# การตีความเชิงวากยสัมพันธ์ของนามวลีที่ใช้กับคำเชื่อม
# คุณานุประโยค *Which* และ *That* ในนวนิยายภาษาอังกฤษ
# Syntactic Interpretations of Noun Phrases Used with the
# Relativizers *Which* and *That* in English Novels

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**บทคัดย่อ**

งานวิจัยนี้ศึกษาการตีความเชิงวากยสัมพันธ์ของนามวลีที่ปรากฏร่วมกันกับ
คำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* และ *that* ในตัวบทนวนิยายที่เขียนเป็นภาษาอังกฤษ
ในขณะที่งานวิจัยที่เกี่ยวกับนามวลีที่ใช้ร่วมกันกับคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* และ *that*
ก่อนหน้านี้ให้ความสนใจในตัวบทหนังสือพิมพ์ภาษาอังกฤษ บทความวิชาการและงานเขียน
ของนักเรียนที่เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศ งานวิจัยนี้จึงเลือกศึกษาตัวบทที่
แตกต่างออกไปนั่นคือนวนิยายที่เขียนเป็นภาษาอังกฤษเป็นจำนวนทั้งสิ้นแปดเล่มคือ
Persuasion (Austen, 2018), The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (Doyle,
2019), Frankenstein (Shelley, 2019), The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship
of the Ring (Tolkien, 2020), Treasure Island (Stevenson, 2019), A Tale
of Two Cities (Dickens, 2021), Little Women (Alcott, 2019) และ The Mayor of
Casterbridge (Hardy, 2021) ชุดข้อมูลจำนวนประมาณ 400,000 คำ ประกอบด้วย 121
ตัวอย่างของนามวลีที่ปรากฏร่วมกันกับคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* และ *that* ในตัว
บทนวนิยาย การวิเคราะห์โครงสร้างคุณานุประโยคทำตามแบบของ Radford (2009) ใน
การศึกษาไวยากรณ์แบบปริวรรตเพื่อศึกษาระบบการใช้ของไวยากรณ์นี้ การจำแนก
ประเภทของคำนามทำตามแบบของ Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020) ผลการศึกษาแสดง

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ให้เห็นว่าคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *that* และคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* ในนวนิยาย
ภาษาอังกฤษนั้นถูกใช้เป็นจำนวนร้อยละ 23.97 และร้อยละ 76.03 ตามลำดับ การศึกษานี้
พบว่าคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* มักจะใช้ร่วมกันกับการตีความเชิงวากยสัมพันธ์ของ
นามวลีที่เป็นรูปธรรม เช่น *envelope* และ *notepaper* คำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *that*
มักจะใช้ร่วมกับการตีความเชิงวากยสัมพันธ์ของนามวลีที่เป็นนามธรรม เช่น *experience*
จากผลการวิจัยนี้ผู้วิจัยหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่างานวิจัยครั้งนี้จะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อผู้เรียน
ภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สองและผู้เรียนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาต่างประเทศซึ่งผู้เรียนจะ
ได้รับตัวอย่างเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับการใช้นามวลีที่ใช้ร่วมกันกับคำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which*
และ *that* และปรับใช้ได้อย่างถูกต้องและเหมาะสม

**คำสำคัญ:** การตีความเชิงวากยสัมพันธ์ นามวลี คำเชื่อมคุณานุประโยค *which* คำเชื่อม
คุณานุประโยค *that* นวนิยายภาษาอังกฤษ

