Բանբեր Երևանի համալսարանի. Բանասիրություն
2026, Vol. 17, No. 2 (50), հունիս, 79-91
https://doi.org/10.46991/BYSU.B/2026.17.2.079

Discourse-Pragmatic Functions of Appositive Relative Clauses as Parenthetical Constructions

ASTGHIK CHUBARYAN *
Yerevan State University
Marine Evoyan**
Vanadzor State University

Abstract. Appositive relative clauses (ARCs) are conventionally described as a backgrounding device: the main clause carries the point of the utterance, while the appositive adds material the hearer could, in principle, do without. The present article considers to what extent that description is accurate. Drawing on Chafe's (1976) notion of information packaging, on the grounding distinction proposed by Hopper and Thompson (1980) and on relevance-theoretic accounts of inference, we examine attested examples from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) in the light of Loock's (2010) typology of relevance, subjectivity and continuative ARCs. The analysis is arranged as a progression from the most backgrounded type to the least. Relevance ARCs adjust what the addressee is assumed to know, establish the standing of an antecedent, and leave relations of cause, justification or concession for the hearer to infer. Subjectivity ARCs open a commentary level alongside the referential content of the main clause, either through overt evaluative and modal marking or, more covertly, through irony and presupposition. Continuative ARCs go furthest, adding an event or a step of argument that carries the same informational weight as the main clause, so that both clauses belong to the foreground. We argue that in all three cases the meaning of the sentence cannot be reduced to the sum of its two propositions, and that the implicit inter-clausal relation is what determines the semantic contribution of each ARC and the variation in its illocutionary force across contexts and interlocutors.

Keywords: *appositive relative clauses, parenthetical constructions, foregrounding and backgrounding, information packaging, inter-clausal relations, discourse pragmatics.*

Introduction

* **Astghik Chubaryan** – Professor at the Chair of English Philology of the YSU
Աստղիկ Չուբարյան – ԵՊՀ անգլիական բանասիրության ամբիոնի պրոֆեսոր
Асттик Чубарян – профессор кафедры английской филологии ЕГУ Email: astghik.chubaryan@ysu.am ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4413-6044
** **Marine Evoyan** – Lecturer at the Chair of Foreign Languages and Literature of Vanadzor State Univer- sity
Մարինե Էվոյան – Վանաձորի պետական համալսարանի օտար լեզուների և գրականության ամբիոնի դասախոս
Марине Эвоян – преподаватель кафедры иностранных языков и литературы Ванадзорского государственного университета
Email: marine.evoyan@gmail.com ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0004-5108-4491

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License.

Ստացվել է՝ 12.02.2026
Գրախոսվել է՝ 23.02.2026
Հաստատվել է՝ 09.06.2026
© The Author(s) 2025

Among the constructions that interrupt the linear flow of an English sentence, appositive relative clauses (ARCs) are probably the most familiar. A clause such as *which represents 61,000 pilots*, set off by commas after *Air Line Pilots Association International*, looks at first sight like a courtesy to the reader. It can be skipped without damaging the grammar of the host sentence, and its content is seldom the reason the sentence was produced. Grammars and usage guides have long described ARCs in these terms, and the description is not wrong. It is, however, incomplete.

The limitations of this description become apparent once ARCs are examined in connected discourse rather than in isolated sentences. In some contexts, an ARC does little more than supply a missing piece of background information. In others, however, it conveys the speaker's evaluation of what has just been said, or it advances a narrative or an argument to its next stage, in which case it can hardly be regarded as background at all. The contribution of an ARC thus depends on two factors: how its content is weighted relative to that of the main clause, and the extent to which the speaker's own point of view enters the utterance. Both are pragmatic questions, and both have received considerably less attention than the morphosyntax of the construction. The present article addresses that imbalance through three related questions. First, how is information distributed between an ARC and its main clause, and under what conditions does the appositive cease to be backgrounded? Second, what semantic relations hold between the two clauses when no conjunction marks them, and how does the hearer recover them? Third, how do ARCs make room for the speaker's attitude alongside the propositional content of the main clause? We approach these questions through Loock's (2010) distinction between relevance, subjectivity and continuative ARCs, three types that differ in their syntactic organisation, semantic properties and pragmatic functions, and we examine them against examples taken from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The aim is to show how ARCs, while syntactically subordinate, can display substantial pragmatic independence and contribute in their own right to the semantic structure and rhetorical organisation of an utterance.

Section 2 positions ARCs between subordinate clauses and parentheticals. Section 3 sets out the analytical framework, which combines information packaging and grounding with a relevance-theoretic view of inference, and introduces Loock's typology. Section 4 describes the data. Sections 5 to 7 examine the three types in turn, moving from the most clearly backgrounded to the one that most clearly belongs to the foreground. Section 8 draws the findings together, and Section 9 concludes.

