Syntax and Discourse: A Look at Resumptive Pronouns

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Syntax and Discourse: A Look at Resumptive Pronouns* Ellen F. Prince University of Pennsylvania

1. Introduction.

Whenever a grammar has two or more forms that are in free variation from the point of view of truth-conditional semantics, it is worthwhile investigating whether there are in fact pragmatic differences that distinguish them. In this paper, I shall investigate the discourse functions of a particular syntactic form in Yiddish and its correlate in English, relative clauses containing a resumptive pronoun, comparing them with gap-containing relative clauses in each language.

Standard Yiddish has, alongside of gap-containing relative clauses, as in 1, relative

clauses containing so-called resumptive pronouns, as in 2:

- (1) a. ...a yid vos [e] hot geheysn rabinovitsh... (RP81) ...a Jew that [e] has be-called Rabinowitz...
 - '...a guy who [e] was named Rabinowitz...'
 b. ...an alte yidene vos [e] iz nebekh gelegn in bet (RP230)
 ...an old Jewess who [e] is PRT lain in bed...

"...an old bag who [e] was lying in bed, the poor thing..."

- c. ...di mayse vos ikh vel [e] aykh dertseyln... (RP 63)
 ...the story that I will [e] you tell...
 '...the story that I'll tell you [e]...'
- (2) a. ...a yidene vos zi hot geheysn yente... (RP29)
 ...a Jewess that she has been-called Yenta...
 '...an old bag that [she] was named Yenta...'
 - b. ...a yid vos er iz geven a groyser lamdn un a gvir... (RP178)
 - ...a Jew that he is been a big scholar and a rich-man...
 '...a guy who [he] was a big scholar and a rich man...'
 - c. ...mentshn vos a shlang hot zey gebisn... (RP248) ...people that a snake has them bitten...

'...people that a snake has bitten [them]...'

The situation in English is somewhat different: relative clauses with resumptive pronouns are officially ungrammatical in English (Langendoen 1970, Kroch 1981, Sells 1987, inter alia; but cf. Kayne 1981). However, they are in fact not uncommon in speech. Some examples are given in 3 and 4:

(3) a. There are always guests who I am curious about what they are going to say. (AK:Dick Cavett)

b. The only one we could see *her* figure was Number 2. (AK:Kitty Carlisle, To Tell the Truth, 9/8/81)

- c. Let's get to our first guest, who I asked for and was so delighted that he could make it. (AK:Orson Wells, Tonight Show)
- (4) a. They were just towed across the Midway onto the bridle path, where they were just sitting there peacefully. (AK:Laurence Horn)

b. That's a suggestion of yours which I followed, which I didn't even want to do that. (AK:Gregory Ward)

c. I have a friend who she does all the platters. (AK:Ellen Prince)

Thus, we may pose the following questions: What prompts a Yiddish or English speaker to utter a gap-containing vs. a pronoun-containing relative clause in a particular context? Is

the distribution of the two types of clauses random, or does one type do some work that the other does not do, resulting in a nonrandom distribution? Finally, in the event that both the Yiddish and the English resumptive pronoun clauses have some function, is it the same function? I shall now present findings from an ongoing study of the functions of resumptive pronoun clauses in Yiddish and English discourse.

2. Resumptive pronoun clauses and island violations: a processing function.

2.1. English.

What mention there has been in the literature of English resumptive pronouns has generally taken the approach that they are ungrammatical but are ways of salvaging a sentence that a speaker has started without realizing that it is impossible or at least difficult to finish it grammatically, 'making the best of a bad job,' as Langendoen puts it (1970:104). See also Bever, Carroll, and Hurtig 1976 and Kroch 1981. Thus we find many resumptive pronouns in island environments, e.g. indirect questions as in 3a, left branches as in 3b, and following a complementizer in embedded sentences, as in 3c. As would be expected, attempted extraction from other island environments may also result in resumptive pronouns, e.g. relative clauses as in 5a, adverbial clauses as in 5b, and coordinate structures, as in 5c:

- (5) a. That asshole X, who I loathe and despise the ground he walks on, pointed out that... (AK: William Labov)
 - b. Apparently there are such things as bees in the area which if you're stung by them, you die. (AK:D.R.)
 - c. ...or those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them. (AK: Luke 13.4)

Furthermore, we find such 'breakdown' resumptive pronouns in environments where extraction is possible but difficult, either because some material has been preposed, adding to the distance (and time) between the head and the would-be gap, as in 6a, or in the case of a stacked relative, presumably for the same reason of distance/time, as in 6b, or in combinations of the above, as in 6c, 6d:

- (6) a. This is the one if you tell her to go away she stays, if you tell her to stay, she leaves. (AK: M.K.)
 - b. There are two plants that need more light, that we have a good chance of getting *them* to bloom if we give them more light. (AK:Anthony Kroch)
 - c. I got a new pen the other day that someone gave me that if you press the clip it shows the time. (AK:J.C.)
 - d. What does it print out some statement that's really obscure that the average reader is going to look at it and wonder what it means. (AK:T.X.)

