RELATIVE CLAUSES

T y p e s: 1) DEFINING 2) NON-DEFINING 3) FOLLOW ON // 4) SENTENCE RELATIVE

specify o n e word (noun/pronoun) in the
main clause

comments on the
w h o l e main clause
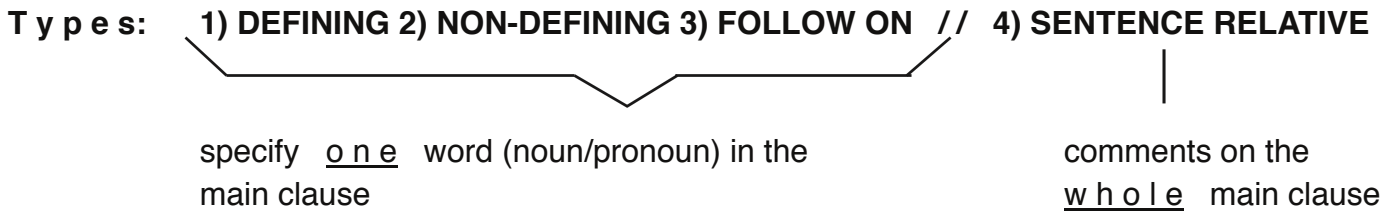
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1)   DEFINING (people: who, that, whose // things: which, that, whose) : **N O** C O M M A S !

Ex.   The students   *who / that*   have understood this problem may go home. [Only those who
have understood: defining]
The roses   *which / that*   had withered [verwelkt] were thrown away. [Only the ones that
had withered: defining]
The students   *whose*   memories were good could easily remember what had been
discussed the last time. [Only those with good memories]
The roses   *whose*   heads were hanging down weren't beautiful any longer. [Only those
with hanging heads]

[for "contact clauses", i.e. clauses without relative pronouns, see Murphy U 93, p. 186, or other sources]

2)   NON-DEFINING   (people: who, whose // things: which, whose): **W I T H** C O M M A S !

Ex.   The students *, who*   had understood the problem *,*   could go home. [All the students have
understood the problem, all can go home: no definition, just additional information]
The roses *, which*   had withered *,*   were thrown away. [All the roses were thrown away: no
definition or selection]
The students *, whose*   memories were good *,*   could easily remember what had been
discussed the last time. [All the students had good memories and could remember]
The roses *, whose*   heads were hanging *,*   weren't beautiful any longer. [All the roses had
hanging heads]

3)   FOLLOW ON   (people: who, whose // things: which, whose) **W I T H** C O M M A S ! !

Ex.   She told the news to her girlfriend *, who*   told the whole class. [= and she told...]
She was given a rose *, which*   she put into fresh water immediately.
He got to know a rich woman *, whose*   big house he fell in love with immediately.
She bought a brand new car *, whose*   stereo set got stolen the next day.

4)   SENTENCE RELATIVE   (always: which [dt. ', was']) **W I T H** C O M M A S ! ! !

Ex.   Nobody came to his birthday party *, which* upset him very deeply. [comment on whole sentence]
Just that day we had done the homework *, which*   saved us, because we got a short test.
Mrs. Brunner did not get elected *, which*   has caused a political outcry in our country.

[attention: German „**was**" ihn verärgerte = English "**, which**" upset him, not ~~"what"~~]

T h a t ' s   i t   f o l k s   !

well, almost...