## Abstract

        This study examined the syntactic interpretations of noun phrases
(NPs) used with the relativizers *which* and *that* in English novels. Whilst
previous studies focusing on the study of NPs occurring with the relativizers
*which* and *that* selected the data from academic articles, English news and
writing of EFL learners, this study contributes to the field by examining their
use in English novels. This study selected eight best-seller English novels,
including *Persuasion* (Austen, 2018), *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*
(Doyle, 2019), *Frankenstein* (Shelley, 2019), *The Lord of the Rings: The
Fellowship of the Ring* (Tolkien, 2020), *Treasure Island* (Stevenson, 2019), *A
Tale of Two Cities* (Dickens, 2021), *Little Women* (Alcott, 2019) and *The
Mayor of Casterbridge* (Hardy, 2021). The data contains approximately
400,000 words which provide 121 tokens of relative clauses used with the
relativizers *which* and *that*. The data analysis follows Radford's (2009)
generative grammar to study the patterns of relativizers. The classifications
of nouns in this study follow Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020). The results show

that the use of the relativizers *that* and *which* is 23.97 percent and 76.03 percent, respectively. The differences between the two are that the relativizer *which* in English novels is preferred to be used with NPs, which have the syntactic interpretations of concrete nouns, such as *envelope* and *notepaper*. However, the relativizer *that* in English novels is preferred to be used with NPs that have the syntactic interpretations of abstract nouns, such as *experience*. It is expected that the findings in this study can be beneficial in the sense that they provide EFL and ESL learners with more examples of how to use the relativizers *that* and *which* in a sentence.

**Keywords:** Syntactic interpretations, Noun phrase, The relativizer *which*, The relativizer *that*, English Novels

## Background of the Study

Relative clauses are grammatical features in English that are productively used in various types of texts (Friedmann, Aram & Novogrodsky, 2011). Not only do relative clauses allow the writers to provide additional information in sentences, but they are also mechanically used as adjuncts or postmodifiers to provide additional information (Radford, 2009). With this special quality of relative clauses, they are usually selected when the writers want to explain more information (Swan, 2016), such as numerical data, as in (1).

(1)  Peter planned to purchase a new house *which is made up of three bedrooms, two restrooms and a small kitchen.*

The use of relative clauses, as in (1), denotes the information of numerical data. With this information, it seems that we know that relative clauses are used as a grammatical feature to provide additional information (Radford, 2009).

However, another distinctive aspect to learn the complex structure of relative clauses is the relativizer, such as *who*, *which* and *that*. This is viewed as a core element of the relative clause and English language learners should pay attention to the study of how to use the relativizers in English. However, English language learners usually ask what the similarities and differences of the relativizers *which* and *that* are (Syarif, 2016). For many English language learners, it seems as though the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* are synonyms, which can be used interchangeably, as in (2).

      (2) (a)   Kate planned to study at a university *that was ranked in the top five of the world.*

          (b)   Kate planned to study at a university *which was ranked in the top five of the world.*

In (2a), *that was ranked in the top five of the world* represents an example of a relative clause in English, interchangeably known as an adjective clause (Swan, 2016). It is used to modify the noun phrase *a university*. However, the replacement of the relativizer *that* by the relativizer *which* also makes example (2b) grammatical. The grammar references explain that the variants of relativizers *which* and *that* are interchangeable. Similarly, English language teachers often explain to their English language learners that the relativizers *which* and *that* are interchangeable. However, syntacticians may question when and why one grammatical variant should be used over the other (Wongkittiporn & Chitrakara, 2018).

With the available options of the relativizers mentioned above, EFL learners become confused about how to use the relativizers *which* and *that*. Gao (2014) addressed that they try to overgeneralize the use of the relativizer *that* more frequently than the other variant. This could be because the relativizer *that* can be used with various noun phrases denoting people, animals and objects. Along the same lines, Syarif (2016) observed

the use of relative clauses in writing of EFL learners and found that EFL writers demonstrate confusion regarding the use of relativizers in English. Consequently, they are likely to overgeneralize the use of the relativizer *that,* as in (3).

(3) (a)　The cow *that was bought from the farm* yesterday was sick.

(b)　The building *that is located in Westminster* in the main office.