Finally, it is possible that some extractions fail because the constituent to be extracted represents an argument low on the Accessibility Hierarchy (Keenan and Comrie 1977) and a resumptive pronoun occurs. Perhaps the datives in 7 are such cases:

- (7) a. ...the man who this made him feel sad... (AK:P/S)
 - b. Some of the same judges who we told *them* that if you mess with John Africa, you going to... (AK: MOVE member)
 - c. He looks like one of those guys you got to be careful throwing them fastballs. (AK:Tim McCarver, KYW Radio)

2.2. Yiddish.

The situation in Yiddish is very similar in that resumptive pronouns occur when extraction would violate an island constraint or when processing is difficult for some other reason. However, the Yiddish corpus used for the present study is a written one and understandably has few such instances. All the same, we do find one possessive (8a), one embedded subject (8b) and a number of datives, e.g. 8c:

- (8) a. dos iz oykh a shlekhte krenk,
 this is also a bad sickness,
 di gelt vos zeyer har hot fun zey tsores. (RP193)
 the riches that their owner has from them troubles.
 - b. bay eynem a keyser iz geven a minister mit a sheyner bord by one a czar is been a minister with a beautiful beard vos er flegt zogn az zayn bord iz di shenste fun der velt. that he used say that his beard is the most-beautiful of the world.

'This one czar had a minister with a beautiful beard that he used to say [his beard] was the most beautiful in the world.'

c. es iz geven amol a melamed, vos es iz im zeyer shlekht gegangen. it is been once a teacher that it is him very bad gone. 'There was once a teacher who [he] was very badly off.' (RP184)

In fact, I suspect that certain datives are simply nonextractable; these are the datives in 'subjectless' sentences, of which 8c is an example. That is, datives in ordinary subject-containing sentences can be extracted so long as the complementizer is one that can be inflected, as in 9b. However, an informant found it nearly impossible to extract a dative in the subjectless sentence corresponding to 8c, as in 10a; she was unable to produce 9b and, when I produced it, could say only 'Well, I guess that's grammatical,' a response motivated perhaps more by her fine logic than by her equally fine linguistic intuitions. Furthermore, it was even harder for her to extract the dative from subjectless sentences with zayn 'be' as their main verb, as in 10b, and she accepted easily only the resumptive pronoun forms 10c and 10d:

- (9) a. ...eyn eyntsikn zun, vos im gehert di gantse yerushe... (RP167)
 ...one single son, that him belongs the whole inheritance...
 '...an only son, to whom the whole inheritance belongs [to him]...'
 - b. ...eyn eyntsikn zun, vemen/velkhn es gehert di gantse yerushe
 - ...one single son whom/whom it belongs the whole inheritance
- (10) a. ??...a melamed vemen/velkhn s'iz [e] zeyer shlekht gegangen. ...a teacher whom/whom it is [e] very bad gone
 - b ?*...a mentsh vemen/velkhn s'iz [e] kalt
 - ...a person whom/whom it is [e] cold
 - '...a person who [e] is=feels cold'
 - c. ...a mentsh vos s'iz im kalt
 - ...a person that it is him cold
 - d ...a mentsh vos im iz kalt ...a person that him is cold

Thus we see that the processing function attributed to English resumptive pronoun clauses in the literature, that is, the function of permitting speakers to finish sentences which have been poorly planned from the point of view of the grammar, may also be ascribed to Yiddish resumptive pronoun clauses.

2.3. Where the processing explanation fails.

One looks for discourse functions of a particular syntactic form when it is clear that speakers have options; in the case of resumptive pronoun clauses with processing functions, there are no options and hence no reason to look for discourse explanations. The fact remains, however, that both Yiddish and English speakers produce many resumptive pronoun clauses which do not fall into the processing-function category in any obvious way, i.e. where no syntactic salvaging appears to be needed. Consider, for example, 2 and 4 above. Such cases, where the relative clause consists of a simple sentence with the subject or object relativized and with no intervening material and no obvious sign of dysfluency, are cases where we have to assume that the resumptive pronoun clauses are grammatical alternatives to gap-containing clauses, and it is here that we shall try to see whether they do any discourse work for the speaker.

3. Previous claims about the discourse functions of resumptive pronouns. While there has been no discussion in the literature of Yiddish resumptive pronouns and no specific claims about non-processing functions for English resumptive pronouns, some claims have been made about the discourse function of resumptive pronouns in other languages, which we shall now consider.

3.1. The 'concept' claim.

First, resumptive pronouns in island-type environments have been noted in a number of languages in addition to English, e.g. the Scandinavian languages (Engdahl 1979, Maling and Zaenen 1980). Accounts differ as to whether they are grammatical or not, but their occurrence and distribution has been recognized.

