

Affirmative Clausology (2)

Direct (Type B) Affirmative Relative Clauses

Time to finish off our clauses! The only "cell" in our matrix of possibilities that we haven't tackled yet is the Affirmative version of Type B Clauses, known as Direct Relative Clauses.

There are the ones where the "that" refers to something, in the first part of the sentence, that turns out to be the subject or object of the clause. So, when we find a clause that is obviously missing a subject or object of the action (not of a preposition), we have a direct relative clause.

Affirmative direct relative (B) clauses are different in grammatical form from the others we have dealt with, in that they use only one particle (*a*) for all tenses, always followed by lenition (or *d'*).

The Grammar of Direct Relative Clauses

Here's the grammar of affirmative direct relative clauses:

- ◆ For all tenses *including* the past, we use the particle *a* followed by lenition. Note these special forms: *atá, a deir, a fuair*.
- ◆ This *a* is followed by the *independent* form of the verb (*a bhí*). That means that you get things like *a rinne, a chuaigh*.
- ◆ In the past, habitual past, and conditional, we use the *d'* where necessary: *a d'oscail sé, a d'osclaíodh sé, a d'osclódh sé, a d'fhan siad*.

This is the one that doesn't fit . . .

On the one hand, we can't piggyback on *nach* as easily to figure this one out for most tenses. But the good news is that this form is very consistent. We just **use the usual form of the verb, adding lenition if necessary**. That means independent forms, where that applies, and that *d'* will be used for the appropriate tenses.

So, comparing the other forms with these Direct Relative (B) clauses:

Seo é an fear a mbuaileann a iníon a deartháir.

Seo é an iníon a bhuaileann(s) a deartháir.

Cá bhfuil an bord ar chuir tú an bia air?

Cá bhfuil an bia a chuir tú ar an mbord?

Deir sí gur oscail sí an doras.

Sin í an bhean a d'oscail an doras.

Past Tense

Because it is followed by lenition, the past direct relative ends up looking much the same in the affirmative and the negative. The main issues are *a* vs. *ar*, and whether to use *d'*:

- | | | |
|----|---|---|
| A. | Deir siad nár ith siad úll. | Creidim nár cheannaigh sí carr. |
| | Deir siad gur ith siad úll. | Creidim gur cheannaigh sí carr. |
| B. | Seo é an t-úll nár ith siad. | Seo é an carr nár cheannaigh sí. |
| | Seo é an t-úll a d'ith siad. | Seo é an carr a cheannaigh sí. |
| C. | Feicim fear nár ith a iníon úll. | Feicim fear nár cheannaigh a iníon carr. |
| | Feicim fear ar ith a iníon úll. | Feicim fear ar cheannaigh a iníon carr. |

Additional Usage Notes

Special Relative Forms with -s

You've probably heard me say "a bhíonn" and stuff like that. With the direct relative particle *a*, there are two tenses that often get the -s addition: the habitual present, and the future:

. . . an fear a bhíonn ann

. . . an fear a bheas ann

. . . an bhean a chasanns amhráin

. . . an bhean a chasfas amhráin

an fear a cheanaíonn carranna

an fear a cheannós carranna

Now, there are naturally some variations on this theme:

- ◆ Although this is not part of the standard, these -s forms are very widely used, especially outside of Munster. They would be found and recognized just about everywhere.
- ◆ In the habitual present, there is also the option of just using (e)as, that is, *a chasas* instead of *a chasanns* -- making them sound identical! In fact, the adding s to the -nn ending is most common in Conamara. The (e)as approach may be equally, or more, common elsewhere.
- ◆ This happens *only in the affirmative*. So, *a chasanns*, but *nach gcasann*.
- ◆ This has no effect on combined forms -- *an t-amhrán a chasaim*.

Other "Triggers" For Direct Relative Clauses

Direct relatives consistently follow:

- ◆ Cad/Céard/Cé questions (with no preposition before the relative particle)
- ◆ Anything with *uair*
- ◆ Cé mhéad, Cá fhad, Cathain, Conas
- ◆ Cé chomh + adjective + is: (How often do you eat? *Cé chomh minic is a itheanns tú?*)

Minor Confusions To Keep You On Your Toes

- ◆ *Mar* is followed by a direct relative clause when it means "how, like, etc.", and by an indirect relative clause when it means "where". So, "what she's like" = *mar atá sí*, but *mar a bhfuil sí* = "where she is."
- ◆ Many of the time expressions -- *Cén lá*, and the like, are flexible, and might be followed by either type of clause. The ones you can count on are:
 - *uair*: *Cén uair* and *Nuair* are always followed by the direct relative.
 - We use the direct relative form when we ask, "What time is it?" with *Cén t-am atá sé?*, but in other usages, *am* could be followed by either one.
- ◆ As mentioned in the previous handout, note the difference between asking a "what" versus a "with/on/etc. what" question:

Céard a bhuail sé?

Céard leis ar bhuail sé é?

PRACTICE

Translate the sentences below (all B: Direct Relative). IF the sentence is in the negative, then also translate an affirmative version. Note that unlike our indirect clauses, the grammatical forms will generally be different.

1. I see the car that will not break.
2. What kind of bread doesn't he eat?
3. This is the man who did not watch television.
4. Where is the cat that does not sit on the table?
5. Do you know the woman who would not buy my book?
6. I saw the man who did not kill his wife.
7. I love that song she will not sing.
8. That is the police officer who did not steal money.
9. When will they come?
10. How wide is that road?
11. That's how it is.
12. What didn't you see inside the box?
13. Who will not learn in class?
14. When I was young . . .
15. Which student did not come last week?
16. Where is the cat that will not eat the mouse?
17. I am the person who did not listen to the radio.
18. Kick the boy who does not kick cats.
19. She bought a skirt that is not red.
20. I was a movie that I did not like ("that did not please me").