In (3a), *the cow* is an animal which is animate. However, *the building* in (3b) is inanimate (Kearns, 2011). In both (3a) and (3b), the replacement of the relativizer *that* by the relativizer *which* remains grammatical.

In addition, Alotaibi (2016) reported another problem in which EFL learners show their grammatical errors in the production of the relativizer *which*. EFL learners use the relativizer *which* with human beings, as in (4).

(4)　*Mary helped *the teacher which* rewarded the students.

(Alotaibi, 2016: 62)

This grammatical error reflects EFL learners' problems in regard to their understanding and their accuracy in the usage of the relativizer *which* in English. With this issue, to study how the relativizer *which* is used seems to be significant for EFL learners and ESL learners.

Whilst previous studies which examined NPs used with the relativizers *which* and *that* mostly focused on the genres of academic articles and newspapers, this study contributes to the field by examining their use in English novels. English novels are considered as everyday reading materials that are particularly suitable for everyone who would like to master their English capability (Wongkittiporn, 2022). In order to motivate English language learners to learn different grammatical forms, they should be encouraged to learn form, meaning and use at the same time via outside

reading materials, such as English novels. Not only can reading English novels provide entertainment and imagination for the readers, but it also encourages learners to be autonomous English language learners by avoiding being dependent on their English teachers inside the classroom. Accordingly, this current study would support EFL and ESL learners' grammatical performance in applying the different linguistic variants of the relativizers *which* and *that* consistently and practically. This information leads to the following research questions.

**Research Questions**

     1. What are the frequencies of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* in English novels?

     2. What are the syntactic interpretations of noun phrases used with the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* in English novels?

**Literature Review**

     **Relative Clause in Grammar Reference**

     The relative clause is one of the English structures that are used frequently in present-day English. They are normally used to provide additional information concerning people, places, and things (Swan, 2016). Relative clauses occur with question words, such as *who* and *where.* These relative pronouns are used to modify the nouns and pronouns in front of them.

     (5) (a)   I don't know the people *who live in the next room.*

        (b)   Mary and Peter stay in a village *where they are surrounded by mountains.*

     The relative clauses *who live in the next room* and *where they are surrounded by mountains* modify the nouns *people* and *a village*. The relative pronoun *who* is specific in that it is merely used to introduce

people. Likewise, the relative pronoun *where* is also specific in that it is used to introduce places, such as *a village*. Therefore, using the relative pronoun *who* and *where* to modify nouns other than people or places could lead to ungrammaticality, as in (6).

(6) (a)  *I like the dinner *who you cook.*

   (b)  *I bought a book *where can improve my English ability.*

The relative pronouns *who* and *where* are specific in regard to their selection with their head noun phrases. Nevertheless, the relative pronoun *that* can be used to modify both people and things, as in (7) (Swan, 2016).

(7) (a)  People *who want to purchase tickets* should visit the office.

   (b)  People *that want to purchase tickets* should visit the office.

The relative clauses *who want to purchase tickets* and *that want to purchase tickets,* as in (7a) and (7b), can be used with the relative pronouns *who* and *that*.

While the relative pronoun *that* is optional to be used with people (Swan, 2016), as in (7b), it can be used to modify things. This function is similar to the relative pronoun *which.*

(8) (a)  I totally forgot the wine *that you asked me to buy.*

   (b)  I totally forgot the wine *which you asked me to buy.*

*That you asked me to buy* and *which you asked me to buy* are examples of relative clauses that can be used with different relative pronouns; the relativizers *which* and *that*. Nevertheless, both of them are used to modify the same object, *the wine.*

Relative clauses function similarly to adjectives and are interchangeably known as adjective clauses. It is a postmodifier of a noun phrase (NP) (Swan, 2016). When relative clauses are used, there are relative pronouns that are placed in front. In some cases, the relative pronouns can

be omitted depending upon varieties of text, varieties of English and users. In addition to *who, which* and *that*, relative pronouns include *whom and whose,* as in (9).