In addition, resumptive pronouns in simple contexts have been noted in other languages, in particular Hebrew and the Celtic languages. With respect to Hebrew, Doron 1982 claims that the antecedent of a resumptive pronoun has widest scope in the clause that contains the pronoun, whereas the antecedent of a gap does not necessarily. For example, Doron contrasts 11a with 11b; while the gap-containing 11a can have a referential or non-referential understanding for 'the woman', the pronoun-containing 11b can have only the referential reading, paraphrased in 11c:

- (11) a. dani yimca et ha-iSa Se-hu mexapes [e]. [= Doron 1982, ex. 49]
 Dani will-find ACC the-woman that-he seeks [e]
 - b. dani yimca et ha-iSa Se-hu mexapes ota. [= Doron 1982, ex. 50]
 Dani will-find ACC the-woman that-he seeks her
 - c. There is a woman that Dani is seeking and he will find this woman.

Sells 1987 concurs, arguing that resumptive pronouns cannot have a 'concept' interpretation, his term for the nonspecific/de dicto/narrow scope reading possible in 11a but not 11b. Whether his claim is restricted to Hebrew or is generalizable universally, as he implicates, is not clear.

In any event, Erteschik-Shir 1989 disagrees with the claim even for Hebrew and finds a context in which Sells' own example can have a 'concept' interpretation. Ariel 1990 likewise disagrees with Sells' claim for Hebrew, providing counterexamples like 12:

(12) higia ha-zman she-navin she-pashut eyn arrived the-time that-we-should-understand that-simply there-is-not be-nimca ha-muamad ha-ideali she-oto anaxnu mexapsim. in-existence the-candidate the-ideal that-him we are-seeking 'It is about time that we realized that the ideal candidate that [him] we are looking for simply does not exist.' [= Ariel 1990, ex. 26]

Regardless of the situation in Hebrew, Sells' and Doron's claim of necessary referentiality clearly does not hold for Yiddish. The Yiddish equivalent of 11b is 13:

(13) dani vet trefn di froy vos er zukht zi.

Dani will find the woman that he seeks her

The resumptive pronoun clause in 13 is perfectly grammatical with the reading in 11c, although it is not particularly felicitous for reasons which will become clear later. In the corpus, we find an example of a resumptive pronoun clause where the head is nonreferential, shown in 14a, and one from a letter from a Yiddish speaker in Bucharest is shown in 14b:

- (14) a. [A messenger comes to tell a Jewish community that a priest wishes to have a Bible contest with the Jews.] di shtetl zol shteln a yidn vos er zol geyn oysfregn dem galekh, the village shall place a Jew that he shall interrogate the priest, un der galekh zol oysfregn dem yidn. (RP:220) and the priest shall interrogate the Jew. 'The village should pick a Jew who [he] will question the priest...'
 - b. er hot nokh nisht gefunen dos meydl vos er zol derfiln az er hot zi lib. he has still not found the girl that he shall feel that he has her love 'He still hasn't found the girl he feels he loves [her].' (Y. G.)

Both 14a and 14b clearly involve 'concept' interpretations. The resumptive pronoun in 14b may well have a processing motivation, since the extraction site is in a complement, but neither Doron nor Sells make any distinction between island-type cases and simple cases, and therefore 14a,b show that their claim that resumptive pronouns may not refer to nonspecific heads does not apply to Yiddish. We shall return to this matter below.

Likewise, it is not the case that 'concept' interpretations are impossible in English.

A number are found in the corpus, e.g. those in 15:

- (15) a. ...in case there's important plans that a robber wants to steal them. (AK:D.K.)
 - b. If there is any message that she can forward it to us, then... (AK:William Labov)
 - i don't think there's a company in the world that the stockholders would allow a company to copy it. (AK:engineer on TV)
 - d. You get a rack that the bike will sit on it. (AK: E.K.)

3.2. The 'restrictive-set' claim.

Second, Erteschik-Shir (1989) argues that Hebrew resumptive pronoun clauses are used when a 'restrictive-set' reading is intended. She contrasts 16a, where a gap is preferred, with 16b, where a pronoun is preferred:

- (16) a. [In the context where H knows that S bought a dress.] hine ha-simla she-kaniti [e]. [= Erteschik-Shir 1989, ex. 12] here-is the-dress that-I-bought [e]
 - b. [In the context where H knows S had three dresses in mind originally.] hine ha-simla she-kaniti ota. here-is the-dress that-I-bought it.

However, the notion of 'restrictive-set' does not seem relevant for English or Yiddish resumptive pronouns. While the Yiddish equivalent of 16b is clearly grammatical, it is not

felicitous, certainly not in the restrictive-set understanding forced by the context. Furthermore, none of the naturally-occurring examples in the corpus have a restrictive-set reading. As for English, while I am reluctant to pass judgment on the grammaticality of the English equivalent of 16b, it is likewise the case that none of the naturally-occurring examples in the corpus are contrastive in this way.

