) (d) De man *aan wie/waaraan* ik het boek gaf liep weg.  
 (11) (d) Het boek *waarin* ik de foto vond was uitverkocht.

Note also that *die* and *dat* do not allow preposition stranding.

- (10) (e) \*De man *die* ik het boek *aan* gaf liep weg.  
 (11) (e) \*Het boek *dat* ik de foto *in* vond was uitverkocht.

[4] Independent relatives shouldn't be confused with embedded interrogatives, which DO allow pied piping (*I don't know to whom he spoke/who(m) he spoke to*).

To the extent that Dutch prepositional relatives allow preposition stranding, the relativizer must be a WH-form.

- (10) (f) De man \**wie/waar* ik het boek *aan* gaf liep weg.  
 (11) (f) Het boek *waar* ik de foto *in* vond was uitverkocht.

The point of all this is the following: if the Dutch non-WH-relativizers *die* and *dat* can be incontestably pronominal even though they allow neither pied piping nor preposition stranding, how then can one claim that the fact that R-*that* doesn't allow pied piping proves it to be non-pronominal?

*Argument 2.* The pronominal relativizers *who*, *whom*, *which*, and *what* are sensitive to gender. R-*that* isn't.

- (12) (a) The man *who*/\**which* attracts her...  
 (b) The book \**who/which* attracts her...  
 (13) He then scoured *what*/\**who* was left.  
 (14) The man/book *that* I like...

Hence R-*that* might not be a relative pronoun (Kruisinga, 1924: 141–143, 1934: 107–108, 1935: 296; Deutschbein, 1953: 223; Erades, 1955: 53).

*Counterarguments.* First, to some extent it is true that R-*that* isn't gender-sensitive, but neither is *whose* nor WAS *which* as strictly non-human as it is now (cp. Scholten, 1934: 119).

- (15) This is the man/book *whose* cover I dislike.  
 (16) Our father, *which* art in heaven...

Yet *whose* and the *which* of (16) are not said to be non-pronominal. Second, it isn't true that R-*that* is completely genderless. In his corpus of written British *who(m)*,  $\emptyset$ , and R-*that* relativizations of the thirties and forties, Malmberg (1947) found out that only 1.63 per cent of all human antecedents took R-*that*, while 88.98 per cent took *who(m)* (and 9.39 per cent  $\emptyset$ ). It further appears from Quirk's (1957: 106) study of spoken educated British of the fifties that R-*that* subject relatives prefer a non-human antecedent: the [+Human]/[–Human] ratio is 1/9.<sup>5</sup> Third, to stress the parallel with *whose*, *whose* isn't really genderless either: it is predominantly [+Human]. Fourth, to stress the parallel with *which*, in the earlier stages of the language, both *which* and R-*that* could freely take a human antecedent. Then both underwent a process of 'dehumanization' (Saito, 1961: 84–85; Dekeyser, 1984). In this

[5] With personal object relatives Quirk (1957: 107) found as many R-*that*'s as WH-forms. Quirk assumes that the relatively high frequency of R-*that* is due to a reluctance of speakers to use *whom*. Another thing is that object status prototypically correlates with a low degree of agency and that we find a similar correlation in the use of R-*that* in subject relatives: non-humans, R-*that*'s favourite type of antecedent, are typically low on the agency scale.

perspective, the difference in gender-sensitivity between present-day *which* and R-*that* need not be attributed to the ‘fact’ that *which* is a pronoun and R-*that* isn’t. It is more plausible to say that the dehumanization of *which* is completed – and was virtually completed by 1700 (Saito, 1961: 85; Dekeyser, 1984) – and that of R-*that* isn’t.

*Argument 3.* If R-*that* were pronominal, one would expect it to show number, like the demonstrative pronoun *that*.

- (17) (a) I want *that*.  
 (b) I want those.

Of course, R-*that* doesn’t show number.

- (18) (a) The book *that* I like . . .  
 (b) The books *that*/\**those* I like . . .

So R-*that* might not be pronominal (Jespersen, 1926: 106; Kruisinga, 1934: 107–108; Lehmann, 1984: 107).

*Counterarguments.* First, why expect R-*that* to show number, when neither *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *what*, nor *which* show number? Second, why should R-*that* be like the demonstrative pronoun *that* with respect to number; they aren’t alike with respect to gender either. Different from R-*that* and from the demonstrative adnominal *that*, pronominally demonstrative *that* is neuter.

*Argument 4.* The relative pronoun *who* shows case: its oblique forms are *whom* (objective) and *whose* (genitive). Historically speaking, *whose* is also the genitive of *what*. If R-*that* were like *who* and *what*, one would expect it to show case, too. It doesn’t; so perhaps it isn’t a pronoun (Kruisinga, 1934: 107–108).

*Counterarguments.* First, *which* doesn’t have any oblique forms of its own either, yet that doesn’t make it any less pronominal. Second, though *what* does have its genitive *whose*, the latter is not or no longer used as a free relative – as it should if it functioned as the genitive of *what*. (19) is a ‘rare’ nineteenth century example found by Jespersen (1927: 63).

- (19) I shall accept *whose* company I choose.

Yet *what* is no less pronominal for that matter. Third, even *who* is losing a part of its declension, viz. *whom*, without, again, losing its pronominal status. Fourth, though *which* doesn’t have a morphological genitive, it may be said to have *whose* as a SUPPLETIVE genitive. Indeed, *whose* can mean both ‘of whom’ and ‘of which’ (see (15)), which combined with the fact that R-*that* can mean both ‘who’ and ‘which’ opens the possibility for saying that R-*that* has *whose* as a suppletive genitive, too. Fifth, there is at least one dialect of

English, viz. Scots, in which R-*that* has developed a case marking. According to Jespersen (1927: 111) and Romaine (1980: 227), Scots has a genitive *that's*.

- (20) The dog *that's* leg has been broken...

*Argument 5.* In contradistinction to the WH-relativizers, R-*that* cannot be used in non-restrictive relatives.

- (21) Our secretary, *who*/\**that* is really rather good, keeps track of the money, too.

This aberrant behaviour suggests that R-*that* isn't a real pronoun (Kruisinga, 1924: 141-143, 1934: 108).

*Counterarguments.* First, it is simply incorrect that R-*that* cannot be used in non-restrictives (Scholten, 1934: 122). We can only say that there is a (strong) tendency not to use R-*that* in non-restrictives; Jacobsson (1963) has shown that non-restrictive R-*that* is much more frequent than is generally assumed. Second, the above tendency was not as strong in the earlier periods of English (Jespersen, 1927: 80, 154; Dekeyser, 1984). If a possibility to appear in non-restrictives is to correlate with greater pronominality, it follows that Kruisinga is committed to believing that R-*that* used to be more pronominal. In fact, Kruisinga doesn't believe this at all: he (1924: 143-144) believes that the ancestor of present-day R-*that* is a conjunction. Third, it is fully normal for a language to have more than one relativization strategy and to have distributional restrictions. It can be shown on independent grounds that the explanation of these restrictions has to do with a variety of factors: the morphological explicitness of the relativizer (Van der Auwera, 1983), the 'Accessibility Hierarchy' (Keenan & Comrie, 1977), and the need for a clause to have an overt subject (Van der Auwera, 1984a). The reason why R-*that* tends to stay out of non-restrictives may well be that the greater independence of a non-restrictive correlates with a greater need for morphological explicitness (Van der Auwera, 1983). Hence non-restrictives would prefer the morphologically more explicit forms *who*, *whom*, and *which* to R-*that*, and it furthermore makes sense that non-restrictives do not accept the morphologically most inexplicit  $\emptyset$  relativizer at all. An indirect indication for the correctness of this hypothesis is the fact that nominative *who* first developed in non-restrictives (Rydén, 1983; Van der Auwera, 1983; Dekeyser, 1984).