ARCs between subordination and parenthesis

Relative clauses are traditionally divided into two classes. Restrictive relative clauses (RRCs), also called defining or identifying clauses, narrow down the reference of their antecedent. Non-restrictive clauses, variously labelled non-defining, non-identifying or appositive (ARCs), leave the reference of the antecedent as it is and say something further about it. The literature on the second class is now extensive (Emonds 1979; Safir 1986; Fabb 1990; Burton-Roberts 1999; Del Gobbo 2007; Arnold 2007; Loock 2010; de Vries 2012; Lee-Goldman 2012), and much of it is motivated by the awkward position ARCs occupy. In form they resemble RRCs, being introduced by a relative pronoun and attached to a nominal antecedent. In behaviour they come much closer to parentheticals.

Syntactic analyses divide accordingly. One family of accounts integrates the ARC into the structure of the main clause (MC), usually as an adjunct (Jackendoff 1977). Another denies it any syntactic attachment and locates its connection with the host at the level of discourse (Emonds 1979), a position that Haegeman (1991) captures with the term "orphanage". Overviews of the debate are given in de Vries (2006: 231–4), Loock (2010: 21–35) and Heringa (2011: 122–9). Whichever analysis is preferred, the debate makes it clear that ARCs are at most loosely integrated into their hosts.

This loose integration is the property ARCs share with parenthetical constructions, and it explains why they have so often been treated as one of the most thoroughly investigated forms of parenthesis (Jackendoff 1977: ch. 7; Sells 1984; McCawley 1988: ch. 13; Demirdache 1991; Del Gobbo 2003; Potts 2005). Emonds (1979: 216) points to the "essential similarity between parentheticals and appositive relatives". Safir (1986) treats both as "extra" constituents attached to sentences that are independently grammatical, and accounts for them at the level of his proposed LF. Some descriptions go further and grant ARCs a status close to, or identical with, that of independent clauses. For Fowler & Fowler (1949: 85), an ARC inserts an "independent comment, description or explanation", and Emonds (1979) describes such clauses as "interpolated" at the level of discourse.

These observations raise a question that syntactic work leaves open. If an ARC is only loosely tied to its host, what determines the weight its content receives when the sentence is interpreted? The semantics and pragmatics of ARCs remain much less studied than their morphology and syntax, and it is this side of the construction that the present study addresses.

Analytical framework

Information packaging and grounding. Our starting point is Chafe's (1976) notion of *packaging*, a term he uses for "the kind of phenomena at issue, with the idea that they have to do primarily with how the message is sent and only secondarily with the message itself" (1976:28). The underlying idea is that the same information can be expressed in more than one syntactic form, and that the speaker's choice among these forms is constrained by semantic and pragmatic factors arising from the interaction of linguistic and extralinguistic circumstances. Choosing an ARC rather than a separate sentence or a coordinate clause is one such packaging decision.

The decision is usually taken to signal a difference in informational status. Loetscher (1973) and Cornilescu (1981) contrast the *"hot news"* of the MC with the *"not so hot news"* of the ARC, using the opposition to gauge how much each clause adds to the communicative significance of the utterance. Cotte (1997: 134–135) credits ARCs with a certain value while also stressing their degree of subordination, a combination that reflects their partial integration into the MC. Loock (2010) likewise regards the ARC as a syntactic resource for backgrounding, its content carrying less informational weight than that of the MC.

Loock does not stop at this observation, however. His interest lies in the motive behind the choice, which he frames as two questions: "Why do speakers use such a syntactic structure? What do they intend to convey when they make this particular linguistic choice?" His answer turns on the interaction between the two propositions, since it is this interaction that governs how the embedded content is understood and weighed against the meaning of the utterance as a whole. If the MC expresses P and the ARC expresses Q, the sentence does not simply assert *P & Q*. An ARC allows the speaker to link two propositions while leaving the semantic relation between them unstated, for the hearer to infer, so that the sentence ends up communicating more than the plain combination of its parts. Relations such as causality, consequence and concession, recovered in this way, help to explain why a speaker selects an ARC rather than, for instance, a coordinated clause. Their recovery depends to a large extent on co-text and context interacting with the encyclopedic knowledge the addressee is presumed to have (Loock 2010). Backgrounding, in other words, is not the same as insignifica hat of the MC to the for ntegrated can substantially affect the informational status of the MC itself.

To describe these weightings more precisely, we draw on the concept of *grounding* developed by Hopper and Thompson (1980). In their account, foregrounded clauses are those "comprising the backbone or skeleton of the text, forming its basic structure," while backgrounded clauses "put flesh on the skeleton, but are extraneous to its structural coherence" (Hopper & Thompson 1980:281).

Two diagnostics follow from this. Foreground clauses normally occur in temporal order, so that, in Labov's formulation, "a change in their order will result in a change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation" (Labov 1972:360). Background clauses are bound by no such order and can be left out without the utterance losing its structural coherence (Hopper & Thompson 1980: 282). It is also generally accepted that English relative clauses are not confined to the background and may convey foregrounded information (Depraetere 1996), a phenomenon Thompson (1987) calls "narrative subordination". The grounding framework therefore gives us a means of testing, case by case, whether a given ARC is doing background work or not.