3.3. The 'accessibility' claim.

In her discussion of the cognitive 'accessibility' of discourse entities and their linguistic representations, Ariel 1990 argues for a pragmatic explanation for the ungrammaticality of relative-clause-initial resumptive pronoun subjects in Hebrew. Her argument is that the antecedent in such cases is maximally 'accessible', being immediately prior to the extraction site, and that resumptive pronouns occur when antecedents are low on the accessibility scale. Whatever the correctness of such an account for Hebrew, it certainly cannot be maintained for Yiddish or English, since the majority of naturally-occurring resumptive pronouns in both the Yiddish and the English corpuses are initial subjects. See, for example, 2a,b and 14a above for Yiddish, 4c above for English.

4. The present study.

We shall now turn to the present study of how resumptive pronoun relative clauses are used in Yiddish and English. First, however, a description of the corpuses on which the study was based is in order.

4.1. The corpuses.

4.1.1. The Yiddish corpus.

The corpus for the Yiddish study is taken from Royte pomerantsn, a 200-page compilation of anecdotes gathered and edited by Immanuel Olsvanger and published in a romanized version by Schocken Press (1947). This volume contains 169 headed relatives, of which 31/18% have resumptive pronouns and 138/82% have gaps. Of the 31 resumptive pronoun clauses, three were omitted from the study, since their presence could be explained by the processing explanation given above and since they have no gapped correlate. (These three are shown in 8 above.) Other tokens which possibly have a processing explanation but which do have a gapped correlate, e.g. 9a, were included. The rationale for this was that these tokens are from a published work where the author had ample time to plan and edit, where he had a choice and chose a resumptive pronoun, and it is exactly that choice that we are investigating. Thus we are left with 166 headed relatives where the author had a choice of clause-type, choosing a gap in 138/83% of them, a resumptive pronoun in the remaining 28/17%.

4.1.2. The English corpus.

The English study is based on two very different types of data, different both from each other and from the Yiddish data. The English resumptive pronoun clauses are from a collection of 539 naturally-occurring resumptive pronoun clauses with their immediate contexts collected about 9 years ago by Anthony Kroch. These tokens are taken from a wide variety of situations, from casual conversation to classroom discourse to radio and TV newscasts to the New Testament, and the speakers represent an equally wide range, from inner city adolescents to plumbers to Philadelphia aristocrats to Luke. For the present study, only those speakers who were known to be nonnative speakers of American or British English were removed from the corpus. Although no other tokens were omitted because of their speaker, about 70% were in fact removed since it was felt that they had a sufficiently strong processing explanation. That is, all cases where the resumptive pronoun is in an island, e.g. 3 and 5 above, and where there is preposed material intervening between the head and the extraction site, e.g. 6a, or where the extraction site is in a non-initial stacked relative, e.g. 6b, were omitted from the study. For the sake of consistency, datives were not omitted, since they had not been omitted from the Yiddish

corpus, although the English corpus, being spontaneously produced, is more likely to contain breakdowns than the Yiddish corpus. After all these omissions, 158 resumptive pronoun clauses were left where no processing explanation is obvious and where some other motivation for their having been uttered seems likely.

In order to compare these resumptive pronoun clauses with gap-containing clauses, we used a second corpus, the 115 gap-containing clauses occurring in a taped career-counseling session, the transcript of which is on-line in the Computer and Information Science Department at the University of Pennsylvania. The participants are the counselor and a college-age woman, both native speakers of an unmarked variety of American English. ¹

4.1.3. Totals.

The figures for the two corpuses and their provenance are presented in 17:

the figures for the two corpuses and their proventance are presented in it.							
17)	<u> </u>	Yiddish		English			
		Gap	Pronoun	Gap	Pronoun		
	Source:	Royte pomerantsn.	Royte pomerantsn	counseling	A. Kroch		
	Total:	138	31	115	539		
	Foreign:	-	-	-	20/4%		
	Island+:	-	3/10%	-	361/67%		
	Corpus:	138/100%	28/90%	115/100%	158/29%		

4.2. Discourse functions of resumptive pronouns: distributional facts.

4.2.1. Yiddish.

When we compare gap-containing with pronoun-containing relative clauses in Yiddish, a number of patterns emerge. First, we notice that the head of the resumptive pronoun clauses has a significantly greater tendency to be indefinite than does the head of gap-containing clauses, as shown in 18:

18)	Yiddish:	Gap-containing clauses	Resumptive pronoun clauses
	Def. head:	60	3
	Indef. head:	76	25
	Adj. head:	2	-

Chi-square = 10.951 p < 0.001

Second, when we look at the distribution of these definite and indefinite heads, we see that the distinction is relevant only in restrictive relative clauses, as shown in 19:

(19)	Yiddish:	Nonrestrictive		Res	trictive
		Gap	Pronoun	Gap	Pronoun
	Definite head:	6	3	54	-
	Indefinite head:	3	1	73	24
			square =		square =
		0.090			5.886
		p < 0.80 [N.S.]		p <	< 0.001

Furthermore, if we look at the distribution of definite and indefinite heads in restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses only with gaps, we see that it is not significant, as shown in 20:

(20)	Yiddish:	Gap-containing relative clauses only		
		Nonrestrictive	Restrictive	
	Definite head:	6	54	
	Indefinite head:	3	73	
		Chi-square $= 1.988$	p < 0.20 [N.S.]	