*Argument 6.* One can find (marginally acceptable) R-*that* relatives that contain a non-relative pronoun coreferential with the relativized constituent. (22) is an example from Jespersen (1927: 110) and (23) is a contemporary example from Downing (1973: 9) (repeated by Geoghegan, 1975: 60).

- (22) He's just the kind of fellow *that*, if everyone leaves him alone, *he'll* be content with five-and-twenty shillings for the rest of his life.



(23) That's the problem *that* I asked you to find out from Fred about *it*.

This pattern is most intelligible if one doesn't assume R-*that* to be pronominal and, therefore, the pattern itself to be DOUBLY pronominal (Jespersen, 1927: 109–110, 165–168).

*Counterarguments.* First, one can find relative clauses that contain a non-relative pronominal reflection of the relativized constituent and are introduced by WH-relativizers. The example below is Geoghegan's (1975: 60).

(24) I have to type the footnotes and the bibliography *which* I don't know how long *they're* going to be.

Interestingly enough, Jespersen (1927: 111) reports that he has found more such examples with *which* than with R-*that*. Second, this pattern is even found with *who*, especially when the non-relative pronoun is a possessive adnominal. The example is Jespersen's (1927: 112).

(25) ...the fellow *who* you don't know *his* name...

The basic point of all this is that nobody would use (24) and (25) as evidence for a claim that *which* and *who* are not pronominal. Why treat (22) and (23) differently?<sup>6</sup>

*Argument 7.* If R-*that* were pronominal, it would be possible to add something like *himself* to it. (Kruisinga, 1927a: 29, 1934: 109; Erades, 1955: 52).

(26) (a) I heard it from the lady { \**that* } *herself* was present.  
 (b) { *who* }

*Counterarguments.* First, Jespersen (1927: 168) sheds doubt on Kruisinga's argument the very year it appears. Perhaps it is hard for *himself* or *herself* immediately to follow R-*that*, but there is nothing wrong with (27).

(27) This is the man *that* has written the article *himself*.

Second, for some speakers, Smith (1982: 74) reports, even (26a) is (marginally) acceptable. I suspect that the reason why (26b) is better than (26a) is that the explicitly [+Human] *himself* and *herself* pattern better with the uniquely [+Human] *who* than with the genderless or, in subject function, predominantly [–Human] R-*that*.

[6] In this view, (22) to (24) are doubly pronominal. A double pronoun strategy facilitates comprehension and is therefore particularly useful for complex relatives such as (23) and (24), having a relative pronoun in the bridge clause and a non-relative one in the embedded clause. See Comrie (1981: 140) and Van der Auwera (1984a).

*Argument 8.* R-*that* can't be a pronoun, for it sometimes means the same as *on/in/at which* (Kruisinga, 1924: 141–143, 1934: 108, 1935; Jespersen, 1927: 162; Deutschbein, 1953: 223).

(28) (a) I remember the day { *that* } he came.  
 (b) { *on which* }

(29) (a) We parted in the same cordial fashion { *that* } we had met.  
 (b) { *in which* }

*Counterargument.* The interchangeability of R-*that* and *on/in/at which* is no less compatible with the idea that R-*that* isn't fully pronominal or with the idea that there are two R-*that*'s, a pronominal and an adverbial one (cf. Scholten, 1935: 120). Of course, these proposals will have to be made plausible on other grounds (see Section 3), but this is no less the case for the hypothesis that R-*that* isn't a pronoun at all.

*Argument 9.* Pronominal *that*, as exemplified in (17a)

(17) (a) I want *that*.

is neuter. If R-*that* were pronominal, a clause such as (30) would be impossible, for *the man* forces would-be pronominal R-*that* to be masculine.

(30) ...the man *that* broke the window...

Hence, R-*that* isn't pronominal (Erades, 1955: 54–55).

*Counterargument.* Instead of saying that pronominal *that* is neuter one could hold that only the demonstrative pronominal *that* is neuter. The idea that demonstrative *that* and R-*that* are substantially different is further supported by the fact that only demonstrative *that* is sensitive to number (see Argument 3).

The general conclusion is that though the above arguments concern a number of interesting peculiarities of R-*that* and though these peculiarities are compatible with the hypothesis that R-*that* isn't a pronoun, they DO NOT ENTAIL this hypothesis. Let us now see whether the more specific hypothesis that R-*that* is a conjunction or particle fares any better.

### 1.2. R-*that* is a conjunction or particle.

Though the claim that R-*that* is a conjunction or particle has just been called 'specific', in another sense it is still vague. Traditional grammar was seldom if ever precise when it came to such minor categories as particles. Particles were subdivided in three or four groups: prepositions, conjunctions, adverbs, and, sometimes, interjections (see Sweet, 1898: 37; Emerson, 1912: 387–395; Jespersen, 1924: 87). Given this typology, it is clear that if R-*that* is a particle,

it must be a conjunction, for it definitely isn't an interjection, preposition, or adverb (see Jespersen, 1927: 165). It is left vague what type of conjunction it is. There simply isn't any typology of conjunctions. Thus it is left vague whether R-*that* is the SAME as the conjunction *that* found in complement clauses, henceforth 'C-*that*' or whether the two *that*'s are only SIMILAR. In other words, it is unclear whether R-*that* and C-*that* are seen as uses of the one conjunction *that* or whether English has two *that* conjunctions, a relativizer and a 'complementizer'.

There is indirect evidence that Kruisinga and Jespersen held the former view. When traditional grammarians call a particle 'relative', they obviously call it 'relative particle', but not 'relative conjunction'. Though the introduction of the term 'relative particle' is at odds with the idea that particles subdivide in three or four categories, it does suggest that relative particles are not conjunctions and that conjunctions are not relative. Thus we can understand how Kruisinga (1924) could consistently write that Old English *þe* was a relative particle, and modern R-*that* a conjunction. Given that Kruisinga didn't use his notion of non-conjunctive 'relative particle' for R-*that*, and given his failure to distinguish between subtypes of conjunctions, we may assume that Kruisinga took R-*that* to be the same as C-*that*. The same can be said about Jespersen. He too calls *þe* a 'relative particle' (Jespersen, 1927: 80) and modern R-*that* a 'conjunction' (Jespersen, 1927: 165), which suggests that Jespersen saw no difference between R-*that* and C-*that*. Ten years later, Jespersen was explicit on this point; R-*that* 'is to be regarded as the same word that we have in "I know that you mentioned the man"' (Jespersen (1937) quoted from Jespersen, 1969: 151).