Relevance and inference. The second strand of the framework concerns how hearers work out what an ARC contributes. Grice's (1975) Cooperative Principle supplies two pertinent maxims. The Maxim of Relation requires contributions to be relevant, and the Maxim of Quantity requires the speaker to give the information that is needed without overestimating or underestimating the hearer's knowledge of the topic. Successful communication thus depends on a balance between the speaker's encoding of the message and the hearer's decoding of it, and much of the responsibility for that balance lies with the speaker, who has to fit the utterance to what the hearer is presumed to know so that it is neither obvious to the point of redundancy nor unduly hard to follow.

Sperber and Wilson (1986: 158) reformulate relevance in terms of costs and benefits. The information a speaker means to convey must be worth the effort the hearer spends processing it, and the form of the message must be the most effective way of conveying it. Relevance is accordingly a comparative notion governed by two factors that pull in opposite directions: an assumption is more relevant the greater its contextual effects and the smaller the effort needed to process it, and less relevant as the processing demands rise (Sperber and Wilson 1986: 125). On this view, an ARC that leaves its relation to the MC unstated still adds to what is communicated, because the hearer's inference feeds into an *explicature*, an enriched, context-sensitive interpretation built up through decoding, disambiguation, reference resolution and further pragmatic processes. Interpreting a sentence containing an ARC therefore involves more than putting together the content of its two clauses (Khalifa 1999: 27–28; Cornilescu 1981).

Loock's typology. Loock (2010) organises the discourse functions of ARCs into three principal categories, which give their names to three types: relevance appositive relative clauses (RARCs), subjectivity appositive relative clauses (SARCs) and continuative appositive relative clauses (CARCs). With respect to grounding, RARCs and SARCs are the more conventional members of the class, since they provide contextual support, background detail or commentary on the MC. CARCs are the exception. Their content matches that of the MC in informational status, typically adding the next event in a narrative sequence (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 1064), so that both clauses receive a foregrounded reading even though they remain semantically interdependent. This lack of an informational hierarchy has led some scholars to attribute to CARCs syntactic properties associated with independent clauses (Emonds 1979), and Loock (2010) suggests that the relative pronoun introducing a CARC behaves more like a coordinating element than a marker of subordination.

For the purposes of this study we find it useful to read the three types as points along a cline of informational weight. At one end stands the RARC, the prototypical backgrounding device. The SARC occupies a middle position, adding a second, evaluative layer to the utterance. At the other end is the order.

Լեզվաբանություն

Data and method

The examples analysed below are attested sentences from the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA; Davies 2008–). They come from the academic, newspaper and magazine sections of the corpus and date from 1998 to 2019. Each is quoted as a complete sentence, and the ARC under discussion is given in bold. The examples are used illustratively rather than as a basis

for frequency claims. The analysis is contextual-semantic and pragmatic: for each example we consider the informational status of the ARC relative to its MC, the relation between the two propositions, and the cues (connectives, adverbs, modal markers and lexical choices) that guide the hearer towards that relation.

Relevance ARCs: adjusting what the hearer knows

RARCs are the most frequent subtype of ARC in both spoken and written discourse (Loock 2010). In relevance-theoretic terms their main function is to reduce the hearer's processing effort, and speakers often use them for exactly this purpose. Cornilescu (1981: 58) describes them as the means by which speakers separate "hot news", the primary foregrounded information, from "not so hot news", the supplementary background material. A RARC does two things at once. It keeps the message clear and relevant for recipients who lack the relevant background, and it spares those who already have that background a separate and redundant statement. Loock (2010) identifies three discourse strategies served by RARCs: levelling the shared cognitive space, legitimising the antecedent, and providing explanation, justification or concession. We consider them in turn.

Levelling the shared cognitive space. Loock (2010) defines the characteristic function of the RARC as follows: "The insertion of an ARC serves to provide supplementary information that compensates for discrepancies in shared knowledge. The addressees may not be familiar with the referent or the content of the ARC (hearer-new information), so the speaker aims to level the shared knowledge and reduce the gap between informed addressees (for whom the information is hearer-old) and uninformed addressees (for whom it is hearer-new)." Examples (1) and (2) show the strategy at work in news reporting and in academic prose, where the writer cannot know what each reader already knows.

(1) *Last week, Air Line Pilots Association International, **which represents 61,000 pilots**, urged Trump to take the " necessary steps to immediately end the shutdown of government agencies that is adversely affecting the safety, security and efficiency of our national airspace system. "* [COCA, News, 2019]

(2) *The state-owned Chinese Academy of Sciences, **which owns Legend computer**, also has unveiled the world's twenty-fourth fastest commercial supercomputer, Deepcomp 1800, as a sign of its capabilities.* [COCA, Academic, 2004]

In (1) the antecedent is a proper noun, *Air Line Pilots Association International*, which some readers will recognise and others will not. The RARC *which represents 61,000 pilots* is hearer-old for the first group and hearer-new for the second, and for the second group it is what makes the sentence interpretable. Without it, the weight of an appeal addressed to the President by this body would be hard to judge. The writer anticipates a possible gap in background knowledge between informed and uninformed readers and closes it in passing, which strengthens the coherence of the utterance without interrupting the report.

