Notes on the *Wh*-Replacement for Meaningful Nominative *That*

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Transitional Stages to De-relativized *Which*

In one of the papers on anaphoric subject *which* (Sasaki 1984), I once suggested that a traditional definition of the pronoun seemed to have an ineffective range, where it showed a kind of maturity that had already gone beyond the 'introduitory *which*' of a non-restrictive relative clause 'which is sometimes made into a separate orthographic sentence (Quirk et al. 1972: 702)', even if the orthographic stage had undoubtedly been a historical requisite through which the de-relativized *which* had gradually grown into an independent pronominal subject.

In that paper I showed a few tentative norms to differentiate the outgrown *which* from that which still remained in an orthographic stage. For example, one is (a) the case where a second speaker of a dialogue uses *which* to initiate his utterance, and the other (b) in discourse with a new paragraph led by *which* as the subject of its first sentence. In order to pursue an argument to its logical conclusion, some of the recent examples will be given below. First, we will see into those that belong to (a).

(1) "You can't smuggle a *Penthouse* into Russia without using the diplomatic bag, and now we're supposed to believe a German smuggled a bomb in? Then tries to blow up the Politburo?"

"Could we do it?" Toland wondered aloud.

"If CIA was crazy enough to try it? God, that's more than just crazy."

Lowe shook his head. "I don't think any body could do it. Even the Russians themselves. It's got to be a layered defense. X-ray machines. Sniffer dogs. A couple of hundred guards, all from three different commands, the Army,
KGB, MVD, probably their militia, too. Hell, Bob you know how paranoid they are against their own people. How do you suppose they feel about Germans?"

"So they can't say he was a crazy operating on his own."

"Which leaves .........."

"Yeah." Toland reached for his phone to call CNN. (Clancy 1987, 101, 3-16)

(2) "I haven't eaten breakfast for years, General." For a moment, Eisenhower's face was illuminated by that famous and inimitable smile. "Which shows you aren't an old military hand. You prefer tea, don't you?"

"Yes, General." (Higgins 1987, 36 20-4)

(3) "Sarah Anne Drayton, sir, age nineteen. Born in Jersey. Left the island just before the war to go out to Malaya where her father was a rubber planter. He was a widower apparently. Sent her home a month before the fall of Singapore."

"Which means she hasn't been back in Jersey since when?" Munro looked at the file. "Nineteen thirty-eight. Six years. That's long time at that age, Jack. Girls change out of all recognition." (Higgins 1987, 104, 19-27)

(4) Hoshima would have been crazy enough to take in evil-minded people just for the fun of it, but Mantis had been stationed in Japan, and so on, Capitan had found out, had this 'Big Sun.' Could he have been a monitor, too? And Mantis as well? Damn. Why hadn't Hoshima ever informed him? He told Carmen what he thought.

'All this leads us back to where we started,' she said.

'Yes.'

'Which leads me to ask the same question, what do you intend to do?'

(Gilbert 1988, 258, 10-9)

As for (b), although it has not been among rarities for a long time as a member of those included in the absolute use (e.g. Higashimura 1990), some further examples will reveal an intermediate status of this variant.
(5) And now – those Acura ads from Honda are not just little jokes – the German manufacturers who battened on the inability or refusal of American makers to deliver good machinery at any price are becoming very nervous as the Japanese upgrade their product and go nose-to-nose with him.

*Which* leads to still another paradox: There is more than a little reason to suspect that Japanese have begun overpricing their cars, and there's some evidence as well that their fit-and-finish excellence has dropped off a little bit. While in Korea, of course, they are building Hyundais – not good yet, but small and cheap and destined to improve. (Higgins 1986, rightmost column 26-47)

(6) Noda wasn't hedging or even speculating in the normal sense; he was playing a giant game of cat and mouse with the markets. This told me once again he wasn't showing all the cards in his hand. He had something major, and unexpected, in the pipeline.

*Which* brought forth the next insight: Matsuo Noda didn't hire me merely because he wanted some innocent-seeming outsider to do his bidding in the futures market; any number of players in this town could have handled that action as well or better. No, he'd sucked me into his operation for some entirely different purpose, at the moment known only to him. (Hoover 1988, 71-2, 35-42 & 1-3)

(7) He didn't say much, just led me onto the floor, heading for his office. But he was clearly the on-site daimyo: lots of heavy bowing from the young, white-shirted Japanese staff as we headed for the corner suite.