Not surprisingly, perhaps, from these figures, if we look at the distribution of definite and indefinite in restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses only with resumptive pronouns, we see that it is highly significant, shown in 21:

(21)	Yiddish:	Resumptive pronoun	relative clauses only
		Nonrestrictive	Restrictive
	Definite head:	3	0
	Indefinite head	1	24
		Chi-square = 20.1	160 p < 0.001

Although the numbers are small, we see a clear pattern in that resumptive pronoun relative clauses in Yiddish strongly favor either nonrestrictives or else restrictives with indefinite heads, whereas no such favoring appears in gap-containing relative clauses. And, in fact, when I constructed resumptive pronoun relative clauses that were restrictive and definite, informants rejected them, e.g. 22:

- a. [Context: There were two guys, one who had a pass and one who didn't.]
 #makht der yid vos er hot gehat a pas, 'zorg zikh nit.'
 makes the Jew that he has had a pass, 'worry REFL not'
 'So the guy who [he] had a pass said, 'Don't worry."
 - b. #di froy hot farloym vos zi hot es gehat. the woman has lost all that she has it had.
 - c. #lomir prubirn a ton dem ershtn yidn vos mir veln im trefn. let-us try an ask do the first Jew that we will him find 'Let's ask the first guy we meet [him].'

4.2.2. English.

We shall now turn to the distribution facts for the English corpus. First, the distribution of definites/indefinites in gap-containing vs. resumptive pronoun clauses is not significant, shown in 23:

(23)	English:	Gap-containing clauses	Resumptive pronoun clauses
	Def. head:	35	56
	Indef. head:	80	102
		Chi square: 0.7	51 n < 0.50 (NIC)

Chi-square: 0.751 p < 0.50 [N.S.]

However, if we separate restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, the situation looks more like what we have already seen in Yiddish, as shown in 24:

(24)	English:	Nonrestrictive		Restrictive	
` '		Gap	Pronoun	Gap	Pronoun
	Definite head:	3	40	32	16
	Indefinite head:	4	18	76	84
		1.	quare = .902 20 [N.S.]	5.	quare = 434 : 0.02

That is, in nonrestrictive clauses, the definiteness of the head is not statistically significant, whereas it is significant at the 0.02 level for restrictives, with indefinites being more favored in resumptive pronoun clauses than in gap-containing clauses.

Now let us consider gap-containing and resumptive pronoun clauses separately. The figures for gap-containing clauses are shown in 25 and those for resumptive pronoun clauses are shown in 26:

(25)	English:	Gap-containing clauses only		
	•	Nonrestrictive	Restrictive	
	Definite head:	3	32	
	Indefinite head:	4	76	
		Chi-square = 0	.543 p < 0.50	
		[N.S.]		

		[-11-1]		
(26)	English:	Resumptive pronoun clauses only		
		Nonrestrictive	Restrictive	
	Definite head:	40	16	
	Indefinite head:	18	84	
		Chi-square $= 45$.	007 p < 0.001	

The pattern that emerges for English in 25 and 26 is strikingly like the one for Yiddish: for gap-containing relative clauses, there is no significant interaction between definiteness and restrictiveness, while, for resumptive pronoun clauses, restrictives tend strongly to be indefinite. That is, there is no significant difference in the likelihood of occurrence of gap-containing clauses like 27a,b, while analogous resumptive pronoun clauses like 28a,b have a very different likelihood of occurrence, indefinites like 28a being far more frequent than definites like 28b:

- (27) a. ...I want to show you some things in the library that you could look at during the vacation time... (COU:c-786)
 - b. There's a big dinner for Reagan a couple of weeks ago and, depending on how much that people paid, they got to have cocktails with him before or an—and then everybody got to eat with him and then those who paid a lot more got to meet with him afterwards... (COU:c-649)
- (28) a. My son, God bless him, he married this girl which I like her. (AK:E.W.) 2
 - b. She sent them in the working room where my father worked, you know, there. (AK:G.R.)

We shall return below to the exceptional cases, those 16 resumptive pronoun clauses that are restrictive and definite, of which 28b is one.

4.3. The 'file card' account.

The obvious question at this point is: What do nonrestrictives have in common with indefinite restrictives? In what way do they form a natural class? The answer certainly does not lie in any morphosyntactic explanation of definiteness per se, nor does it lie, I believe, in a static truth-conditional semantic account. Rather, I believe that what is needed is a dynamic account of how hearers understand sentences and increment their discoursemodels on the basis of those understandings. Intuitively, when a hearer processes a nonexpletive NP, s/he must do something with respect to the discourse model. In the typical case, if the NP is indefinite, it represents a 'Brand-new' entity, as in 29a, and the hearer must add that entity, or construct a new file card, following Heim 1983. And, typically, if the NP is definite, it represents something already evoked in the discourse model, as in 29b, or something assumed to be present in the hearer's knowledge-store, as in 29c, in which case the hearer must activate the appropriate existing file card, or else it represents an entity which the hearer is assumed to be able to infer on the basis of prior knowledge s/he is assumed to have, as in 29d, in which case the hearer must construct a file card out of existing material:

- (29) a. He bought a house and a car.b. The house is a colonial.