Example (2) works somewhat differently. *The Chinese Academy of Sciences* can be identified from its name alone, and the premodifier *state-owned* already tells the reader what kind of body it is, so the RARC *which owns Legend computer* is not needed to identify the antecedent. What it supplies is a fact about the Academy's commercial holdings that is likely to be hearer-new for many readers. Knowing that the Academy exists does not imply knowing that it owns a computer manufacturer, and it is precisely this detail that explains why a scientific institution should be unveiling a *Բանբեր Երևանի համալսարանի. Բանասիրություն* nowledge not about who the antecedent is but about why it is relevant at this point.

In both cases the RARC enlarges the semantic content of the antecedent and improves the audience's understanding of it, while remaining syntactically dependent and semantically

backgrounded. Its contribution is to bring all readers, informed or not, to the point where the MC can be understood as intended.

Legitimising the antecedent. A second use of the RARC is to show why a particular antecedent deserves its place in the discourse. Mentioning a person or an institution in the MC does not, by itself, tell an unfamiliar hearer who that is or why that person's view should count. The RARC supplies the credentials: details that establish the antecedent's credibility, authority or relevance, and so present it as a legitimate participant in the discourse, someone with grounds for offering an opinion, a judgment or a piece of information. The message as a whole becomes more meaningful and more coherent for every listener as a result (Loock 2010).

(3) *" He has probably been our most efficient judge, both in terms of getting out his opinions and getting to the heart of the issue, " Circuit Judge Lanier Anderson of Macon,* ***who has served on the appeals court since 1979****, said of Fay.* [COCA, News, 1998]

(4) *" I don't think we have complete answers yet as to why this happens, " says Naomi Roht-Arriaza,* ***who teaches international human rights law at the University of California's Hastings College of Law in San Francisco***. [COCA, News, 1999]

The MC of (3) reports a favourable assessment of a fellow judge, Fay, as probably the most efficient member of the court. A reader who does not know Judge Anderson has no particular reason to give this assessment much weight. The RARC *who has served on the appeals court since 1979* provides the reason by invoking his long service on the same court, which puts him in a position to compare its judges. By supporting the antecedent's epistemic standing, the RARC lends both authority and coherence to the statement, and it does so above all for readers who lack the contextual background.

In (4) the legitimising work rests on professional expertise rather than on length of service. The MC quotes Naomi Roht-Arriaza's remark that complete answers are not yet available. The RARC *who teaches international human rights law at the University of California's Hastings College of Law in San Francisco* tells the reader why that remark is worth reporting, by identifying her as a specialist in the field. Coming from a specialist, even an admission of uncertainty is informative, and readers are thus given grounds to treat her assessment as credible and informed.

Explanation, justification and concession. The third strategy exploits the implicit inter-clausal link most directly. Here the RARC explains or justifies the content of the MC, or introduces a contrast with it, but without the conjunctions, such as *because* or *although*, that would mark the relation explicitly in other clause types. A RARC may account for an event reported in the MC, give grounds for the speaker's view that something is important or acceptable, or concede a limitation or contrast. The relation is left to be inferred from context, and once inferred it subtly reframes the MC or its antecedent, making the message as a whole more relevant and more informative. Through this implicit connection the speaker communicates more than the two clauses would convey if simply added together (Loock 2010). In the terms introduced in Section 3.2, the inferred relation becomes part of the explicature of the utterance.

(5) *Ch[illegible]'d apply only to*
Լեզվաբանություն
ted 2.3 million incarcerated people across the country. [COCA, Magazine, 2019]

(6) *The freight railroads say indemnification merely protects them from risks they would not face if Congress had not insisted that Amtrak,* ***which owns little track of its own****, use their rails.* [COCA, News, 2004]

Read in isolation, the RARC *which represents a tiny fraction of the estimated 2.3 million incarcerated people across the country* in (5) could be taken as a plain statistical note on the federal prison system. In context it does more than describe its antecedent. The MC presents a proposal for

resentencing and restricts it, through *only*, to the federal system, and the RARC turns that restriction into a concession, which can be spelled out as *although the idea would open the way to resentencing, it would reach very few of those in prison*. No concessive connective appears, yet the opposition between the ambition of the proposal and its limited reach is exactly what the clause is there to convey.

The relation in (6) is causal, though again there is no *because*. The MC reports the freight railroads' complaint that Congress obliged Amtrak to use their rails, and the RARC *which owns little track of its own* explains why such an obligation arose in the first place. Made explicit, the inference runs: "Because Amtrak owns little track of its own, it has to run its trains on rails that belong to the freight railroads". Leaving the causal link unmarked allows the writer to supply the explanation in passing, and leaves the reader to arrive at the appropriate interpretation from the context.

Across all three strategies, then, RARCs remain background clauses in the grounding sense, yet their contribution is far from incidental. They adjust what the hearer knows, establish the standing of the antecedent, and carry relations such as concession and cause that the MC alone does not express, increasing both the information the message conveys and its pragmatic coherence.