*Which* brings us the real shocker. Dai Nippon's floor operation looked like the flight deck of the Starship Enterprise. (Hoover 1988, 96, 21-6)

(8) "Then it looked like we have everything we need to move forward." I nodded.

"Excellent."
Upon which I absented his office, safety net in place. The play was on.

*Which* brings us to Tam Richardson. If my approach to this new job was a little unconventional, what about the college prof who showed up in jeans as she readied to renovate Corporate America? (Hoover 1988, 179, 31-9)

The norms (a) and (b) I applied to these examples are obviously discourse-oriented because the rhetorical breaks are actually signalled in expository prose by utterance or paragraph breaks (Cf. Fox 1987:113). Considering that new rhetorical units often begin with full NPs in expository prose, the semantic weight of these *whiches* obviously seems to be superior to other ordinary pronominals including *that*. That is, they formally take place of lengthy precedent sentences that cannot be substituted by single NPs. In this sense, they are still on the heritage of non-restrictive relative prototype.

If the *which* above that has already been freed from its prototype still lingers in the shadow of a relative pronoun, are there any variants produced completely without an intermediary of this foregoing stage?

*Which is to Say*

An obvious case where the nominative pronoun seems quite free from the yoke of the historical prototype is the *wh*-replacement for *that* in 'that is to say' as shown in the following examples.

(9) One fine day, after he had joined a fighter squadron, it would dawn on the young pilot exactly how the losers in the great fraternal competition were now being left behind. *Which is to say*, not by instructors or the superiors or by failures at prescribed levels of competence, but by death. (Wolfe 1985, 26, 1-5)

(10) Yeager had started out as the equivalent, in the Second World War, of the legendary Frank Luke of 27th Aero Squadron in the First. *Which is to say*, he was the boondocker, the boy from the back country with only a high-school education, no credentials, no cachet or polish of any sort, who
took off the feed-store overalls and put on a uniform and climbed into an airplane and lit the skies over Europe. (Wolfe 1985, 67, 14-21)

(11) Wife and children?
Most of them, Gus included, dealt with this question in typical military-pilot fashion. Which is to say, they manage to get out something brief, obvious, abstract, and above all safe and impersonal. (Wolfe 1985, 94-5, 43&1-4)

(12) Glenn noticed that some of his confreres were loosening up in quite another way, however. Which is to say, they were checking in at the holy coordinates. After a long day of make-believe flying in the simulator—Drinking & Driving & the rest of the real pilot's life. (Wolfe 1985, 137, 16-20)

There is nothing to prevent us from understanding that every which above is an emphatic variant of that, which the author found better to carry a pronominal substance than the original, in spite of a shade of semantic inconsistency of the phrase itself. Probably, he took 'is to say' for 'means' on his way to give an interchangeability to the initial constituent of the half-petrified phrase 'that is to say', which might have some grounds in the intuition shared among native speakers.

Although the usage does not seem prevailing as shown in the singularity of its source, publication itself may bear witness to its established status. It is more important for us than its present-day legitimacy, however, to see that it cannot be an outgrowth of non-restrictive relative clause. There are two mid-sentential usages in the same source.

(13) A controversy arose over just how much bonus Slick Goodlin should receive for assaulting the dread Mach 1 itself. Bonuses for contract test pilot were unusual; but the figure of $150,000 was now bruited about. The Army balked, and Yerger got the job. He took it for $283 a month , or $3,396 a year; which is to say, his regular Army captain's pay. (Wolfe 1985, 42, 24-30)
(14) By now Betty knew what to expect from Gus personally; *which is to say*, she seldom saw him. In one 365-day period he had been with her a total of sixty days. (Wolfe 1985, 245, 5-7)

Something in the author's or the publisher's instinct seems to avoid putting a comma instead of the semicolon here, which suggests the impossibility of linking two sentences by this apparent relative pronoun contained in an initial adverb phrase of the second sentence. That is, nobody expects this *which* to carry out a linking function in addition to its pronominal substance, for which it has just replaced a seemingly formal *that*.