 - c. Dolly Madison lived in it for three years.
 - d. But the roof is shot.

Now let us reconsider relative clauses. First, as is well known, nonrestrictive relatives do not affect the reference of the head NP. That is, whatever the hearer is doing with respect to the relevant NPs in 29, s/he is doing the same thing with respect to the heads alone of the corresponding complex NPs in 30:

- a. He bought a house, which, by the way, I had found, and a car.
 - b. The house, which is in Society Hill, is a colonial.
 - c. Dolly Madison, who he always admired, lived in it for three vears.
 - d. But the roof, which is slate, is shot.

That is, the hearer activates or constructs the appropriate file cards purely on the basis of the heads, the nonrestrictive clauses representing information which presumably does not yet exist on those file cards and which must be added to them.

Now consider definite restrictive relative clauses. Typically, the NP that represents the entity whose file card the hearer is being told to activate is the whole complex NP consisting of the head plus the relative clause. Unlike the case of nonrestrictives, the relative clause does not simply add some property to an independently selected file card; on the contrary, the relative clause represents information which must already be on the file card for the hearer to select that card. Consider 31:

- a. He bought a house in Society Hill and a house down the shore. (31)
 - b. The house that's in Society Hill is a colonial.
 - c. The First Lady who introduced ice cream in America lived in it for three years.
 - d. But the part of the roof that's over the dormer is shot.

In 31b, the hearer doesn't add the property of being in Society Hill to the file card for the house; rather, this property is already on one of the two 'house' file cards added for the previous sentence, and it is its presence on that card that induces the hearer to select it in order to add the property of being a colonial. Likewise, the relative clauses in 31c and 31d are not new attributes but (assumed) old information which the hearer must already have

simply to evoke the intended entity.

Thus we see a clear difference in the functioning of nonrestrictive and definite restrictive relative clauses. Interestingly, indefinite restrictive relatives typically function more like nonrestrictives in this respect than like definite restrictives. Consider 32:

(32) a. He bought a house which he'll move into in June.

b. A realtor that I had recommended found it for him.

In both cases, the hearer has to add a new file card, as signaled by the indefiniteness of the NPs. And, in each case, the file card to be added need represent only the entity described by the head, the information in the relative clause simply being an additional property of

that entity to be noted on the independently constructed file card.

I believe that the difference discussed here between nonrestrictives and indefinite restrictives on the one hand and definite restrictives on the other is the relevant factor for whether a Yiddish or English speaker can felicitously utter a resumptive pronoun relative clause rather than a gap-containing relative clause: gap-containing clauses are always permissible in both languages (island-environments notwithstanding), but resumptive pronouns may occur felicitously just in case the entity evoked by the whole NP is in fact evoked by the head, the relative clause serving simply to predicate some property of that entity, that is, where the appropriate file card has already been independently constructed/activated.

Thus, the file card account predicts that English and Yiddish will have a felicitous resumptive pronoun correlate of, for example, 32a but not of 31b, shown for English in

33:

(33) a. He bought a house which he'll move into it in June. (cf. 32a) b. #The house that it's in Society Hill is a colonial. (cf. 31a)

Note that the file card account presented here means that resumptive pronouns work exactly like ordinary discourse pronouns, as argued by Doron 1982 and Sells 1987, inter alia, and it also explains why one finds other anaphoric expressions in the place of resumptive pronouns, e.g. demonstratives, as in 34a, coreferential full NPs, as in 34b, and even referentially related but non-coreferential pronouns, as in 34c, and full NPs, as in 34d:

(34) a. I had a handout and notes from her talk that that was lost too. (AK: Gillian Sankoff)

b. He's got this lifelong friend who he takes money from the parish to give to this lifelong friend. (AK: P.)

c. I have a manager, Joe Scandolo, who we've been together over twenty years. (AK: Don Rickles, 5/82)

d. You assigned me to a paper which I don't know anything about the subject. (AK: Lila Gleitman)

That is, whatever means speakers generally have for referring to already evoked discourse entities will be at their disposal in these resumptive pronoun clauses.

Interestingly, the distinction I am drawing here between definite and indefinite restrictive relatives is similar to one made in McCawley 1982, and it is in fact the same one made in Crain and Steedman 1982, in a very different domain, the processing of garden path sentences. Crain and Steedman show that the expected misparse of garden path sentences often fails to obtain just in case the NP is indefinite. Consider 35:

- (35) a. The teachers taught by the Berlitz method passed the test.
 - b. The children taught by the Berlitz method passed the test.

 c. Teachers taught by the Berlitz method passed the test.