Subjectivity ARCs: adding a commentary level

With SARCs the speaker moves from report to commentary. A SARC expresses the speaker's or writer's own position on the proposition in the MC through a personal judgment or attitude, and in doing so further characterises or qualifies the content of the host clause. The evaluation may be overt or implicit. Loock (2010) observes that ARCs allow speakers to give opinions, comments or judgments on the propositional content of the MC, sometimes without being aware that they are briefly leaving the main line of discourse, and so create "a break between two levels: the referential/objective level vs. the commentary/subjective level. The ARC contains markers of modality, such as modal auxiliaries, vocabulary denoting judgment or appreciation." He further distinguishes explicit from implicit subjectivity, and we follow that division here.

Explicit subjectivity is signalled by recognisably evaluative or judgmental expressions, through which speakers state their own opinions or report the views of others. Examples (7) and (8), both from academic writing, illustrate it.

(7) *We thus witness the participation of leading members of the Eastern District's legal community in running the bankruptcy slave trade,* ***which perhaps is not surprising*** *given that " the characteristics of individuals who profited from the 1841 Bankruptcy Act were usually those of insiders -- either to the workings of the bankruptcy system in a given place, or to the particular circumstances of individual bankruptcies. "* [COCA, Academic, 2018]

(8) [illegible] ***is sad*** *because*

Բանբեր Երևանի համալսարանի. Բանասիրություն

that really fall under that realm. [COCA, Academic, 2015]

Both SARCs attach an evaluation to a factual assertion and keep the two clearly apart. The MC states what is the case, and the SARC proposes how the reader should regard it. Where the two examples differ is in how firmly the evaluation is put.

In (7), the MC reports that leading members of the Eastern District's legal community took part in running what the author calls the bankruptcy slave trade. The SARC *which perhaps is not surprising* presents this involvement as something to be expected, but does so cautiously. The adverb *perhaps* hedges the judgment, and the negated form *not surprising* stops short of calling the involvement predictable, so that the comment reads less as a firm opinion than as a courteous suggestion. The *given that* clause which follows supplies the grounds for it and indirectly encourages the reader to accept the involvement as normal or expected.

The SARC in (8), *which I think, in this district, is sad*, is more openly personal. Rather than reporting a fact, the speaker passes judgment on the loss of the social worker. The epistemic marker *I think* grounds the assessment in the speaker's own view, and the evaluative adjective *sad* names the attitude outright, with no hedge to soften it. The inserted phrase *in this district* narrows the judgment to local circumstances, and the *because* clause that follows justifies it by pointing to the social work issues in the households concerned. The comment is therefore considerably more direct than the one in (7).

Both SARCs, then, depart from factual exposition to introduce evaluation, but in (7) the evaluation is conveyed subtly and tentatively, while (8) articulates a recognisably personal opinion. The difference affects how far readers are drawn towards the speaker's particular view of the matter under discussion.

Implicit subjectivity conveys the speaker's attitude without stating an evaluation. The viewpoint is embedded in the wording and has to be inferred rather than read off the surface, so that an assertion may appear objective while communicating a personal judgment, one that readers can overlook and come to accept as fact. Where explicit subjectivity makes its evaluative orientation plain, implicit subjectivity offers a seemingly neutral account and lets the stance come through indirectly. How it is interpreted depends on the situational context and on the relationships among participants, and presuppositions and the framing of information often contribute to the effect. Loock (2010) places such cases between relevance and subjectivity ARCs: "Sometimes the subjectivity is so implicit that we need to create an extra subcategory of ARCs between relevance and subjectivity ARCs. ... We consider such ARCs as an exploitation of the complex inter-clausal link we mentioned earlier. Such a technique enables the speaker to say things without encoding them linguistically but paving the way for inferences that readers are meant to make." Example (9), from a newspaper text, is a case in point.

(9) *They'll just buy back more of their stock instead,* ***which, of course, they've been doing at a record pace the past year***. [COCA, News, 2018]

The SARC *which, of course, they've been doing at a record pace the past year* contains no evaluative predicate, and on the surface it simply adds a fact about recent share buybacks. It is nevertheless anything but neutral. Its subjectivity is carried by presupposition and a dry irony. The parenthetical *of course* presents the information as something the reader already knows and expects, and so presupposes a shared, sceptical view of how the companies in question behave. Together with *just* and *instead* in the MC, it implies that buying back stock is the predictable and less desirable use of the money, although nothing in the sentence says so. It is this divergence between the factual wording and the implied criticism that turns an apparently objective remark into a comment.

SARCs therefore bring the speaker's perspective into the discourse both overtly and covertly, with effec valuation and irony. Whi espond to the content of the MC on which the SARC comments.

Լեզվաբանություն

Continuative ARCs: joining the foreground

CARCs stand at the far end of the cline. Their content is not background to the MC but continuous with it: the relative clause introduces a further event, a further consequence or a further step in an argument, and in doing so becomes part of the foreground. Our analysis of this type builds on the general observation that English relative clauses can convey foregrounded information (Depraetere 1996) and seeks to show this capacity at work in CARCs, in line with what Thompson (1987) calls "narrative subordination". The four examples below come from academic prose and magazine journalism, and in each the narrative dynamism generated by the CARC makes its continuative function easy to recognise.