A little further on we come across a de-petrified or free variant of this phrase as shown in the following example with a due derivation of its negative form, though we do not know exactly whether it came directly from *which is to say* we have discussed so far or not.

(15) The conference lasted for about fifteen minutes, after which the attorney knew what had taken place. *Which is to say* that he didn't "know" in the metaphysical or legal sense or in a way that had anything to do with legal ethics – but he knew Under the Canon of Ethics, of course, he could not act on a speculation without betraying his oath as an officer of the country. (Clancy 1990, 503-4, 38-9, 1-4)

(16) He also knew how to use the SAW – the Belgian-made squad automatic weapon that had recently been added to the Army's inventory – and had shot expert with pistol once. But submachine guns had long since gone out of favor in the Army. They just weren't serious weapons of the sort a soldier would need.

*Which is not to say* that he didn't like it. It was a German gun, the MP-5 SD 2 made by Heckler & Koch. It was decidedly unattractive. (Clancy 1990, 120, 24-32)

Although this variant seems, on the surface, to be an anaphoric subject, its semantic identity obviously remains on that of the phrasal *which is to say*, which may,
at least, prevent it from a potential possibility of regression to non-restrictive relative pronoun.

**Which is?**

Another type of the *wh*-replacement for *that* is an outwardly interrogative *which*, which has the closest relationship with *which is to say.*

(17) 'Because, quite frankly, he's caused me so much trouble at this point that I thought it would be satisfying to kill him, with my own hands. He is point A, and point A is going to lead me to point B.'

'Which is?'

'This fellow Capitan. Capitan is a part of a movement to which I myself belong.'

Abe turned pale.

'You –' (Gilbert 1988, 237, 22:30)

(18) This Oriental was standing directly over Capitan now, the two wooden swords in hand. He offered one to Capitan. 'You have a job to do. Remember, the man is stronger than you, he is in far better shape. He is probably only an equal swordsman though. And has accepted our bait about using the Aiki sword.' He also functions through one great defect……'

'Which is?'

'Exactly what we've been discussing. He expects any true attempt on his life to come from his own blood, not from you. He is predisposed, and that is a distant disadvantage for you.' (Gilbert 1988, 290-1, 31-4 & 1-8)

(19) '……First he acquired control of half the capital in Japan, then he came to the U.S. and started grabbing up all the R & D that'll be competing with MITI through the end of the century. When he's got it, he'll have a power base to match theirs. He's set to call the new tune.'

'Which is? ' 
‘Who knows? But try this for an agenda: time to cut the crap, Noda’s thinking, get rid of all the clumsy Western style demokurasu charade, tighten up, lean and mean----- ’ (Hoover 1988, 268-9, 40-2 & 1-7)

(20)"-----As things now stand, we both play by the sane rules, and those rules, as applied here, gives the advantage to the opposition. We never seem to learn that. We always let the other side set the rules. We can annoy them, inconvenience them, take away some of their profit margin, but, hell, given what they already make, it’s a minor business loss. I only see one thing changing that."

“Which is?”

“How’d you like to live in a house like that one?” Clark asked, handing over one of his photographs.

“Frank Lloyd Wright meets Ludwing the Mad,” Ritter observed with a chuckle. (Clancy 1990, 84, 18-29)

The simplest way to explain the phrase which means ‘what do you mean?’ is to replace which with that to reconstruct the prototype that is (to say)?

In this case, to ask whether the subject was a relative pronoun once upon a time or not must be very silly question, considering the genetic background of which is to say that we have just discussed. No matter what surface does this which assume, it cannot be qualified as an interrogative pronoun, since these simple two-word sentences are actually made up into a question only by a given tonal peculiarity. Even if interrogative variant gives a mere supporting evidence, its immediate prototype is enough to convince us of the existence of a circuit through which that metamorphoses into which without any relay of non-restrictive relative stage.

Which is $S$

Further evidence will be desirable to endorse a certain prevalence of this $wh$-replacement since the examples above are too much in the shadow of a peculiar half-petrified phrase. If we look for another variant somewhere else, we will find it in a
half-petrified beginning of a compound sentence that is free on the whole, where which is contained in an initiating set phrase followed by a free or substitutional message.

(21) Sorry about being touchy earlier, she was saying. All forgotten, he was telling her. And when they've gone we'll make love, she was saying, we'll stay sober and make love and everything will be fine.