 - d. Children taught by the Berlitz method passed the test. (= Crain and Steedman 1982, ex. 16)

In spite of the different plausibility levels, 35c,d were misparsed less often than 35a,b (p < 0.001). While garden path phenomena are not directly relevant to resumptive pronoun clauses, Crain and Steedman's experimental evidence strongly supports the claim that hearers process indefinite and definite restrictive relatives differently. (In fact, their explanation for the garden path results is directly compatible with what has been argued above for the resumptive pronoun data.)

4.4. The 'concept' claim revisited.

Although Sells' (1987) 'concept' claim, that resumptive pronouns may not have nonspecific reference, is not made explicitly for English, he does suggest (pp. 288f.) that it holds also for English. While I cannot speak for the situation in Hebrew, I should like to return now to why someone might think that English-or Yiddish-lacked a 'concept' understanding for resumptive pronouns.

Briefly, the examples given in the literature of infelicitous uses of resumptive pronouns with 'concept' understandings involve definite NPs with restrictive relative

clauses, e.g. 36:

- (36) a. Every man will eventually find the woman that he seeks. (=Sells 1987, ex. 49a)
 - b. Every man will eventually find the woman such that he seeks her. (= Sells 1987, ex. 49b)

The claim, attributed to Steven Weisler, is that 36b cannot have the 'concept' understanding. While Sells notes 'a potential problem' with the definite article in 36b, he explicitly ignores it, suggesting that only definites can have 'concept' interpretations. Of course, if 'concept' reference is akin to 'nonspecific', 'nonreferential', etc., then it may of course be indefinite. In any event, as noted above, both the Yiddish and the English corpus contain nonspecific heads with resumptive pronouns, as shown in 14a and 15 above. The difference between them and 36b is that, in 14a and 15, the relative clause represents a property of some independently evocable entity, which happens to be nonspecific, whereas, in 36b, the relative clause is a defining property of that entity. Let us look more closely at 14a, repeated here for convenience as 37:

(37) [A messenger comes to tell a Jewish community that a priest wishes to have a Bible contest with the Jews.] di shtetl zol shteln a yidn vos er zol geyn oysfregn dem galekh, the village shall place a Jew that he shall interrogate the priest, un der galekh zol oysfregn dem yidn. (RP:220) and the priest shall interrogate the Jew. 'The village should pick a Jew who [he] will question the priest...'

In file card terms, the hearer of 37, upon hearing the head a yidn 'a guy', adds a new file card for this new, arbitrary guy. Then, upon hearing the relative clause, the hearer adds to that file card the information that this arbitrary guy will interrogate the priest. Note the difference in the function of the relative clause in 37 and in 38:

- (38) a. men zukht dem yidn vos [e] zol geyn oysfregn dem galekh.. one seeks the guy that [e] shall go interrogate the priest.
 - b. #men zukht dem yidn vos er zol geyn oysfregn dem galekh. one seeks the guy that he shall go interrogate the priest.

In 38, where the file card is selected because it already has the information on it that this arbitrary guy will go interrogate the priest, the resumptive pronoun is not felicitous. Thus, while I do not know what the actual situation is in Hebrew, it is clear that in Yiddish and English there is nothing incompatible between 'concept' interpretations and resumptive pronouns, although the particular examples of 'concept' interpretations that are typically invented are infelicitous with resumptive pronouns for independent reasons.

4.5. The exceptions.

At this point, the question remains why there are so many exceptions in the English corpus to the predictions made by the file card account, that is, why there are 16 tokens of resumptive pronoun clauses which are both definite and restrictive, as shown in the figures in 26, one of which is given in 28b.

I believe one answer is that the English corpus is a corpus of spontaneously produced data and as such is likely to contain dysfluencies and other performance errors. In fact, the resumptive there in 28b clearly has the ring of an afterthought. Note in this vein that resumptive pronouns have already been established as arising from poor syntactic planning, in cases where they occur in what would be inaccessible extraction sites. Of course, there is no reason to believe that the only time a speaker cannot go through with an intended extraction is when it is ruled out or strongly disfavored by the syntax; very plausibly, speakers may fail to perform an intended extraction for extralinguistic reasons—memory lapse, distraction—whatever reasons lead to dysfluency in simple sentences. In fact, 4 of the 16 are datives, as mentioned above, an argument that is universally difficult to extract.

Interestingly however, a close look at the remaining cases in question suggests that not all are the result of dysfluency: 6/16 are cases where the head is introduced by some form of *that*, e.g. 39:

- (39) a. In the Preservation News they had a feature article on the replastering of those incredible figurines that they look like they're holding up the balcony. (AK:C.R.)
 - b. I know it can't be X. Do you know that guy who Mommy's typing for him? (AK: D.K.)
 - c. He's very good at those gold leaf letters you put them on from the inside. (AK: T.M.)

