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Modifiers Hosted by Indefinite and Interrogative Pronouns

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In arguments that have been offered to support an analysis of interrogative expressions in terms of corresponding "indefinite" expressions (e.g., Katz and Postal (1964, 93–94)) a prominent place has been given to the parallelism that is held to exist between interrogative pronouns and the various (*some-, any-, every-,* and *no-*) series of "indefinite" pronouns. One facet of this alleged parallelism is the ability of these items to support restrictive relative clauses. It turns out, however, that relative clauses hosted by interrogative words are considerably less acceptable than their counterparts with "indefinite pronoun" hosts, as illustrated by the following acceptability judgments given by the 16 native speakers of English in an intermediate syntax course:[1]

[1] The respondents are asked to judge the examples, relative to whatever assumptions are provided with respect to context and intended interpretation, as "Perfect," "Pretty good," "Pretty bad," or "Horrible," and those four evaluations are reported here as OK, ?, ??, and *, respectively.

(1)	OK	?	??	*	
a.	16	0	0	0	I want to be with somebody that I can trust.
a′.	6	7	2	1	Who that you know is likely to enter the contest?

When reduced relative clauses are used in place of full relative clauses, the acceptability is lowered at least as much, and usually to sheer unacceptability, though with considerable individual variation in the reported acceptability:

(2)	OK	?	??	*	
a.	15	1	0	0	You should cast someone tall as Hamlet.
a′.	0	3	6	7	Who tall can we get to play Hamlet?
b.	11	4	0	0	Try something odd as a value of x.
b′.	0	3	5	6	What odd have you tried as a value of x?
c.	15	1	0	0	You should cast someone with blond hair as Hamlet.
c′.	8	4	2	2	Who with blond hair can we get to play Hamlet?
d.	16	0	0	0	Someone carrying a black briefcase has the bomb.
d′.	0	5	8	3	Who carrying a black briefcase do you think has the bomb?

The obvious factor on which to pin the blame for these differences in acceptability is the difference between the morphological transparency of the various "indefinite" pronouns[2]

[2] There are also morphologically opaque indefinite pronouns (*always, ever, never*), and these words do not host full or reduced relative clauses or even *else*:

(i) a. *John is happy [always that/when Mary is happy].
b. *Susan doesn't drink [ever that/when she's going to drive].
c. *Fred got drunk last Saturday, but he's been sober always else.

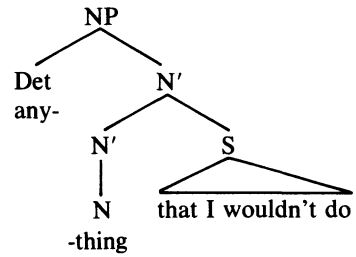
But such combinations are absent for a reason extraneous to the opaque morphology, namely, that the words in question are adverbs (unlike *everywhere, somewhere, anywhere,* and *nowhere,* which are NPs), as shown by their occurrence in unambiguous adverb positions, and adverbs (as contrasted with adverbial NPs; see McCawley (1988)) cannot host relative clauses:

(ii) a. John always brushes his teeth before he goes to bed.
b. ??John everywhere has girlfriends.
c. Marcia hasn't ever/*anywhere played roulette.
d. Bill handles a gun the careless way that you handle one.
e. *Bill handles a gun carelessly that you handle one.

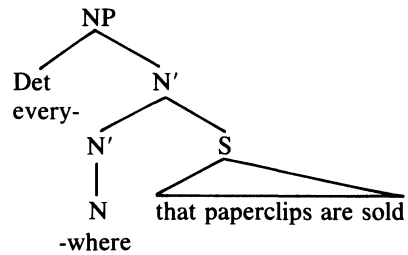
There is in fact a class of cases in which *nowhere* fits comfortably into an adverb position, namely, when it is used as a rough synonym of

and the morphological opacity of the interrogative pronouns. If the two morphemes making up *someone, anybody, anywhere,* and so forth, are identified as a quantifier and a noun, respectively, then the "indefinite" words will provide an N′ to serve as host for ordinary N′-modifiers such as restrictive relative clauses:

(3) a.



b.



The one peculiarity of N′-modifiers with "indefinite" hosts is that, because the morphology requires that the quantifier and the noun be fused into a single word, modifiers that normally would have to precede the noun follow it.