(10) *This new connection then led to broader and cheaper supply,* ***which subsequently spurred further demand****.* [COCA, Academic, 2019]

(11) *The survivor crawled home through miles of jungle to alert his fellow warriors,* ***who then counterattacked****.* [COCA, Magazine, 2014]

(12) *Warren told me she attributes this to the disillusionment surrounding Dodd-Frank, which ushered in a range of new regulations but left the details to regulators,* ***who promptly caved****.* [COCA, Magazine, 2013]

(13) *Amazon e-mails a receipt to Suffolk University's head of technical services,* ***who then catalogs the e-book for the local integrated library system****.* [COCA, Academic, 2012]

What the four examples share is narrative dynamism. In each, the CARC carries the discourse forward from the proposition of the MC to a new proposition while keeping the progression of ideas coherent. Although syntactically subordinate to and dependent on their MCs, these clauses show considerable pragmatic autonomy. They introduce new information that the reader needs in order to follow the developing narrative or argument, and that information carries as much weight as the MC instead of serving as an aside. Each CARC sustains topical continuity and supports the sequential organisation of the text, reinforcing both the unity of the topic and the coherence of the passage. Beyond this common ground, however, the examples differ clearly in how they relate to their MCs and in how they move the discourse on.

Example (10) builds an explicit chain of cause and effect, in which a new connection led to broader and cheaper supply and the improved supply in turn increased demand. The CARC *which subsequently spurred further demand* is foregrounded because it adds a new proposition closely tied, causally and temporally, to what precedes it. Its pragmatic contribution is to complete the causal chain and to present the final consequence as an integral part of the explanation. The verb *spurred* specifies the causal link, while the adverb *subsequently*, echoing *then* in the MC, reinforces the temporal and causal sequence and ties the CARC back into the ongoing discourse. Far from playing a subordinate descriptive or restrictive role, the clause adds propositional content that substantially enriches the semantic structure of the utterance.

In (11) the progression is purely temporal. The MC narrates one event, the survivor's journey home to alert his fellow warriors, and the CARC *who then counterattacked* narrates the next, with a change of agent from the survivor to the warriors. The adverb *then* places the second event after the first, and t ɔerty Labov (1972) associ leaving the CARC out would deprive the sentence of its outcome.

Example (12) shows that the dynamism of a CARC need not be simply temporal or causal. The sentence contains two ARCs. The first, *which ushered in a range of new regulations but left the details to regulators,* supplies background on Dodd-Frank, and it is the second, *who promptly caved*, that is continuative. It does more than describe the noun phrase *regulators*. By reporting what the regulators went on to do, it sets the outcome against the expectation raised by *a range of new regulations*, and so completes the explanation of the disillusionment mentioned in the MC. The adverb *promptly* and the informal verb *caved* sharpen the contrast between what the law promised and what followed. The contribution of the CARC is rhetorical as much as chronological: instead of simply moving events forward, it delivers the point on which the argument of the sentence turns.

Example (13) describes a procedure rather than a single occasion, and its CARC, *who then catalogs the e-book for the local integrated library system*, likewise goes beyond description. Both clauses are in the simple present with generic reference, and together they set out two successive stages of a routine workflow, the second of which is carried out by the person introduced at the end of the first. *Then* appears again as a resumptive adverb, but here it marks the next step in a procedure rather than a sequence of past events.

CARCs, in sum, keep the discourse moving and place additional propositional content in the foreground, but they do so by way of quite different relations, from causal connection and temporal progression to rhetorical opposition and the ordering of procedural steps.

Discussion

Taken together, the three types show that the familiar picture of the ARC as a backgrounding device holds for only part of the class, and even there only in a qualified sense. Table 1 summarises the findings.

Table 1. Informational status and pragmatic functions of the three ARC types

Type	Informational status	Main pragmatic functions	Relation to the MC	Examples
RARC	Background	Levelling shared knowledge; legitimising the antecedent; explanation, justification or concession	Implicit cause and concession	(1)–(6)
SARC	Background, on a separate commentary level	Explicit evaluation, hedged or direct; implicit stance through irony and presupposition	Evaluation of the MC proposition	(7)–(9)
CARC	Foreground, on a par with the MC	Advancing a narrative or an argument	Cause, temporal sequence, contrast, procedural sequence	(10)–(13)

Three points follow from the analysis. The first is that syntactic dependence is a poor guide to informational weight. Every clause examined here is formally subordinate, yet their pragmatic independence ranges from modest, as with RARCs that fill a gap in the hearer's knowledge, to considerable, as with CARCs that carry the next event or the next step of an argument. The grounding to (4) could be omitted w nd (11) would leave the sequence each passage sets out to describe incomplete.

Հեգվաբանություն

The second point is that what unites the three types is not a common informational status but a common mechanism. In every case the relation between P and Q is left implicit, and it is the hearer's recovery of that relation, whether it is concession, cause, evaluation or sequence, that gives the ARC its semantic contribution. This is why the meaning of a sentence containing an ARC exceeds the combination of its two propositions, and why one and the same construction can serve purposes as different as identifying an institution (1), conveying an unstated criticism (9) and completing a causal explanation (10).