      (9) (a)    *The man whom* you met last week, is a famous doctor.

           (b)    *J.K. Rowling, whose* novels are popular, has become a millionaire.

In (9a) and (9b), the relative pronouns *whom* and *whose* are obviously used for different functions. In (9b), the relative pronoun *whose* shows possession of his or her belonging.

Despite having different relative pronouns, the relativizers *which* and the relativizer *that* are interchangeably used with things, as in (10).

      (10) (a)    It is a book *which will interest children of all ages*.

           (b)    This is the key *that opens the garage*.

           (Swan, 2016: 478)

As shown in (10a), the relative clause *which will interest children of all ages* is used with an object. In (10b), *that opens the garage* modifies *the key*, which is also an object (Swan, 2016). Although grammar references provide some information in regard to the differences of the relativizers *which* and *that* in English, the information in regard to their use is quite limited and not up-to-date in present-day English. Accordingly, the current study will provide insight into the use of the relativizers *which* and *that* via English novels.

### Type of Nouns

According to Radford (2009), noun phrase (NP) is defined as a phrase where the head is a noun. For example, if one says *a lover of opera*, the *lover* is the head noun. The noun can perform many syntactic functions, such as the subject and the object. For example, *the cat ate the rat* is a

noun phrase where *the cat* is a noun acting as subject and *the rat* is a noun acting as object.

Since there are many types of nouns used in English, this current study follows Santhalunai and Vijaya's (2020) criteria to explain each type of noun.

*Concrete noun* is defined as a physical or tangible object existing in the real world, such as *a boy*, *a cat* and *a cup*. They are explainable by their physical features (Just et al., 2010). For example, *a cat* is defined as an animal with four legs, having fur with different color and having a long tail.

*Abstract nouns* are defined as intangible objects. These intangible objects include ideas, qualities, feelings as well as emotions. Abstract nouns cannot be objects that are touchable but can be the name of an action and the name of a state. More examples of abstract nouns are speed, freedom, justice, bravery, creativity, happiness and time (Santhalunai & Vijaya, 2020).

*Proper nouns* are particular names. They can be the names of people, the months of the year, cities, towns, countries, brands, streets and states. A proper noun gives a more specific name, such as *Wednesday*, *Neptune*, *Mary* and *London*. For example, proper nouns are the specific name of particular things or places (Santhalunai & Vijaya, 2020), such as the *Opera House*.

**Previous Studies of the Relativizers *Which* and *That* with Text Varieties**

To begin with, Allen (2009) used English newspapers to study the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that*. The results show that the use of the relativizers *which* and *that* appear differently. The relativizer *that* occurs higher than the relativizer *which*. Hence, the use of the relativizer *which* is preferred in the genre of English newspapers.

Tse and Hyland (2010) studied NPs used with the relativizers *which* and *that* in different research journals, such as biology, engineering, applied linguistics and sociology. Approximately 42,000 words, which were collected to be studied, contained a total of 209 tokens of relative clauses. The results show that the NP used with the relativizes *which* and *that* in these research articles are used to modify format-represented entities, as in (11).

(11) (a)    Syntax features *short articles which* facilitate a fast review process.

(b)    FEBS letters provide an international forum for *mini-reviews, hypotheses and research letter that* merit urgent publication.

(Tse & Hyland, 2010: 12)

In (11a) and (11b), *short articles, mini-reviews, hypotheses and research letter* are NPs as format-represented entities. In addition, the relative clauses in research articles are used to denote subjectivity or the writers' opinions and comments, such as (12).

(12) Written in language that new readers will find accessible, articles provide insights *that seasoned experts will find valuable.*

(Tse & Hyland, 2010: 20)

*That seasoned experts will find valuable,* as in (12), is interpreted as the writer's comment. The results also show that the relativizer *that* is preferred to be used in academic articles.