Which was when she heard the phone ring. Exactly then. As she was transmitting those loving thoughts to Magnus and having a desperately happy time with them. (leCarré 1987, 24, 5-11)

(22) I just walked out and poured myself a cup of green tea from the huge urn there in the middle of the floor. Walston, you idiot, how did you get yourself into this?

Which was when I spotted a sporty looking lady way across on the other side of the floor, over by the climate-controlled NEC mainframe. (Hoover 1988, 168, 32-8)

(23) 'And then the Germans took Paris. Being a neutral, they didn't bother me at first, but then I got involved with entirely the wrong people from their point of view and I had exit stage left rather quickly. I came to England.'

'Which was when you joined OSS of yours?'

'No, America wasn't at war with Germany at that time. I worked for a British outfit at first – SOE. Same kind of work, you might say…….' (Higgins 1990, 50, 10-8)

What is in no way inferior to which is/was when above in occurrence must be which is/was why.

(24) Doing things the same way every time wasn't a rut for Cathy Ryan; it was perfection. She played the piano that way also. Sissy Jackson, who played and taught professionally, had once remarked that her playing was too perfect, lacking in soul. Cathy took that as a compliment. Surgeons don't autograph their work; they do it the right way, every time.
Which was why she was annoyed with life at the moment. It was a minor annoyance having to take a slightly different route to work everyday – in fact it was something of a challenge, since she gave herself the goal of not allowing it to affect her schedule. (Clancy 1988, 238, 16-25)

(25) Technical staff? Then who were those grimfaced minions out there punching computers?

"You're bringing in more people?"

"Correct. Which is why I needed to see you. I understand that the lease on the floor above us is due for renewal at the end of this month. We would like to acquire that space. We will need to convert it as quickly as possible."

(Hoover 1988, 98-9, 41-2 & 1-5)

(26) A samurai regarded his katana as the symbol of his caste: a weapon, yes, but also a constant reminder of who he was, his obligations as well as his rights.

Which was why I needed the prize of my collection in hand when we entered our final battle with Dai Nippon. (Hoover 1988, 308, 26-30)

(27) He knew about Holland's obsession with civil rights. Though benign to the law-abiding citizen, they also made life a rose-path for the vicious and squalid. Which was why lovely old Amsterdam had become Europe's capital for drug-dealers, terrorists and child-porn film-makers. (Forsyth 1989, 383, 23-8)

(28) 'She was selfish, totally ruthless where her own desires were concerned, but she was my niece, my blood, my flesh. A de Voincourt.'

'And acted like one these past few months.'

'Which is why I am here.' (Higgins 1990, 162, 8-14)

There is a modified variant with an adverb before the interrogative conjunction, which shows an elasticity of the half-petrified portion.
(29) Through the front window we could see the ankles of people walking past the house, and they could see what were eating. *Which is* perhaps *why* we had the sort of meal that women’s magazines photograph from above. (Deighton 1989, 101, 18-21)

Although any subordinate conjunction apparently seems to be qualified to lead a sentence after *which is*, a closer examination reveals that possible ones are almost limited to some conjunctions that developed from interrogatives, leaving a reasonable chance to *that*. Higgins’ *Cold Harbour* shows following variants in addition to (23) and (28).

(30) ‘…I operate a couple of planes from there, German planes. A Stork and a Ju88S night fighter. They still carry Luftwaffe insignia and the man who flies them, gallant RAF pilot though he is, wears Luftwaffe uniform.’

‘And you want to the same thing with this E-boat?’ Hare said.

‘Exactly, *which is where* you come in. After all a Kriegsmarine boat needs a Kriegsmarine crew.’ (Higgins 1990, 7, 25-32)

(31) ‘In this fog?’

‘It’s very low lying,’ Bleriot shrugged. ‘I’ve put a signalling lamp in and there’s this.’ He took a luminous signal ball from his pocket.’ SOE supply these. They work very very well in the water.’

‘*Which is where* I’m likely to end up from the look of the weather,’ Craig said as waves lapped in hungrily across the beach.’ (Higgins 1990, 21, 7-14)

(32) ‘You know him, too!’