Of linguists that call R-*that* a 'relative particle' rather than a 'conjunction', we can safely assume that they do not think that R-*that* is the same as C-*that*. Deutschbein, for example, does have the category of conjunction and it is used for C-*that* (Deutschbein, 1953: 260), but for R-*that* 'relative particle' is used (Deutschbein, 1953: 223; cf. also Stevick, 1965: 31; Helgander, 1971: 271–280). Zandvoort (1972: 197), implicitly endorsed by Araki (1958) and Masuya (1958), calls R-*that* a 'relative particle', too, i.e. something 'intermediate between a relative pronoun and a conjunction'.

Though a relative particle can be given the NEGATIVE characterization that it is not a conjunction, it is dangerous to give it a POSITIVE characterization. There is never any explicit definition, but from the use that is made of the term I gather that a relative particle is thought of as a non-pronominal, invariant, clause-introductory relativizer.<sup>7</sup> The difference with a conjunction is that the latter simply isn't a relativizer. Otherwise, a conjunction and a relative particle are the same. Conjunctions are also non-pronominal and invariant – in English at least – and they introduce their clause.<sup>8</sup>

[7] Deutschbein (1953: 223) makes the obscure remark that a relative particle is 'adjectival' in nature, while a relative pronoun is 'nominal'.

[8] This is still the case in the *that* of *in that*, *save that*, and *except that*, if we may analyse them as *in/save/except* [<sub>s</sub>*that* [<sub>s</sub>... ]<sub>s</sub>].

Because the arguments listed in 1.1 concern the fact that R-*that* is clause-introductory (Argument 1), invariant (Arguments 2 to 4) and, in general, non-pronominal (Arguments 1 to 9), they can all be interpreted as evidence for the hypothesis that R-*that* is a conjunction or relative particle. Unfortunately, this reinterpretation doesn't diminish the force of the counterarguments.

There are some additional arguments; they all serve the hypothesis that R-*that* is the same as C-*that*.<sup>9</sup>

*Argument 10.* While demonstrative *that* is pronounced with a full vowel, C-*that* has a weak vowel. In this respect, R-*that* is like C-*that* (Jespersen, 1885: 32–33, 1926: 106, 1927: 165; Kruisinga, 1924: 142–143; Erades, 1955: 55).

*Counterarguments.* First, as Araki (1958: 86) (see also Kruisinga & Erades, 1960: 470; Zandvoort, 1972: 197; Smith, 1982: 73) points out, the relative WH-forms have weaker stress than their interrogative 'homophones'. Nobody would dream of saying that this indicates that the relative WH-forms are really conjunctions. It seems to me that it is better to say that English relativizers, both the WH-forms and R-*that*, are inherently weakly stressed. Second, Smith (1982: 73) has observed something about the stress of R-*that* that documents the difference between C-*that* and R-*that*: only C-*that* allows contrastive stress.

- (31) I know *THAT* you mentioned the man, not *WHEN*.  
 (32) ?I know the man *THAT* you mentioned, not *WHOM*.

The *THAT* of (32) is only interpretable as 'metalinguistic stress', meaning something like 'the word I have just used but that you haven't heard or understood is *that*'.

*Argument 11.* Both R-*that* and C-*that* are deletable; if we say that they are the same, we arrive at a generalization (Jespersen, 1885: 33, 1924: 85, 1927: 165; Klima, 1964: 6; Lehmann, 1984: 228).

- (33) (a) I know  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  Antwerp has a harbor.  
 (b)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$   
 (34) (a) I know the man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  you've mentioned.  
 (b)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$

[9] Deutschbein (1953: 223) makes a remark that may be intended to support his relative particle analysis. If it is not, it must be a consequence of his more general claim that R-*that* is not a pronoun. In any case, I do not understand the remark. It merely says that his analysis explains why R-*that* can function as a predicate nominal, as in *Even his dog could see the sort of man that he was*.

*Counterarguments.* First, the deletion conditions for C-*that* and R-*that* are different. For C-*that*, Bolinger (1972b: 18–23; cp. Jespersen, 1927: 33; McDavid, 1964) draws attention to the frequency of the main verb: deletion would be easier for high-frequency verbs such as *know* (in (33)) than for low-frequency ones such as *snigger* (in (35)).

- (35) He sniggered *that*/? $\emptyset$  it was easy.

Another factor might be the presence of an indirect object (Bolinger, 1972b: 23–24).

- (36) (a) He wired *her*  $\emptyset$  he was coming.  
 (b) ?He wired  $\emptyset$  he was coming.

In any case, what is relevant for the deletion of R-*that* and TOTALLY IRRELEVANT for that of C-*that* is whether the relativized constituent is the subject of the relative clause.

- (37) (a) There is a man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  wants to speak to you.  
 (b)

- (38) (a) I met the woman  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ * \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  loves John.  
 (b)

For subjects ‘zero’ or ‘contact clause’ relativization has a highly restricted function. In a sentence such as (38b) it is impossible, and in a small number of patterns exemplified in (37b) it serves a very specific focussing function and is typically colloquial (see Erdmann, 1980; Van der Auwera, 1984b). Second, there is no reason why the  $\emptyset$  of relative clauses is any more an absence of R-*that* than of WH-relativizers.

- (34) (c) I know the man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{who(m)} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  you’ve mentioned.  
 (b)

- (37) (c) There is a man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{who} \\ \emptyset \end{array} \right\}$  wants to speak to you.  
 (b)

If one is allowed to draw attention to the PARTIAL similarity between the absence of R-*that* and C-*that*, then one must surely take account of the COMPLETE similarity between the absence of R-*that* and *who*, *whom* and *which*.

*Argument 12.* Under the assumption that R-*that* is a conjunction, (34a) must be considered to have no overt object. Similarly, (37a) and (38a) must be said to lack overt subjects. This allows for a generalization over both R-*that* and  $\emptyset$  relatives, for the latter may exhibit the very same absence of overt objects or subjects (Jespersen, 1927: 166–167; Krusinga, 1927a: 29, 1937: 142).

*Counterargument.* Because of the differences between subject relative clauses with R-*that* and with Ø, which I have drawn attention to in countering Argument 11, it is far from obvious that one should generalize.

*Argument 13.* Kruisinga (1924: 141–143) defends a concept of clause such that a relative pronoun is part of a clause, but a conjunction isn't – a conjunction stands BETWEEN two or more clauses and connects them. In independent relatives, the real or alleged relative pronoun 'MUST be looked upon as a part of the subordinate clause' (Kruisinga, 1924: 143). It appears now that independent relatives allow WH-pronouns, but not R-*that*, except for some archaisms.

- (39) (a) He will take  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{what} \\ \textit{*that} \end{array} \right\}$  you offer him.

(b) Handsome is *that* handsome does.

Connectedly, Erades (1955: 53) points out, WH-relativizers have compound forms in *-ever* (*whoever*, etc.), but R-*that* doesn't (*\*thatever*). This is exactly what the hypothesis that R-*that* is a conjunction makes one expect.

*Counterarguments.* First, one probably wouldn't want to claim that *who* and *which* – without *-ever* or a similar mark of genericity (see Jespersen, 1927: 62–63) – are conjunctive just because they are rare and literary in independent relatives (cf. Scholten, 1934: 120).