Along the same lines, Cho and Lee (2016) selected science and engineering journals to study English relative clauses. They selected four research journals, including *CELL*, *JACS*, *IEEE* and *ESP*. The use of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* are substantially different. The use of the relativizer *that* in *CELL*, *JACS*, *IEEE* and *ESP* journals appear at 97.3 percent, 84.3 percent, 71.2 percent, and 53.8 percent, respectively. This

implies that research articles prefer the use of the relativizer *that* more than *which*.

(13) Acculturation has been defined as adaptation to *a new major society that* results when people of one ethnicity move to an area with different cultural features.

(Deveci & Nunn, 2018: 24)

The use of the relativizer *that* occurs with abstract nouns as in *a new major society* in (13). In addition, Khan and AL-Namer (2017) selected Arabic EFL learners to study usage of relative clauses with the relativizers *which* and *that*. In their experiment, the percentage of accuracy was counted out of 100 percent. The percentage of correct answers in the use of the relativizers *which* and *that* are 33.3 percent and 30.67 percent.

## Methodology

### Source of Data

Lalremruati (2019) highlighted the numerous benefits of English novels. The criteria for selecting English novels in this study follow Cullings (2015), who indicated that the novels selected to be studied must gain popularity among readers, the indicator of popularity in the English novels in this study are based upon them being best-seller novels. The contents in these novels are suitable for everyone, which means all genders and both children and adults are able to read them. The selection of the novels in this study was based upon the purposive sampling method. The advantage of this method is that it supports the researcher's convenience in gathering information. The researcher can keep collecting the data until he can ensure that the result of the study is effective enough to report to the public. (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016). For example, in this current study, after the researchers gathered the following eight English novels to study the relativizer *which* and *that,* the results of the study finally appear to be

repetitive enough to be reported. The novels selected to be studied are as follows:

**Table 1** Selected English Novels

| Titles | Authors and Years |
|---|---|
| *Persuasion* | Austen (2018) |
| *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* | Doyle (2019) |
| *Frankenstein* | Shelley (2019) |
| *The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring* | Tolkien (2020) |
| *A Tale of Two Cities* | Dickens (2021) |
| *Little Women* | Alcott (2019) |
| *The Mayor of Casterbridge* | Hardy (2021) |
| *Treasure Island* | Stevenson (2019) |

There are eight well-known authors in this study. As such, when the data were gathered from the various authors, the grammatical patterns that were collected to be studied would not be specifically related to only a particular author's writing style (Melcher & Shaw, 2011).

### The Data Collection

With the number of eight English novels, the data collection in this study is approximately 400,000 words to study the relativizers *which* and *that*. There are 121 tokens of relative clauses used with the relativizers *which* and *that* in the selected English novels. The data collection in this study is collected based upon sentence structure (Radford, 2009). This study follows Radford's (2009) generative grammar as it is believed that grammar use is systemic. We can study the formulaic pattern and system of how language is used. This acquisition of systems and formulaic patterns will be

useful for EFL and ESL learners to use language more effectively and efficiently.

Each token was collected based upon sentence level as the vicinity of the relativizers *which* and *that* is significant to help the researcher gain syntactic interpretations, as in (14).

(14) Every stone of its inner wall was covered by *inscription which* has been carved by prisoners- dates, names, complaints, and prayers.

(Dickens, 2021: 128)

Example (14) presents how data were extracted to study. The keyword is the relativizer *which*. The noun phrase in (14) is *inscription* which is modified by the relative clause.

### The Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study follows Radford (2009), who classified the use of the relativizer *which* and *that* into different categories. While the relativizer *that* is used with animacy, referring to people, the use of the relativizer *which* is able to be used with NPs referring to inanimate subjects, as in (15).

(15) I gazed on *the picture of my mother which* stood over the mantelpiece.

(Shelley, 2019: 58)

In (15), *the picture of my mother* is interpreted as inanimacy as it is referring to the picture, not the mother.