Although these are all technically definite, in fact they act like indefinites in at least one other way: they are amenable to extraposition, usually reserved for indefinites (Ziv and Cole 1974, Ziv 1975), as in 40:

- (40) a. I saw those incredible figurines yesterday that look like they're holding up the balcony.
 - b. That guy just called who Mommy's typing for.
 - c. I found those gold leaf letters in the bookstore that you put on from the inside.
 - d. Those people may come whom you want. (= Guéron 1980, ex. 111b)

Furthermore, and perhaps relatedly, another 6/16 of the definite restrictives with resumptive pronouns in the English corpus are of the form Demonstrative-BE-NP and 1/16 is of the form Pronoun-BE-NP, e.g. 41:

- (41) a. Was that the girl that some wines made her feel sick? (AK:P/S)
 - b. Was that the one that—she teaches at Temple? (AK: H.D.)
 - c. This is the guy that he stabbed Shields and gave him 64 stitches across his chest, right? (AK:M.)

Interestingly, in all these cases, the hearer is assumed to already have the appropriate file card activated: in 41a,b, the speaker is asking the hearer to check the currently activated file card to see whether it has certain information, so that the speaker can determine whether s/he in fact has the right file card activated. Similarly, 41c presumes that that hearer has already activated the appropriate file card and is asking for confirmation, presumably for rhetorical effect. Thus, in all these cases, the hearer is not expected to activate the file card on the basis of the information in the relative clause. Notice that the complex NPs in 41 can be paraphrased by free relatives, rather rare in Modern English when the complementizer is who; these are shown in 42:

- (42) a. Was that who some wines made feel sick?b. Was that who teaches at Temple?

 - c. This is who stabbed Shields..., right?

In addition, two of the sixteen definite restrictives with resumptive pronouns have same in their head; one of them, shown in 43a, clearly works like an indefinite; the other, shown in 7b, is a fragment and its behavior cannot be determined. In addition, one of the five tokens of the form Demonstrative-BE-NP, given in 43b, likewise does not work like a definite in the usual way:

- (43) a. The black Mafia, I believe, is run by the same Mafia that everybody else knows it as the Italian Mafia or the Cosa Nostra... (AK:R.R.)
 - b. That's the only dream that it came true. (AK:D.)

In 43a, we are told that the black Mafia is run by a(nother) Mafia and that this other Mafia has the property that it is known as the Italian Mafia. Notice that such definite NPs with same can occur freely in there-sentences, environments for (conceptually) indefinite NPs, as in 44.

- (44) a. Last year I went to BLS and CLS. There were the same people at both conferences.
 - b. There are the same people at this BLS that I saw at the last BLS.

Note that, in 44b, we even have a definite NP with a restrictive relative in a there-sentence: what the relative is doing is not telling the hearer which file card to activate but rather giving information about the filecard activated by the head people at this BLS, to wit, that they were seen at the last BLS.

Analogously, in 43b, the definite head does not work in the stereotypic definite way: all that the complex NP is doing is conveying the information that no dream other than the one already under discussion has the property of having come true and, by conventional implicature, that the one under discussion has.

Finally, we are left with two unexplained definite restrictive resumptive pronoun clauses, the dative sentence fragment in 7a, where we have insufficient information, and the full sentence in 45:

(45) Let's go to the library and get the Babar book, get the book that Beto's going to read it. (AK:J.B.)

This turns out to be one of the most compelling pieces of evidence for the importance of context in discourse studies. If we just considered the clause in which the relative clause occurs, we would be at a loss to explain it. With the prior context, however, the mystery is solved: the speaker, a young woman speaking to the children for whom she is babysitting, has already evoked the appropriate filecard with the NP the Babar book; the repetition containing the relative clause serves perhaps simply a rhetorical purpose in that it articulates something the hearers presumably already know: that this book has the property that Beto is going to read it. What it is not doing is telling them which book is under discussion.

Thus we see that the exceptions are not really exceptions; rather the morphological marking of definite/indefinite has only an imperfect correlation with the cognitive processes with which we associate them, and it is these cognitive processes, not their morphological markings, that are reflected in the use of resumptive pronoun clauses in Yiddish and English.³

Notes

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¹This transcript also contains three resumptive pronoun clauses, all of the island type and therefore not used in this study.

²I am counting such instances of *this* as indefinite; cf. Prince 1981.

³Other syntactic forms with closely related, though not identical, discourse functions, are missing complementizers with extracted subjects, as in i, apparent 'run-ons', as in ii, extraposed relative clauses, as in iii, and *kind-*clauses, as in iv. See Prince, In prep.

- i. I have a friend of mine in the history department teaches two courses per semester. (= Lambrecht 1988, ex. 9)
- ii. There are many Americans they approve of violence. (= Lambrecht 1988, ex. 37c)
- iii. I read a book during the vacation that was written by Chomsky. (= Guéron and May 1984, ex. 17a)
- iv. He was one of those comedians that he could make the whole audience laugh without even saying a word. (Barry Reisman, WIBF-Philadelphia)

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