Relational processes
Processes of being and having

Relational processes
3 types:
1) Describing things: Verb = “be” or “have” (+synonyms)
2) Identifying things: Verb = “be” or “have” (+synonyms)
3) Representing the existence of something: “be” (+synonyms)

1 – describing things
linking a thing and its descriptive attribute

The daisy is a beautiful flower.
The daisy is a member of the class beautiful flower.
The Thing and its attribute differ in terms of generality.

Participants in Attributive relational processes

Carrier Attribute

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The daisy</th>
<th>is</th>
<th>a beautiful flower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrier</td>
<td>Pro: Relational Attributive</td>
<td>Attribute</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nominal group    Verbal group    Nominal group

1 – describing things
linking a thing and its descriptive attribute

The attribute of a thing may be:
• a quality
• a circumstance
• a possession

1 – describing things

Mr Piggott has a car.
The car is new.
It is in the garage.
The daisy is a beautiful flower.

That was only a foolish dream

James became adventurous

He was both wise and good

It wasn't any use

in possessive Attributive Relationals we may use "be" or "have"

Mr Piggott has a car

The car is new.

It is in the garage

Attribute = possession, quality or circumstance

Mr Piggott has a car

The car is new.

It is in the garage

A Circumstantial Attribute may come first

Here are his paw marks

On the mantelpiece was an envelope

quality and possessive Attributes generally do not come first

a sore head has the bear
Some verbs of attribution that are synonyms of “be” and “have”

- Quality: become, get, turn into, go, grow, start out, turn out, end up, keep, stay, remain, seem, appear, look (like), sound (like), smell (like), taste (like), feel (like)
  - She sounds like a star

- Circumstance: concern, last, weigh, cost
  - The book costs $30

- Possession: has, belongs (to)
  - The car belongs to Mr Piggott

nominals

- common
  - nouns
    - Proper
    - pronoun
  - adjective (describer)
  - numeral (number)
  - Determiner e.g. a, the, some etc

2: identifying things

1. Identifying a thing in terms of some identifying feature

   Tom is the tallest
   Tom is the captain

   Some synonyms of the verb “be” as an identifying verb:
   become, equal, add up to; act as; call; mean; define; represent; spell; express; form; give; constitute; imply etc

2. Identifying a thing in terms of some circumstance: time, place, manner etc:

   Today is the 4th
   The best way to get there is by train

   Some verbs identifying circumstances:
   takes up; follow; spans; crosses; accompany; resemble etc

2: identifying things

3. Identifying a thing in terms of ownership

   The book is mine

   possession
   possessor

   Some verbs identifying possession:
   own; include/exclude; involve; contain; comprise; provide; deserve; owe; lack etc

FAQ:

How can we distinguish between relational processes that:

1) link a thing and its descriptive attribute;

2) link a thing and its identifying feature.
identifying relational processes can be reversed

Her name is Alison

Alison is her name

Today is the 4th

The 4th is today

The book is mine

I own the book

describing relational processes cannot be reversed

That is a beautiful flower.

A beautiful flower is that.

The car is new

New is the car.

Participants in Identifying relational processes

Q: What is her name?

A: Her name is Alison

The thing about which the question is asked is labelled Identified

That which identifies the thing is labelled Identifier

Participants in Identifying relational processes

Q: What is her name?

A: Alison is her name

Identified

Identifier

Participants in Identifying relational processes

Q: What is today's date?

A: Today is the 4th

Identified

Identifier

Q: Whose book is that?

A: It's mine

Identified

Identifier

Participants in Identifying relational processes

What is 'stop'?

Identified

Pro: Identifying

Identified

What does a red light mean?

Identified

Pro: Identifying

Identified

'Stop' is signified by a red light

Identified

Pro: Identifying
An anecdote:

An English literature teacher announced to the class:
"In here, we will speak proper English. There are two words I don't allow in my class. One is gross and the other is cool."

From the back of the room a small voice piped up, "So, what are the words?"

the source of the joke

Attributive relational process

versus

Identifying relational process

A 3rd use of the verb “to be”

to represent the fact that something exists or happens

existential processes are about existence

they usually follow the pattern: There + “be” + Thing

e.g. There were many children in the street

existential there v. circumstantial there

What is the difference (if any) between the following instances of there:

Existential “there”

There are not many flowering trees out there at the moment.

Circumstantial “there”

There’s a spare seat over there
There were many children in the street.

existential 'there'
the main participant is the thing that exists

existential "there" has no transitivity function
why? it is non-referential

relational processes and participants

process

material

processes of being' and 'having

relational

describing Attribute & Carrier

identifying Identifier & Identified

existential Existent

Travelogue (cont)
However, we weren’t disappointed with the stairway to the Moon. This phenomenon is seen each full moon at low tide when the moon casts a beautiful light over the mud flats and gives the illusion of steps up to the full moon. It was a truly spectacular sight and was witnessed by about 4,000 people. There were more oooos and aaaaahs than at the fireworks over Sydney Harbour!

Activity

- Identify the verbs in the following continuation of the travelogue text;
- Segment the text into clauses
### Summary of Participant Roles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process Type</th>
<th>Participant Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Actor - Goal - Range - Beneficiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>Behaver - Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>Senser - Phenomenon - able to create a signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>Sayer - Receiver - Verbiage - Target</td>
</tr>
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<td>Relational - Attributive</td>
<td>Carrier - Attribute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relational - Identifying</td>
<td>Identified - Identifier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relational - Existential</td>
<td>Existent</td>
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- Living
- Conscious