In regard to the interpretation of noun phrase (NP), the classification of noun phrases in this study follows Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020) whose classifications of concrete noun, abstract noun and proper noun are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2** Syntactic Interpretations of Noun Phrases

| Types of Noun Phrase | Examples |
|---|---|
| Concrete noun | I gazed on *the picture of my mother which* stood over the mantelpiece. <br><br> (Shelley, 2019: 58) |
| Abstract noun | He had no *idea* that this could dwell in the thoughts of his fair young wife. (Dickens, 2021: 202) |
| Proper noun | On June 3$^{rd}$, that is, on Monday last, McCarthy left his house at Hatherley about three in the afternoon and walked down to *the Boscombe Pool*, which is a small lake formed by the spreading out of the stream which run down the Boscombe Valley. (Doyle, 2019: 90) |

According to Table 2, concrete noun is defined as a tangible object existing in the real world (Just et al., 2010). Abstract noun is defined as entities that cannot be seen or felt such as ideas, actions, qualities and conditions. Proper noun refers to a specific name of places or things.

**The Results**

**Overall Frequency of the Relativizers *Which* and *That* in English Novels**

This section presents the frequency of the relativizers *that* and *which* in English novels as in Table 3.

**Table 3** Frequency and Percentage of the Relativizers *That* and *Which* in English Novels

| Relativizers | *that* | | *which* | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Freq.* | *%* | *Freq* | *%* | |
| *Persuasion* (Austen, 2018) | 0 | 0 | 6 | 100 | 6 |
| *Frankenstein* (Shelley, 2019) | 2 | 8.70 | 21 | 91.30 | 23 |
| *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (Doyle, 2019) | 8 | 20.51 | 31 | 79.49 | 39 |
| *Treasure Island* (Stevenson, 2019) | 1 | 14.29 | 6 | 85.71 | 7 |
| *Little Women* (Alcott, 2019) | 0 | 0 | 6 | 100 | 6 |
| *The Lord of the Ring* (Tolkien, 2020) | 4 | 57.14 | 3 | 42.85 | 7 |
| *A Tale of Two Cities* (Dickens, 2021) | 9 | 50 | 9 | 50 | 18 |
| *The Mayor of Casterbridge* Hardy, 2021) | 5 | 33.33 | 10 | 66.67 | 15 |
| Total | 29 | 23.97 | 92 | 76.03 | 121 |

Table 3 reports the frequency and percentage concerning the use of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* in the selected English novels. The use of the relativizers *that* and *which* appear at 23.97 and 76.03 percent, respectively.

**Frequency and Percentage of Syntactic Interpretations of Noun Phrases with the Relativizer *That***

There are 29 tokens of the relativizer *that* in this study. While 7 tokens are used with concrete nouns, 22 tokens are used with abstract nouns which are presented as percentages in Table 4.

**Table 4** Frequency and Percentage of the Relativizer *That* with Concrete Nouns, Abstract Nouns and Proper Nouns

| Syntactic Interpretations of NP | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Concrete noun | 7 | 24.14 |
| Abstract noun | 22 | 75.86 |
| Proper noun | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 29 | 100 |

With a total of 29 token, the use of relativizer *that* used with concrete nouns and abstract nouns are 24.14 percent and 75.86 percent, respectively. The use of the relativizer *that* with proper nouns was not found in this study.

**Frequency and Percentage of Syntactic Interpretations of Noun Phrase with the Relativizer *Which***

There are 92 tokens of the relativizer *which* in this study. While 57 tokens are used with concrete nouns, 29 tokens are used with abstract nouns and 6 tokens are used with proper nouns, as presented in Table 5.