(4) a. some odd number
a′. *some number odd (cf. (2b))
b. some blond/tall actor
b′. *some actor blond/tall (cf. (2a), (2c))

By contrast, the opaque morphology of the interrogative words (which may well merit an abstract morphological analysis as

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never. In that position it excludes full and reduced relative clauses and allows *else* only marginally:

(iii) a. Smith nowhere (?else) states that this condition applies only to finite clauses.
b. ??Smith nowhere in his published works states that this condition applies to finite clauses too.
c. *Smith nowhere that I have read states that this condition applies only to finite clauses.

I conjecture that in this usage *nowhere* has been reanalyzed as an Adv and accordingly is not available to host adnominal modifiers. I also note in passing that the huge difference in acceptability between *when else* and **always*/**ever*/**never else* casts serious doubt on the popular belief that *when* is to *always* as *who* is to *everyone*.

wh- + *-one*, *wh-* + *-thing*, and so on, but would have to undergo irregular fusions of the abstract morphemes) leaves the surface form of the NP without any N′ that can host N′-modifiers.

The difference in acceptability between the "indefinite" and interrogative examples provides support for the thesis that restrictive relative clauses modify not NPs but N′s: if the host of a restrictive relative were an NP, there would be no reason for the interrogative examples to be any less acceptable than their "indefinite" counterparts, since they would equally well provide a host of an appropriate category and a semantic structure with which the relative clause could combine coherently. Two important questions remain, though: first, why are the interrogative examples with full relative clauses and with certain reduced relative clauses (such as *with blond hair*) as good as they are, rather than being totally unacceptable? and second, to the extent that a given speaker of English judges some or all of the interrogative examples as acceptable, what syntactic structure does he or she impose on them? The most obvious answer to the second question is that the relative clause is treated as having the NP as its host and that speakers who find any or all of the interrogative examples reasonably acceptable have developed a *patch* (in the sense of Morgan (1972)) that allows them to impose an NP-modifier analysis on restrictive relatives whose meanings could not be expressed literally in English without violating the constraints that normal English syntax and morphology impose. That answer to the second question has the effect of turning the first question on its head: if some speakers of English have developed a patch that lets them impose an NP-modifier analysis on relative clauses with interrogative hosts, why don't they then give as positive an acceptability rating to *who carrying a briefcase* as they do to *who that you know*? I conjecture that the differences in acceptability judgments reflect differences in the closeness of the semantic and syntactic links between the modifier and the abstract noun that can be posited in the analysis of the interrogative word; the modifiers that combine most acceptably with interrogative words seem to be the ones that would be most peripheral in a stack of modifiers in an NP that had an ordinary head noun:

(5) a. a man with blond hair carrying a black briefcase
a′. ?a man carrying a black briefcase with blond hair
b. a man carrying a black briefcase who was acting suspiciously
b′. ?a man who was acting suspiciously carrying a black briefcase
c. an [odd two-digit number] that is divisible by 7 and one that is divisible by 23

c′. ?an odd [two-digit number that is divisible by 7] and an even one

The hypothesized patch may then be sensitive to semantic demands that particular kinds of modifiers be syntactically close to the head noun.

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The Nature of the Anti-C-Command Requirement: Evidence from Young Children

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One of the issues discussed in the literature on parasitic gaps is the nature of what is called the *anti-c-command requirement*, ruling out sentences like (1), in which the parasitic gap is c-commanded by the trace.

(1) *Who$_i$ [t$_i$ met you before [$_{CP}$ O$_i$ [you recognized e$_i$]]]?

Chomsky (1986) gives three suggestions for deriving this requirement from another principle: (1) As in Chomsky (1982), it could be derived from Principle C of the binding theory, if it is assumed that composed chains must also follow the requirement that a variable must be free in the domain of the head of its chain; (2) it could be derived from the Chain Condition, if composed chains must follow this condition; or (3) it could be a case of Subjacency, if 0-Subjacency must hold between the links forming the composed chain.

In this squib we report on two studies in which we tested the first and third of Chomsky's suggestions (Principle C and Subjacency) by investigating the grammars of young children. Correlations between their judgment on parasitic gap constructions and their demonstration of knowledge of Principle C or

We thank the children, parents, and directors of the Cushman Hill Children's Center, the Little Red School House, and the Sand Hill School of Amherst, Massachusetts, and the USM Child Care Services of Portland, Maine. We are also grateful to Wayne Cowart, two *LI* reviewers, and the *LI* Squibs and Discussion editors for helpful comments. This research was partially funded by NIH grant HD 07327 and NSF grant BNS-9108630.