‘Oh, yes,’ Craig said. ‘I worked for SOE from the beginning. Before we came into the war. We’ve had dealings, me and Dougal. A ruthless old bastard.’

*Which is how* you win wars, old boy,’ Edge commented from the rear. (Higgins 1990, 31, 24-29)

In order to fill up a vacancy or two, two more examples will be quoted from other sources.
(33) ‘Aikidoka are clean-cut Ninja, that’s all. Nothing more, and nothing less. They pretend to be peaceful; they pretend to step aside. Aikidoka fight with the web. Once having drawn their opponent in, they sting them – ‘He suddenly lunged his rake at Capitan, who leaped aside quickly – ‘with a punch or sneaky jab.’

‘Which is what you just did to me,’ Capitan said, cautiously watching as the old-timer circled him with the rake. (Gilbert 1988, 62, 23-31)

(34) ‘Our people at Quantico agree with their British colleagues,’ he said. ‘This Zack is at the end of his tether, wants to close it down, make an exchange. The strain in his voice is coming through, hence the threats most probably. They also agree with the analysts over there on another thing. Which is that Quinn appears to have established some kind of wary empathy with this animal Zack……’ (Forsyth 1989, 222, 24-32)

Is That All?

A remaining argument must be that, even if wh-replacement occurs on the initial constituent of a sentence, does it really take over only that which was supposed to be a sole prototype for which in the title of this paper? For example, in order to play the role of subject for is/was when, it often seems more qualified than that as near as everyone can guess. Further, GCE tells us that even there can be used interchangeably with that of it in the following context (Quirk et al. 1972:683).

(35) They sat right in front of the stage. That/It/There was where the noise was greatest.

Since a question requiring immediate attention is the substitution of which for a pronominal prototype, we had better discard there rather than wait for a confusion that will accompany the adverbial variant endowed with a pronominal feature. Now that the problem is somewhat narrowed to whatever difference there is between it and that,
we will have to look into their syntactic features in a required detail. A perceptible difference may be that, while *that* is anaphoric in its verbal context, *it* can be anaphoric as well as cataphoric as shown by an expletive subject of an impersonal verb that expresses a simple condition or an action without direct or implied reference to an agent in statements or questions about the weather, the time, or physical or mental conditions.

If we give *that* the distinctive feature +anaphoric or −cataphoric, *it* will then be expressed by ±anaphoric or ±cataphoric. That is, the reason why *that* is supposed to be the only prototype for *which* is in the agreement of this feature +anaphoric. Even when an actual prototype is *it*, it will be replaced by *which* only when it is endorsed by the feature +anaphoric, which also enables us to suppose that there may be an intervening rewrite process of *it* to *that* before the final replacement by *which* to satisfy Kuroda's reasonable hypothesis (Kuroda 1966:268, Sasaki 1984:8)

Here, we can also see a dim light that may lead us to a solution of the *there* problem mentioned above. Probably, if there is a linkage between *there* and *that* in (35), the former sometimes becomes +pronominal to designate an anaphoric referent, which may well correspond to Kuroda's [+DEF] as a prerequisite for the relativization into *which*.

**Pronominal Emphasis**

Now that a small fraction of the anaphoric subject *which* seems to be generated by a direct *wh*-replacement of *that* without a detour through the non-restrictive relative pronoun, one and the same replacement may covertly occur for other variants of nominative *which* than those in the half-petrified phrases we have examined so far. Although I am still on the ground of insufficient evidence, a possibility of the direct replacement cannot be denied at all. Here, however, we cannot afford to waste time in trying to distinguish indistinguishables.

The mechanism for the *wh*-replacement, which now seems an established rewrite routine, may be supposed as follows.

(a) If a nominative *it* seems insufficient to represent the substance of a preceding
issue or statement within the range of a given literary or situational context, it can be replaced by *that* in order to give the distinctive feature +anaphoric.

(b) Since *that* often functions as a syntactic operant with a kind of semantic vacuousness, there are cases where it still seems insufficient to convey a semantic substance it refers. Then, it can be turned further into *which* to reinforce the anaphoric pronominality.

Probably, the pronominal emphasis which occurs in a close response to the semantic substance of a word or sentence may be sometimes transferred to a semantically vacuous *that* particularly in some petrified phrases simply in order to emphasize them.

**Sources and References**

I. Sources

II. References