

Extension exercises

Chapter 29: Defining and non-defining phrases and clauses

Exploring English

Skim through some pages of any book or magazine.

- 1 Underline:
 - phrases in apposition.
 - prepositional phrases.
 - participle, infinitive and relative clauses.
- 2 Classify each of these as defining or non-defining, or other. Are any of these ambiguous cases, i.e. not clearly one or the other?
- 3 What proportion of these phrases are defining, non-defining and ambiguous?
- 4 Are commas used to separate non-defining clauses from the main clause?

Course materials

Choose one or two coursebooks and look at those parts which teach defining and non-defining clauses and phrases.

- 1 Are the learners encouraged to notice and analyse how these are used in real text?
- 2 Does the material deal with phrases and clauses other than relative clauses?
- 3 What kinds of opportunity for practice are provided?
- 4 How much attention is paid to pronunciation differences in defining and non-defining clauses and phrases?
- 5 Does the material suggest that we always separate non-defining clauses and phrases from the rest of the sentence by a comma, or does it acknowledge that we are flexible about this?
- 6 Does the material acknowledge that it is not always clear whether phrases are defining or non-defining?