(41) *Who* steals my purse steals trash.

(42) Choose *which* you will.

Second, Kruisinga's line of thought doesn't throw any light on why *what* doesn't normally occur in dependent relatives (cp. Jespersen (1927: 130) on 'vulgar' and 'dialectal' *what*).

(43) The book *what* I have read...

In sum, the distributional properties of R-*that*, *who*, *which*, *what* and their forms in *-ever* have to be explained, but the mere claim that conjunctions cannot introduce independent relatives is insufficient. Basically, the reason why independent relatives are the habitat of the WH-forms is that this is the context in which they first developed their relative use (see Helgander, 1971: 200–270); R-*that* never really settled in it.

*Argument 14.* R-*that* wouldn't be the only relative conjunction. Other such conjunctions are *as*, *but*, and *than* (Kruisinga, 1924: 143, 1937: 142–143; Jespersen, 1927: 168–182; Smith, 1982: 79, 110).

(44) He was such a listener *as* most musicians would be glad to welcome.

(45) There was not one *but* had been guilty of some act of oppression.

(46) He offers more *than* could be expected.

Kruisinga (1924: 143) also points to dialects that employ *at* as both C-*that* and R-*that*.

*Counterargument.* Sentences (44) to (46) do not explain anything; instead they HAVE TO BE EXPLAINED. Perhaps one will have to posit both a C-*as* and an R-*as*, etc., just as one has to posit both a C-*that* and an R-*that*. Besides, an analysis of *as*, *but*, and *than* may give us a HINT about the status of *that*, but not the final answer.

*Argument 15.* It is most plausible that present-day R-*that* derives from a conjunction, a fact that is perfectly compatible with the hypothesis that it still is a conjunction (Kruisinga, 1924: 143–144; Jespersen, 1927: 166–167; Klima, 1964: 6).

*Counterargument.* I agree that R-*that* derives from a conjunction (see Section 3). But languages change. The fact that the ancestor of R-*that* was a conjunction doesn't prove that it still is one.

*Argument 16.* Kruisinga and Jespersen offer comparative evidence. Kruisinga (1924: 142) points out that certain non-prepositional adverbial relatives in German and Dutch may be assumed to employ a conjunction. (47) is Dutch.

- (47) In de week *dat* Jan toekwam was iedereen bezig.  
in the week that John arrived was everybody busy

Like English *that*, Dutch *dat* is ambiguous between a conjunction, a demonstrative pronoun, and a relative pronoun, but, in contradistinction to English, the relative pronoun is exclusively neuter. As Dutch *week* is feminine and as the feminine relative alternating with relative *dat* is *die*, it is plausible to assume that the *dat* of (47) is a conjunction.<sup>10</sup>

As to Jespersen, he (1885: 33, 1927: 168) refers to 'vulgar Danish', which allows relative clauses with what seems to be the conjunction *at*.

- (48) Den mand *at* du talte om...  
the man that you spoke about

*Counterarguments.* First, one doesn't need Dutch or German to see that the relativizer in a sentence such as (47) constitutes a problem – see Argument 8. Second, the facts of Dutch, German, or Danish do not prove anything about English. Languages differ. So even if Dutch, German, or 'vulgar Danish' have a conjunctive R-*that*, English needn't have one yet. Similarly, English R-*that* isn't exclusively neuter just because the Dutch relative pronoun *dat* is (cf. Erades's mistake in Argument 9).

[10] This is a corrected version of the Kruisinga argument. Kruisinga mistakenly implies that Dutch has no relative *dat*.

*Argument 17.* Kruisinga (1935: 196, 1937: 142) explains the fact that *R-that* is fairly rare in non-restrictive relatives (see Argument 5) with the hypothesis that non-restrictive relatives are not truly subordinate. Hence they would not accept any subordinating conjunctions, hence no *R-that*, if at least one takes it to be a subordinating conjunction.

*Counterargument.* As Smith (1982: 77) and Lehmann (1984: 270–280) argue, the hypothesis about the status of non-restrictive relative clauses is incorrect: non-restrictives ARE subordinate.

The general conclusion is not very different from that of I.I: Deutschbein, Jespersen, and Kruisinga must be credited for drawing attention to a large number of idiosyncrasies of *R-that*, not, however, for having proved that *R-that* is a relative particle or conjunction.

## 2. R-THAT IS NOT A RELATIVE PRONOUN, BUT A COMPLEMENTIZER

There are various kinds of conjunctions. The big division is that between subordinating and coordinating conjunctions. *C-that*, as in (49), is always a subordinator.

- (49) (a) I know *that* the world is flat.  
 (b) *That* the world is flat is demonstrated by Columbus.  
 (c) The idea *that* the world is flat proves to be correct.

Because there is a big difference between *C-that* and subordinators such as *when* and *although*, it would seem useful to have a special term for *C-that*-like subordinators. Rosenbaum (1967) suggested the term ‘complementizer’ and his suggestion was well received.

In a sense, it was too well received. When a term becomes popular, investigators often appropriate it in their own ways. In the case of ‘complementizer’, an influential user has been Bresnan (1970, 1972, 1974), but she has widened the meaning of the term considerably. As a result, we now have a narrow, Rosenbaum definition as well as a broad, Bresnan definition, a general confusion (cf. Goldsmith, 1981: 551; Smith, 1982: 10–11, 26–27), and at least one ‘in-between’ position. To the extent that one definition dominates, it may be Bresnan’s.

In Rosenbaum’s original proposal, a complementizer is the kind of subordinating conjunction that introduces a clause (the ‘complement’ or ‘complement clause’) that is embedded under an NP or VP in the manner illustrated in (49). For Bresnan (1970, 1972, 1974), however, ‘complementizer’ is synonymous with ‘clause-introducing particle’, ‘clause particle’, or ‘clause-making morpheme’. In her perspective, every clause has a ‘COMP(lementizer)’ node.

- (50)  $\bar{S} \rightarrow \text{COMP S}$

Now a complementizer will introduce other things besides complements, and



complementizers need not be subordinators any more. Some later linguists (Downing, 1973; Geoghegan, 1975; Stahlke, 1976; Lightfoot, 1979: 314; Romaine, 1981; Smith, 1982: 35–36) have chosen the ‘in-between’ option of making ‘complementizer’ synonymous with ‘subordinator’.

complementizer = clause particle (clause conjunction)  
(Bresnan)

complementizer = subordinator (i.e. a kind of clause particle)  
(Downing, etc.)

complementizer = complement-introducer (i.e. a kind of subordinator)  
(Rosenbaum)

Despite modern proclivities, my preference goes to the original definition. The trouble with rule (50) for English is that a main clause never has any overt Bresnan complementizer.

(51) \**That* John loves Mary.

(52) \**Whether* mother is at home?

Hence one needs a rule that obligatorily deletes COMP or leaves it empty (see Bresnan, 1972: 39; Radford, 1981: 172). It seems to me that one should avoid rules that introduce things that MUST be deleted. Of course, I do not deny that there are particles that introduce main clauses. In particular, there are languages in which the literal translation of (52) is grammatical. An example of Radford’s (1981: 173) is the Latvian *yes–no* question.