**Table 5** Frequency and Percentage of the Relativizer *Which* with Concrete Nouns, Abstract Nouns and Proper Nouns

| Syntactic Interpretations of NP | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Concrete noun | 57 | 61.96 |
| Abstract noun | 29 | 31.52 |
| Proper noun | 6 | 6.52 |
| Total | 92 | 100 |

With a total of 92 tokens, the use of the relativizer *which* with concrete nouns, abstract nouns and proper nouns are 61.96 percent, 31.52 percent and 6.52 percent, respectively

The following section will provide a discussion relating to the abovementioned results of the study.

## Discussion

### Comparison of the Relativizers *Which* and *That* in English Novels with Previous Studies

This section provides a comparison of the differences of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* as occurred in the selected English novels with the results of previous studies. In brief, the percentage of the relativizer *that* and *which* in selected English novels occur 23.97 and 76.03 percent, respectively. This clearly shows that the relativizer *which* is preferred over the relativizer *that* in English novels as reproduced in (16).

(16) I gazed on *the picture of my mother which* stood over the mantelpiece.

(Shelley, 2019: 58)

With the percentages and exemplifications shown above, the current study is different from most previous studies. For example, Allen's (2009) study of relative clauses in newspapers found that the relativizer *that* occurs with a higher frequency.

The higher frequency of the relativizer *which* in English novels in the current study appears contradictory to Cho and Lee (2016) who chose academic journals as in science and engineering journal papers. Their study of relative clauses came from the corpora of *CELL*, *JACS*, *IEEE* and *ESP*. The use of the relativizer *that* in *CELL*, *JACS*, *IEEE* and *ESP* journals are 97.3 percent, 84.3 percent, 71.2 percent, and 53.8 percent, respectively. This

shows that research articles prefer the use of the relativizer *that* more than the use of the relativizer *which*.

Moreover, the results of the higher frequency of the relativizer *which* in the current study are also contradictory to Collins, Yao and Borlongan (2014) who used the corpus of ICE-Phil to examine relative clauses in Philippine English. The ICE-Phil data shows that the use of the relativizer *that* is higher than *which*.

Aside from that, the higher frequency of the relativizer *which* in this study appears differently from Race and MacDonald's (2003) study where they used *the Wall Street Journal* to study noun phrases (NP) used with the relativezers *which and that.* The results in their study show that the relativizer *that* is preferred in the genre of newspapers. The high frequency of use of the relativiser *which,* therefore, appears to be unique to the genre of English novels.

**Similarities of Syntactic Interpretations of the Relativizers *Which* and *That***

This section provides a discussion of the use of the relativizer *which* and *that* in English novels. Swan (2016) addresses that the relativizer *that* is able to be used as a relative pronoun to modify people, similar to *who*. However, the relativizer *that* is not found to be used with animate subjects or human beings in English novels in this study. In contrast to Swan (2016), the use of the relativizer *that* mostly appears with inanimacy, or non-human being, as in (17).

(17) The finger of the knitting women was vicious, with the experience that they could tear.

(Dickens, 2021: 273)

In example (17), the noun phrase *experience* is interpreted as inanimacy (Kearns, 2011).

One of the syntactic interpretations of the relativizers *which* and *that* is that they can be used as synonymy, referring to words with closely related meaning (Kearns, 2011). This refers to inanimate objects in the same lexical domain.

One of the similarities between the relativizers *which* and *that* are that they are both used with the semantic denotations of human being's organs, as in (18).

(18) (a)  When coffee had been served and they were alone together, the nephew, looking at the uncle and meeting the eyes of *the face that* was like a fine mask, opened a conversation.

(Dickens, 2021: 154)

(b)  He had that rather wild, strained, seared marking about *the eyes, which* may be observed in all free livers of his class, from the pretrials of Jefferies downward.

(Dickens, 2021: 113)

The relativizers *which* and *that* can be synonymously used in the domain of human being's organ, such as *hands* and *eyes.*

Another similarity between the relativizers *which* and *that* is that they are used to modify places as in (19), where (19b) is a modified version of (19a).

(19) (a)  They turned into *the wine-shop, which* was closed for it was midnight.