The third point is that, because so much depends on inference, the force of an ARC is not fixed. Its contribution, and the illocutionary force it lends to the utterance, varies with the communicative context and with the knowledge and relationship of the interlocutors. The RARC in (1) is hearer-new for one reader and redundant for another; the hedged evaluation in (7) may pass almost unnoticed or be taken as an invitation to agree; and the implied criticism in (9) depends on the reader sharing the expectation the writer takes for granted.

Conclusion

This study has examined the discourse-pragmatic functions of appositive relative clauses as parenthetical constructions, using Loock's (2010) typology and attested examples from COCA. The findings suggest that the peripheral status traditionally assigned to ARCs understates what they do. RARCs supply background, but in doing so they level the knowledge of different addressees, legitimise antecedents and convey relations such as cause and concession by implication, drawing on the situational context. SARCs open a commentary level beside the referential content of the MC and convey the speaker's perspective through effects that range from courteous comment to irony, shaped by how the hearer interprets the MC. CARCs present foregrounded information despite their syntactic subordination and advance the discourse through causal, temporal, contrastive and procedural relations. In all three types, structural dependence coexists with considerable pragmatic independence, and it is this combination that allows ARCs to enrich discourse across a wide range of commu ntitative study of how the

ԱՍՏՂԻԿ ՉՈՒԲԱՐՅԱՆ, ՄԱՐԻՆԵ ԷՎՈՅԱՆ – *Ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունների խոսույթային գործաբանական գործառույթները որպես միջանկյալ կառույցներ* – Հոդվածում քննության են առնվում ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունների խոսույթային գործառույթները՝ Չեյֆի (Chafe, 1976) տեղեկատվության կառուցվածքավորման տեսության շրջանակում: Այս մոտեցմամբ գլխավոր և ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունները էապես տարբերվում են իրենց տեղեկատվական կարգավիճակով. գլխավոր նախադասությունն արտահայտում է առաջնային բովանդակությունը, իսկ ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունը հաղորդում է ֆոնային տեղեկատվություն: Ուստի ամբողջ ասույթի մեկնաբանության համար վճռորոշ է գլխավոր նախադասության դերը: Ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունների ձևաբանական ու շարահյուսական առանձնահատկությունները լայնորեն հետազոտվել են, մինչդեռ դրանց իմաստաբանական արտահայտումն ու գործաբանական մեկնաբանությունը դեռևս համեմատաբար քիչ են ուսումնասիրված: Ըստ Լուքի (Loock, 2010) դասակարգման՝ ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունները լինում են երեք տեսակի՝ շարունակական (continuative appositive relative clauses, CARCs), առնչական (relevance appositive relative clauses, RARCs) և սուբյեկտիվ ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասություններ (subjectivity appositive relative clauses, SARCs): RARCs-ը և SARCs-ը սովորաբար հաղորդում են հավելյալ տեղեկություն՝ ապահովելով ֆոնային բովանդակություն: Մինչդեռ CARCs-ը իրադարձությունները ներկայացնում են գլխավոր նախադասության հետ նույն տեղեկատվական մակարդակում, ուստի երկու նախադասություններն էլ հանդես են գալիս որպես առաջնային միավորներ: Գլխավոր ու երկրորդական նախադասությունների սահմանազատման անորոշությունը ցույց է տալիս, որ ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունները զուտ լրացուցիչ կամ երկրորդական բաղադրիչներ համարել չի կարելի: Նախադասությունների միջև իմաստաբանական և ժամանակագրական տարաբնույթ հարաբերություններ հաստատելով՝ դրանք զգալի ներդրում ունեն ասույթի ընդհանուր իմաստի ձևավորման մեջ: Պատճառականություն, հետևանք, հակադրություն կամ զիջում արտահայտող այդ հարաբերություններով է պայմանավորվում ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասությունների իմաստաբանական կշիռը: Դրանք բացահայտում են այս կառույցների իլոկուտիվ ուժի փոփոխականությունը՝ կախված համատեքստից և խոսքային փոխազդեցության մասնակիցներից:

Բանալի բառեր. *ոչ սահմանափակող որոշիչ երկրորդական նախադասություններ, տեղեկատվության կառուցվածքավորում, խոսույթային գործաբանություն, առաջնային–ֆոնային փոխազդեցություն, միջանկյալ կառույցներ:*

АСТГИК ЧУБАРЯН, МАРИНЕ ЭВОЯН – *Дискурсивно-прагматические функции аппозитивных относительных предложений как вставных конструкций.* – Аппозитивные относительные придаточные предложения (appositive relative clauses, ARCs) традиционно рассматриваются как средство оформления фоновой информации, передающее факультативные сведения по отношению к