(53) *Vai māte mājā?*  
whether mother at home

My objection is that we have enough terms to refer to things like *vai*. Call it ‘performative/speech act/mood operator’, ‘sentence qualifier’, or just ‘clause particle’. Why use the term ‘complementizer’? Potential answer: to generalize over the fact that in Latvian both dependent and independent questions use a *vai* morpheme. Rejoinder: this generalization can be captured equally well with any of the above mentioned terms. To a large extent, the choice between Rosenbaum and Bresnan – and any in-between position – is a terminological matter. I think that Bresnan’s notion of complementizer is unnecessary. The same goes for the in-between notion synonymous with ‘subordinator’: the best term for what is generally known as ‘subordinator’ or ‘subordinating conjunction/particle’ is, VERY TRIVIALY, ‘subordinator’ or ‘subordinating conjunction/particle’. As to Rosenbaum’s notion, however, I think there is a real need for the division of subordinators as effectuated by the invention of his notion (cf. De Geest, 1973: 141). Hence I will remain faithful to Rosenbaum.

Another reason for the above terminological decision is that all the

arguments concerning clause particles that I have to discuss in what follows happen to concern those clause particles that are complementizers (in the Rosenbaum sense). Thus all these arguments, whether originally stated in terms of Rosenbaum complementizers, clause particles (Bresnan complementizers) or something in-between, can be represented simply in terms of (Rosenbaum) complementizers. What now are these arguments? They all reassert the old Jespersen–Kruisinga claim that *R-that* is not a relative pronoun, but a conjunction, as the claim that *R-that* is not a relative pronoun, but a complementizer.

2.1. *R-that is not a relative pronoun.*

All but two of the old arguments reappear. Sometimes they are presented as new, the reason being that the moderns are not always well informed about the heated discussions of the twenties and thirties. Of the classical authors on *R-that*, only Jespersen is still widely read; Kruisinga is vaguely remembered; Deutschbein, Scholten, and such protagonists as Horn and Johansen – to be mentioned in Section 3 – are totally forgotten. The list below gives an idea of the continuing appeal of Arguments 1 to 9.

*Argument 1:* Bresnan (1970: 318, 1972: 43, 1977: 175), Gregg (1972: 53), Morgan (1972: 70), Downing (1973: 7–8), Geoghegan (1975: 31), Emonds (1976: 142), Stahlke (1976: 588–589), and Lightfoot (1979: 314) (cp. also Maxwell, 1982: 146–147)

*Argument 2:* Gregg (1972: 53) and Downing (1973: 6–7)

*Argument 3:* Morgan (1972: 70), Downing (1973: 6–7), Stahlke (1976: 592), and Lightfoot (1979: 315–316)

*Argument 4:* Gregg (1972: 53), Downing (1973: 6–7), Geoghegan (1975: 32), and Smith (1982: 37)

*Argument 5:* Gregg (1972: 53), Downing (1973: 10), Stahlke (1976: 588), and Lightfoot (1979: 316)

*Argument 6:* Downing (1973: 9–10), Geoghegan (1975: 31–32), Stahlke (1976: 591, 599–600), Lightfoot (1979: 315), and Smith (1982: 80)

*Argument 8:* Downing (1973: 11–12), Schachter (1973: 27), and Larson (1983)

The transformationalists' endorsements or rediscoveries do not make these arguments any stronger. Then there are six new arguments.

*Argument 18.* The WH-forms are also used as interrogatives. Both in interrogative and in relative clauses, these forms are clearly pronominal. *R-that* doesn't have an interrogative use, which suggests that it is not pronominal (Gregg, 1972: 53; Downing, 1973: 7; Smith, 1982: 25, 77; cf. also Bresnan, 1977: 175).

*Counterargument.* Old English *se-seo-þæt*, Modern Dutch *die-dat*, and Modern German *der-die-das* are clearly pronominal relativizers. They do not have an interrogative use, yet nobody would want to claim that this suggests that they are not really pronominal. Though I admit that no fact of Old English, Modern Dutch, or Modern German proves anything about Modern English, one should nevertheless think twice before attributing the fact that *R-that* doesn't have an interrogative use to its non-pronominality.

*Argument 19.* The WH-relativizers are morphophonemically similar and they are all pronominal. *R-that* is morphophonemically different. Perhaps it isn't a pronoun (Gregg, 1972: 53; Smith, 1982: 25).

*Counterargument.* For a very short time, when Old English was becoming Middle English, English had two sets of pronominal relativizers: the *se-seo-þæt* pronouns, which were falling out of use, and the upcoming WH-pronouns (cf. Dekeyser, 1983). The two systems were morphophonemically distinct, but no less pronominal. A situation of two morphophonemically distinct, pronominal systems still prevails in Modern Dutch, German, and French. There is no reason why it couldn't prevail in Modern English.

*Argument 20.* While WH-relativizers can occur in infinitival relatives, *R-that* can't.

- (54) (a) John built himself a shed in *which* to keep his marbles.  
 (b) \*John built himself a shed *that* to keep his marbles in.

This fact is totally mysterious if we assume that *R-that* is pronominal (Stahlke, 1976: 592).

*Counterarguments.* First, WH-forms can't be used for the infinitival relativization of subjects and objects.

- (55) \*I am looking for a woman *who* to love me.  
 (56) \*I am looking for a woman *whom* to love.

Surely, the unacceptability of (55) and (56) will not be used to claim that *who* and *whom* are not pronominal. So why treat *R-that* differently? Second, infinitival relativization with overt morphemes is only possible for prepositional objects, and then only pied piping is allowed (cf. Argument 1).

- (8) (a) I found an usher *from whom* to buy tickets.  
 (b) \*I found an usher *whom* to buy tickets *from*.

*R-that* doesn't allow pied piping, and this is why it can't occur in infinitival relatives.

*Argument 21.* It was stated in Argument 6 that the R-*that* of (23) couldn't be pronominal.

(23) That's the problem *that* I asked you to find out from Fred about *it*.

Stahlke (1976: 601–604) makes the cross-linguistic observation that such structures are by no means rare. All the more reason then to doubt that R-*that* is a pronoun.

*Counterarguments.* First, cross-linguistically speaking, one also frequently finds the pattern of an unquestionably relative pronoun followed by a non-relative pronoun, both coreferential with the relativized constituent (cf. the first counterargument to Argument 6). Here is an example from colloquial Dutch, which parallels example (25):

(57) De man *die zijn vader ik gezien heb* . . .  
the man who his father I seen have

Second, languages differ. English R-*that* may well have pronominal status, while something that is similar in some other language may not.

*Argument 22.* Cleft prepositional phrases allow R-*that*, while WH-forms are unacceptable or, at least, less acceptable.

- (58) (a) It's *with Mary that* I was sitting {  $\emptyset$  }  
 (b) { *with* }  
 (c) ?? It's *with Mary who(m)* I was sitting {  $\emptyset$  }  
 (d) ?? { *with* }  
 (e) ?? It's *with Mary with whom* I was sitting.