(Dickens, 2021: 220)

(b)  They turned into the *wine-shop, that* was closed for it was midnight.

In (19), the use of the relativizer *which* and *that* are used as the relative pronouns to modify places such as *the wine-shop*.

Yet another similarity between the relativizers *which* and *that* is that they are synonymously used in the same domain to modify NPs relating to animals, as suggested by Gilquin and Jacobs (2006) and presented in example (20).

(20) (a)   I would like to know who sold you *the geese which* you supplied to the Alpha.

(Doyle, 2019: 183)

(b)   *The fish that* you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could have been done in China.

(Doyle, 20219: 41)

This is agreed by Swan (2016) who stated that the use of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* can be used with objects, such as human beings' organs, shops and animals.

### Differences of the Relativizers *Which and That* in English Novels

This section discusses the differences in regard to the use of the relativizers *which and that* with their NPs.

### The Frequent Occurrences of the Relativizer *That* with Abstract Nouns

As mentioned by Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020), concrete nouns are physical or tangible objects. On the other hand, Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020) note that abstract noun refers to concepts, ideas or intangible objects. While in this study the relativiser *that* was not found to be used with proper nouns, from a total of 29 tokens, the use of the relativizer *that* used with concrete nouns and abstract nouns are 24.14 percent and 75.86

percent, respectively. This clearly indicates that the relativizer *that* is mostly used with abstract nouns as in (21).

> (21) The finger of the knitting women was vicious, with the *experience that* they could tear.

<div align="right">(Dickens, 2021: 273)</div>

**The Frequent Occurrences of the Relativizer *Which* with Concrete Nouns**

Santhalunai and Vijaya (2020) indicated that a concrete noun is defined as a physical object. There are 92 tokens found in the selected English novels. 61.96 percent of the relativizer *which* is used with concrete nouns, while 31.52 percent is used with abstract nouns. However, only 6.52 percent is used with proper nouns. An example of the relativizer *which* with abstract nouns is presented in (22).

> (22) He threw over a sheet of thick, *pick-tinted notepaper which* has been lying open the table.

<div align="right">(Doyle, 2019: 12)</div>

In (22), *pick-tinted notepaper* is an example of a concrete noun or tangible object. This study also found that the relativizer *which* is occasionally found to be used with *proper nouns*, referring to specific names of places (Santhalunai & Vijaya, 2020), as in (23).

> (23) The party would return to the furnished house at *Lancaster Gate which* has been taken by Mr. Aloysius Doran.

*Lancaster Gate* is the name of a place in England. The syntactic interpretation of NPs used with the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that* in this study shows that the relativizer *that* is preferred to be used with abstracts nouns, whereas the relativizer *which* is preferred to be used with concrete nouns and only occasionally with proper nouns.

**Conclusion**

This study examined relative clauses used with the relativizers *which* and *that* in English novels. In regard to the frequency of the relativizers *which* and *that* in English novels, the use of the relativizer *which* occurs higher than the relativizer *that* at 76.03 percent and 23.97 percent, respectively. When comparing these percentages with the previous studies that used different texts, the results in this study show that most text varieties as in newspaper, academic articles, international corpora and EFL writing prefer the use of the relativize *that*, however, the percentage of the relativizer *that* in this study does not go along the same line with those previous studies. This study gains insight into the syntactic interpretations of the relativizer *which* and the relativizer *that*. The differences between the two are that the relativizer *which* prefers to be used with the NP of concrete noun phrase, such as *inscription* and *pick-tinted notepaper.* On the other hand, the relativizer *that* prefers to be used with the abstract nouns, such as *experience*. The results of this study are only limited to the data of English novels. Generalizing the results of the study to other types of texts such as English magazines may not be applicable to the optimal levels. For future research, it is recommended that using other sources of data, such as English magazines and academic prose would gain other perspectives of the use of relative clauses with the relativizers *which* and *that* in English.

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