основному пропозициональному содержанию главной клаузы. В статье проверяется правомерность такой трактовки. Опираясь на теорию информационной упаковки У. Чейфа (Chafe, 1976), разграничение основного (foreground) и фонового (background) планов П. Хоппера и С. Томпсон (Hopper & Thompson, 1980), теорию релевантности и функциональную типологию Р. Лука (Loock, 2010), автор анализирует примеры из корпуса COCA в градуальной перспективе — от наиболее фоновых конструкций к интегрированным в основной план высказывания. Придаточные релевантности восполняют лакуны в знаниях адресата, мотивируя введение антецедента и обеспечивая инференциальный вывод причинно-следственных или уступительных отношений. Придаточные субъективности создают метакоммуникативный уровень оценки (эксплицитно или через пресуппозицию и иронию). Придаточные предложения продвигают повествование или аргументацию, функционируя в основном плане высказывания наравне с главной клаузой. Обосновывается некомпозициональность семантики ARCs: общее значение не сводится к конъюнкции пропозиций, а определяется имплицитным дискурсивным отношением между клаузами и контекстуальной вариативностью их иллокутивной силы.

Ключевые слова: *аппозитивные относительные придаточные, парентетические конструкции, взаимодействие основного и фонового планов, информационная упаковка, межклаузальные отношения, дискурсивная прагматика.*

Ethics Statement

The authors confirm that all ethical requirements regarding the research have been met.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors confirm that there is no conflict of interest.

References

Arnold D. (2007). Non-Restrictive Relatives are not Orphans. Journal of Linguistics, 43, 2, 272–309.

Burton-Roberts N. (1999). Language, linear precedence and parentheticals. The Clause in English, 33–52. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Chafe W. L. (1976). Givenness, contrastiveness, definiteness, subjects, topics and point of view. Subject and Topic, 25–55. New York: Academic Press.

Cornilescu A. (1981). Non-restrictive Relative Clauses, an Essay in Semantic Description. Revue roumaine de linguistique, 26.1, 41–67.

Cotte P. (1997). Grammaire linguistique. Paris: CNED Didier Erudition.

Del Gob alifornia, Irvine.

Del Gob (2007). On the syntax and semantics of appositive relative clauses. Parentheticals, 173–201. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Demirdache H.K. (1991). Resumptive chains in restrictive relatives, appositives and dislocation structures. Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Depraetere I. (1996). Foregrounding in English Relative Clauses. Linguistics, 34, 699–731.

Emonds J. (1979). Appositive Relatives Have No Properties. Linguistic Inquiry, 10.2, 241–243.

Fabb N. (1990). The Difference between English Restrictive and Nonrestrictive Relative Clauses. Linguistics, 26, 57–78.

Fowler H. W., Fowler F. G. (1949). The King's English. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Grice H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. Studies in Syntax and Semantics III: Speech Acts, 41–58. New York: Academic Press.

Haegeman L. (1991). Parenthetical Adverbials: the radical orphanage approach. Aspects of Modern linguistics, 232–254. Tokyo: Kaitakushi.

Heringa H. (2011). Appositional Constructions. Groningen: LOT: Netherlands Graduate School of Linguistics.

Hopper P., Thompson S. A. (1980). Transitivity in Grammar and Discourse. Language 56, 251–299.
Huddleston R., Pullum, G. K. (2002). The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language. Cambridge: CUP.
Jackendoff R. (1977). X-bar Syntax: A Study of Phrase Structure. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Khalifa J. C. (1999). A Propos des relatives appositives. Syntaxe, sémantique, pragmatique. Anglophonia, 6, 7–29.
Labov W. (1972). The transformation of experience in narrative syntax. Language in the Inner City. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Lee-Goldman R. (2012). Supplemental relative clauses: internal and external syntax. Journal of Linguistics 48(3), 573–608.
Loetscher A. (1973). On the Role of Nonrestrictive Relative Clauses in Discourse. Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting, Chicago Linguistic Society (April 13–15), 356–368.
Loock R. (2010). Appositive relative clauses in English: discourse functions and competing structures. John Benjamins Publishing.
McCawley J. D. (1988). The Syntactic Phenomena of English, Volume 2, Chapter 13. Chicago: CUP.
Potts C. (2005). The Logic of Conventional Implicatures. Oxford: OUP.
Safir K. (1986). Relative clauses in a theory of binding and levels. Linguistic Inquiry 17(4), 663–89.
Sells P. (1984). Syntax and Semantics of Resumptive Pronouns. Ph.D. thesis, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
Sperber D., Wilson D. (1986). Relevance: Communication and Cognition. Oxford: Blackwell.
Thompson S. A. (1987). Subordination and Narrative Event Structure. Coherence and Grounding in Discourse, 435–454. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Vries M. de. (2006). The syntax of appositive relativization: on specifying coordination, false free relatives, and promotion. Linguistic Inquiry 37(2), 229–70.
Vries M. de. (2012). Parenthetical main clauses – or not? On appositives and quasi-relatives. Main Clause Phenomena: New Horizons, 177–202. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Data source

Davies, M. (2008–). The Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). Retrieved from https://www.english-corpora.org/coca/
Akademicheskij proekt Publ. (in Russian).