If relative pronouns such as *who(m)* are problematic, the possibly pronominal R-*that* should behave in the same way. Yet R-*that* behaves differently. So perhaps it isn't pronominal (Bresnan, 1977: 1979; Smith, 1982: 26).

*Counterargument.* The relative unacceptability of the WH-forms can be explained in another way. First, (58c) is out, because *who(m)*, different from R-*that*, cannot 'incorporate' the meaning of a preposition and be adverbial – see Section 3 on adverbial R-*that*. Second, the reason (58d) is marginal may have something to do with the general aversion to using *whom* (cf. note 5) and with the particular aversion to *who* when one has used a preposition to indicate that the relativized constituent is a prepositional phrase. Third, another factor may be that the repetition of *with* gives it an objectionable redundancy. This factor seems to be more clearly at work in (58e). Fowler (1965: 312) would call *with...with...* a 'pleonasm' due to 'haziness' (cf. also

Fowler & Fowler, 1931: 115; Higgins, 1976: 26; Smith, 1982: 26). That there is nothing inherently hazy about (58e) is suggested by the fact that corresponding constructions used to be acceptable in French and still are in Spanish (Jespersen, 1969: 78). Fourth, note also that WH-forms are good or better when the antecedent is a noun phrase.<sup>11</sup>

- (58) (f) It's Mary { *that* } I was sitting *with*.  
 (g) { *who(m)* }  
 (h) { *with whom* I was sitting. }

(58g) and (58h) lack the redundant repetition of the preposition.

*Argument 23.* Downing (1973: 18, 25) claims that predicate nominals do not allow WH-relatives.

- (59) (a) Ann isn't half the woman { \**who* } she used to be.  
 (b) { \**which* }  
 (c) { *that* }

According to Downing, the unacceptability of (59a) and (59b) follows from the general restriction that predicate nominals cannot be pronominalized.

- (60) \*John was president, and Fred was *it*, too.

If R-*that* were pronominal, one would expect (59c) to be ungrammatical, too.

*Counterargument.* Downing's views on (59b) are probably mistaken or not representative; I think that the claims of Poutsma (1916: 963–964), Kruisinga (1925: 165–166), Jespersen (1927: 123–124), Curme (1935: 164), and Deutschbein (1953: 223) are still valid: predicate nominals CAN be relativized with *which*. The reason why both R-*that* and *which*, but not *who*, are acceptable is, as Jespersen (1924: 242–243; 1927: 123–124, 156) points out, that predicate nominals are felt to be neuter. Compare:

- (61) *What* is he? Just *nothing* at all as yet.

No wonder that neuter predicate nominals accept neuter *which* and predominantly neuter subject R-*that* (cf. Argument 2).

The general conclusion is again a negative one. The case for the non-pronominality of R-*that* is as shaky as it was sixty years ago.

## 2.2 R-*that* is a complementizer.

Basically, all the arguments for the conjunction/particle hypothesis reappear as arguments for the complementizer hypothesis.

[11] Sentences like (58h) are accepted by Fowler and Fowler (1931: 112) and by Akmajian (1979: 67), but Quirk, Leech, Greenbaum and Svartvik (1972: 953) are sceptical. I haven't seen any judgements on (58g).

*Argument 10:* Downing (1973: 6–7), Geoghegan (1975: 32), and Lightfoot (1979: 315)

*Argument 11:* Gregg (1972: 52), Downing (1973: 7), and Stahlke (1976: 592, 596–597)

*Argument 12:* Stahlke (1976: 587–588)

*Argument 13:* Geoghegan (1975: 32) and Lightfoot (1979: 315)

*Argument 14:* Downing (1973: 13–14) and Bresnan (1977: 174–186)

*Argument 15:* Downing (1973: 21–24) and Geoghegan (1975)

*Argument 17:* Downing (1973: 3, 10–11) and Geoghegan (1975: 66–67)

A variation on Argument 14, which draws attention to the existence of relativizing *as*, *but*, and *than*, is offered by Gregg (1972: 60) and Bresnan (1970: 318, 1972: 43) (see also Smith, 1982: 25). They point out that infinitival relatives may be introduced by what they call the ‘complementizer’ *for*.

- (62) (a) The weapons with *which* to practice. . .  
 (b) The weapons *for* us to practice with. . .

Even the complementizer *poss*, Gregg (1972: 60) points out, is used in relative clauses.

- (63) He likes *running* a business.  
 (64) Anybody *running* a business has to work.

The counterarguments are, again, (i) that it is far from clear what the status of *for* or *poss* is, and (ii) that a decision on *for* or *poss* does not entail any decision on R-*that*.

Bresnan (1970: 318, 1972: 43) and Stahlke (1976: 608–609) expand on Argument 16 by pointing out that there are many languages in which the declarative complementizer and the invariant relativizer are homophonous or, better, identical. The counterargument is double. First, one also finds languages in which the invariant relativizer is not homophonous or identical with the declarative complementizer. Examples of such relativizers are Scandinavian *som*, Malagasy *izay* (see Keenan, 1972: 171), Yiddish *vos* (see Lowenstamm, 1977), and even Old English *þe*. Second, in the end, cross-linguistic considerations are secondary. Of primary importance for a decision on English R-*that* are the facts on English R-*that*.

There is one new argument.

*Argument 24.* That R-*that* is the same as C-*that* is suggested by the fact that both allow extraposition (Gregg, 1972: 52–53; Smith, 1982: 24–25).

- (65) (a) Anything *that* Momma cooks is good.  
 (b) Anything is good *that* Momma cooks.  
 (66) (a) The fact *that* Oklahoma played a good game is not surprising.  
 (b) The fact is not surprising *that* Oklahoma played a good game.

*Counterarguments.* First, WH-relativizers allow extraposition, too.

- (67) No collection would be complete *which* didn't include Puccini's *Turandot*.

Surely nobody will argue that *which* is really a complementizer. So why treat R-*that* differently? Second, C-*that* and R-*that* have different extraposition conditions. One of the factors for C-*that*, but not for R-*that*, for example, seems to be factivity. Generally speaking, factive predicates allow an extraposed and a non-extraposed rendering, while non-factives require extraposition (see Kiparsky & Kiparsky, 1973: 317; Reis, 1977: 187).

- (68) (a) *That* there are porcupines in our basement *makes sense to me*.  
 (b) *It makes sense to me that* there are porcupines in our basement.  
 (69) (a) \**That* there are porcupines in our basement *seems to me*.  
 (b) *It seems to me that* there are porcupines in our basement.

### 3. R-THAT IS A HIGHLY PRONOMINAL RELATIVIZER

#### 3.1 R-*that* is a relativizer.

The proponents of the view that R-*that* is the same as C-*that* deny that R-*that* is a relativizer, i.e. that it conveys 'relativeness'. Thus they must show that something other than R-*that* is responsible for the relative clause meaning. This 'something' can only be the fact that a relative clause with R-*that* is like one with a WH-relativizer, except that there is no WH-relativizer; in other words, this 'something' is the  $\emptyset$  relativizer. In this perspective (70a) is analysed as (70b) or (70c).

