

Relative Clauses

-work in Polish much as in English, with a few differences

FUNCTION AND FORM:

In both languages relative clauses serve as a means of linking two sentences which share the same noun, in the second sentence the noun is replaced by a relative pronoun:

E: I met a woman. This woman works in a bank.
I met a woman who works in a bank.

P: Spotkałam kobietę. Ta kobieta pracuje w banku.
Spotkałam kobietę, która pracuje w banku.

In Polish, a language with gender and case, the gender of the relative pronoun is determined by its referent:

To jest mój *przyjaciel*, **który** pracuje w banku.
To jest moja *koleżanka*, **która** pracuje w banku.
To jest *dziecko*, **które** lubię.

The case of the relative pronoun is determined by its function in the relative clause:

Lubię tego *chłopca*, **który** pracuje w banku.
Lubię tego *chłopca*, **którego** spotkałam w Warszawie.
Lubię tego *chłopca*, **z którym** byłeś w Krakowie.

DIFFERENCES:

1) in Polish you can never delete a relative pronoun:

E: This is the man who(m) I saw yesterday.
This is the man I saw yesterday.

P: To jest ten mężczyzna, **którego** widziałam wczoraj.

2) In English there are three relative pronouns: *who* for people, *which* for objects, *that* for either. In Polish there is one main relative pronoun (*który*) for both people and objects. The pronoun *jaki* (also for people and objects) is used mainly when comparison is involved (*który* is neutral).

To jest najciekawsza książka, **jaką** mam.
To jest (taki) film, **jaki** zawsze chciałam zobaczyć.
Kupię ci (taki) prezent, **jaki** chcesz.

3) Relative clauses are always separated by a comma from the main clause in Polish (in English only nonrestrictive/attributive relative clauses are).

4) Just as with question words, the preposition cannot be separated from the relative pronoun (stranded) in Polish:

E: This is the woman, with whom I went to school.
This is the woman, who I went to school with.

P: To jest kobieta, **z którą** studiowałam.