- (70) (a) I like the man *that* you've seen.  
 (b) I like the man { *that*  $\emptyset$  } you've seen.  
 (c) {  $\emptyset$  *that* }

With respect to object relativizations, this suggestion carries some plausibility, for  $\emptyset$  is indeed sufficient.

- (70) (d) I like the man  $\emptyset$  you've seen.

Not so for the subject relativization, however. In (71a)  $\emptyset$  is insufficient.

- (71) (a) \*I like the man  $\emptyset$  has seen you.

Add R-*that* and the relative clause meaning is unambiguously clear.

- (71) (b) I like the man *that* has seen you.

Hence, in SUBJECT relativizations R-*that* is a relativizer.

There are at least two reasons to think that R-*that* is no less of a relativizer in OBJECT relativizations. For one thing, R-*that* can be substituted by WH-relativizers in subject and object relatives alike.

- (71) (b) I like the man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \textit{who} \end{array} \right\}$  has seen you.  
 (c)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \textit{who} \end{array} \right\}$  has seen you.  
 (70) (a) I like the man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \textit{who(m)} \end{array} \right\}$  you've seen.  
 (e)  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \textit{who(m)} \end{array} \right\}$  you've seen.

For another thing, given the analyses in (70b) and (70c), and given that  $\emptyset$  is interchangeable with WH-relativizers, there is no reason why the following shouldn't be grammatical.

- (70) (f) \*I like the man  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{that} \\ \textit{who(m)} \end{array} \right\}$  you've seen.  
 (g) \*  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{who(m)} \\ \textit{that} \end{array} \right\}$  you've seen.

Of course, (70f) and (70g) are ungrammatical,<sup>12</sup> which suggests that R-*that* is itself a relativizer.

The claim that R-*that* is a relativizer still allows for the Deutschbein position that R-*that* is a relative particle. I now come to the pronominality issue.

### 3.2. R-*that* is highly pronominal.

3.2.1. Is it strange that R-*that*, if pronominal, is invariant? No. English only has vestiges of (pro)nominal declensions. As to WH-pronouns, I have already remarked that *which* is invariant, that the *what-whose* connection is virtually lost, and that the *who-whom* contrast is breaking down. Furthermore, given the claim – to be argued in 3.2.2. – that R-*that* originated as a conjunction only to become a pronoun later on, it would be strange if it acquired a declension, when the general 'drift' of English was one of losing declensions. True, the genitive is still strong, but then R-*that* can be said to have a suppletive genitive in *whose* and there is at least one dialect (Scots) in which R-*that* has developed a morphological genitive (*that's*).

Suppose then that R-*that* is a pronoun. It certainly makes it easy to understand why R-*that* is so often replaceable by pronominal *who*, *whom*, or *which*. It also sheds some explanatory light on the problem why R-*that* is hard to omit in subject relatives. Present-day English is very strict about the rule that each finite clause have its overt subject. Under the pronoun hypothesis, R-*that* subject relativizations have their overt subject in R-*that*;  $\emptyset$  subject relativizations, on the other hand, do not have an overt subject. Thus  $\emptyset$  subject relativizations go against a very strong generalization, and this can only happen under special pragmatic conditions (see Erdmann, 1980; Van der Auwera, 1984b).

3.2.2. So far I have suggested that R-*that* is pronominal. I will now refine this and say that R-*that* is NOT FULLY pronominal, but ONLY HIGHLY pronominal. The hedge in 'highly' takes us back to the fact that R-*that* can't follow a preposition.

[12] The WH-pronoun + *that* pattern was grammatical in Middle English. See Sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.



- (72) (a) ...the man to {*whom*} I have given a book.  
 (b) {\**that*}

Pace Jespersen (1927: 166), Downing (1973: 7–8), and Geoghegan (1975: 31), the claim that R-*that* can't follow a preposition is not equivalent with the claim that R-*that* can't be the object of a preposition. If we have reasons to believe that R-*that* is an object, respectively, a subject in (70a) and (71b), then we shouldn't doubt that it is a prepositional object in (72c).

- (70) (a) I like the man *that* you've seen.  
 (71) (b) I like the man *that* has seen you.  
 (72) (c) ...the man *that/who(m)* I have given a book to.

In (72c) the preposition is 'stranded', but it still governs the relative pronoun. Thus the unacceptability of (72b) is not due to any 'ungovernability' of R-*that*; it is a fact about WORD ORDER.

What is the explanation of this bizarre and stringent rule of word order, one which sets R-*that* apart from the WH-relativizers and, given that one would want a pronoun to be precedable by a preposition, makes it less than a 'full' pronoun? Part of the explanation is historical.

It is very plausible to assume that R-*that* goes back to the Middle English subordinator *þat*, which was a 'coalescence' of the Old English relative particle *þe* and the subordinator *þæt* (see Horn, 1923: 72–73; Helgander, 1971: 276–278; Geoghegan, 1975). What happened was that *þe* disappeared and that its function was taken over by *þæt*. According to Kivimaa (1966: 247–259), this process seems to have started in compound conjunctions such as *oð þe* 'until' and *þa hwile þe* 'while', constructions in which there had been a partial overlap even in Old English – some conjunctions demanded *þe*, some *þæt*, and some allowed both. When *þæt/þat* established itself in relative clauses, we can assume it was helped by the fact that Old English had a neuter relative pronoun *þæt*. Thus we can understand why *þat* in at least some dialects of Early Middle English first preferred inanimate antecedents, and that *þe* held out longest for animate ones (see McIntosh, 1947; Miyabe, 1959; Brunner, 1962: 149–150; Kivimaa, 1966: 85–87; Samuels, 1972: 157; Dekeyser, 1983: 100; Watts, 1982: 25–26). Note that this does not mean, pace Anklam (1908: 75–76), Kellner (1913: 205), Onions (1932: 148), Mustanoja (1960: 188), Kivimaa (1966), and Lehmann (1984: 390), that Middle-English R-*þat* was simply a continuation of the Old English neuter relative pronoun *þæt*. There are at least three facts which this kind of account would leave mysterious (cf. Traugott, 1972: 153; Dekeyser, 1983: 101): (i) Middle English R-*þat* allowed WH-pronoun-*þat* constructions (as in (70g)), (ii) it occurred in adverbial constructions of the type *on the day that*, and (iii) it didn't tolerate any prepositions in front of it. On the *þe-þæt* coalescence account these three facts fall into place. The appearance of WH-pronoun-*þat* forms is a testimony of the way the conjunction *þat* was expanding its use (see Kivimaa, 1966:

251–255); the Middle English R-*þat* of the *on the day that* type was merely fulfilling a function it had inherited from *þe*; that R-*þat* couldn't follow prepositions was a reflection of two facts, viz. (i) *þe* couldn't follow any prepositions either, and (ii) though the conjunction *þæt-þat* could follow prepositions, it then formed a compound conjunction with a double clause scope structure (as in Modern English in *[\_that [\_...]]\_s*), unsuitable for a relativization involving a constituent scope preposition.

Given the independently arguable claim that present-day R-*that* is pronominal, and the one that its ancestor was conjunctive, we must draw the conclusion that R-*that* changed categories. As with all changes, there is no reason to assume that the change has reached its completion. For a change to be complete, it has to take effect in all environments. Now, one environment in which the change definitely couldn't start was the preposition + relativizer pattern; it simply wasn't available for the ancestor of R-*that*. If English was going to allow a preposition to precede R-*that*, this pattern would have to come into existence at a point when R-*that* would be pronominal on account of other factors. Only then could there be some analogical pressure to make R-*that* behave like any other relative pronoun and follow a preposition. But we know that R-*that* still doesn't follow prepositions. This means that the pronominalization process hasn't reached its completion. Though R-*that* has become highly pronominal, it hasn't become fully pronominal.

In essence, the view that R-*that* is pronominal and that its 'repugnance' against a preceding preposition is an inheritance from its Anglo-Saxon ancestors is not new. It goes back to Horn (1923: 72–73) (cf. also Johansen, 1935: 139). Interestingly, Horn (1923: 73) ends his account as follows: 'Es ist merkwürdig, wie der alte Sprachgebrauch nachwirkt auf den heutigen Tag. In der neuenglischen Syntax läßt sich solche auffalend starke Nachwirkung ganz alter Verhältnisse auch sonst noch beobachten.' We will argue in 3.2.4 that it isn't THAT *merkwürdig* that R-*that* doesn't shake off its inheritance.

3.2.3. In the preceding section I concluded that R-*that* went through a reinterpretation on the basis of the INDIRECT evidence that R-*that* belongs to one category at one point of time, and to a different one at another point of time. I will now supply some DIRECT evidence.

First, we have seen that present-day R-*that* is to some extent felt to be neuter (see Argument 2). Gender is a typically (pro)nominal characteristic. If the history of R-*that* is one of increasing pronominality and if present-day R-*that* is highly gender-sensitive while its ancestor was conjunctive, then one may expect R-*that* to have become increasingly more gender-sensitive. This expectation is borne out. In Middle English and Early Modern English R-*that* had no predilection for either human or non-human antecedents. The 'dehumanization' of R-*that* seems to have started in the seventeenth century (see Saito, 1961: 84–85; Dekeyser, 1984).

Second, R-*that* relatives that contain a non-relative pronoun referring to

the relativized constituent (see (22) to (25)) are now uncommon, the explanation being that R-*that* does the pronominal referring. If R-*that* was less pronominal in the preceding centuries, one would expect that the R-*that* + personal pronoun pattern was more common then. Though this point has never been investigated in detail, the expectation does seem to be borne out (see Helgander, 1971: 272–273; Traugott, 1972: 157–158).

Third, though the use of the WH-pronoun + *þat* pattern is explainable as a result of the expansion of the conjunction *þat*, one would expect that when *þat* becomes more pronominal, the pattern becomes redundant and that it might disappear. In fact, WH-pronoun + *þat* relatives were indeed short-lived. They were popular in the fourteenth century, but were on their way out in the fifteenth (Smith, 1982: 61; cf. Rydén (1966: 332, 335, 360) for early sixteenth-century examples).

It is true that certain speakers of present-day English can make WH-*ever-that* relatives (Smith, 1982: 61; C. Ferguson, p.c.).

(73) I yielded to *whatever* arguments *that* were given.

But it seems plausible to regard *whatever arguments that* as short for *whatever arguments there were that*, and then *that* is still pronominal.

3.2.4. There is no evidence that the pronominalization of R-*that* is continuing and pushing it to accept a preceding proposition. On the contrary, there is a feature of R-*that* that seems effectively to block the completion of the category change. Ever since its appearance in relative clauses R-*that* has had a use in which it is synonymous with a WH-adverb or with a preposition + WH-pronoun pattern.

(74) I came the day *that/when/on which* John came.

(75) I saw the place *that/where/in which* John lived.

(76) I don't like the way *that/in which* he mispronounces my name.

(77) This is the reason *that/why/for which* I did it.

This R-*that*, it must be admitted (cf. Argument 8), seems clearly adverbial and non-pronominal.

And yet, adverbial R-*that* is LESS NON-PRONOMINAL than might be thought. As Larson (1983) points out, adverbial R-*that* is allowed with antecedent noun phrases headed by a noun that can head noun phrases functioning adverbially without the help of prepositions. Thus *street*, different from *place*, cannot head a bare-NP adverbial.

(78) (a) You have been some  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \textit{place} \\ \textit{*street} \end{array} \right\}$ .  
 (b)

Hence the bare noun phrase *the street*, different from *the place*, cannot get an adverbial R-*that* clause.

(79) I saw *the street* \**that/where/in which* John lived.

Contrary to Larson (1983), I do not think that adverbial R-*that* is restricted to these kinds of adverbial bare-NP antecedents. It seems to me that when *the street* occurs in a prepositional phrase, adverbial R-*that* is acceptable or, at least, much better.

(80) I saw Fred *in the street that/where/in which* John lived.

Larson (1983) considers *fashion* to be a noun that cannot head a bare-NP adverbial, yet (29a), mentioned by both Jespersen (1927: 162) and Deutschbein (1953: 223), still seems to be as good now as it was sixty years ago.

(29) (a) We parted *in the same cordial fashion that* we had met.

Again, *reason* cannot head a bare-NP adverbial, yet even without a preposition it can get an adverbial R-*that* (see (77)). Nevertheless it remains true that (i) there are noun phrases that can function as adverbials – without prepositions; (ii) constituency in the class of possible bare-NP adverbials is lexically determined, and (iii) adverbial R-*that* seems particularly frequent with such possible bare-NP adverbials. In this light, it becomes easy to claim that (i) there is a relative pronoun that can function as an adverbial – without a preposition, (ii) constituency in the class of possible bare-pronoun relative adverbials is lexically determined (of all relative pronouns only R-*that* qualifies), and (iii) it is only natural that the bare-pronoun relative adverbial tends to go with the bare-NP antecedent adverbial.

Adverbial R-*that* seems to counteract the analogical pressure on non-adverbial R-*that* to go fully pronominal and accept preceding prepositions, in a double way. First, the very existence of adverbial R-*that* can be assumed to diminish the urgency with which non-adverbial R-*that* should go fully pronominal. Second, both adverbial and non-adverbial R-*that* are at present clause-initial. If a pattern of preposition followed by R-*that* were to develop, it would disturb an otherwise exceptionless regularity. This, I think, is why R-*that* will not easily part with its *merkwürdige* inheritance from Anglo-Saxon ancestors.

## CONCLUSION

For many linguists, especially users and writers of pedagogical grammars, it is obvious that R-*that* is a relative pronoun. Yet there are other linguists, especially transformationalists, who have stated that it is obvious that R-*that* is not a relative pronoun. In this paper, I have made an in-between claim: R-*that* is a highly pronominal relativizer and the reason why it is not fully pronominal has to do with its non-pronominal origin. Be this my conclusion, it is as much of a starting point for further work. There is clearly more than

one way to make the 'highly pronominal relativizer' thesis more precise, depending on the way one wants to treat non-categoriality in grammar and depending on one's choice of theory of grammar. One should then also investigate what the theoretical consequences of my claim are. In this paper, however, I have tried to be as 'theory-neutral' as possible, assuming that most grammarians of English use very similar notions of relative pronoun and conjunction and face a very similar R-*that* issue.

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