Supplemental relative clauses
and syntactic generality
(or: A niche of left-adjunction productivity:
rethinking parenthetical as)

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Goals of the talk

Supplemental as
  - Introductions
  - Motivating a relativization analysis

Left-adjointed relative clauses
  - Supplemental *which*
  - Supplemental *what*
  - Name-*as*

Finding your niche

Final thoughts
Outline

1. Goals of the talk
2. Supplemental as
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3. Left-adjoined relative clauses
   - Supplemental which
   - Supplemental what
   - Name-as
4. Finding your niche
5. Final thoughts
We will:

1. Understand why two very similar constructions—supplemental *as* and *which*—have rather different distributions.

To do this we will have to:

1. Have a syntactic analysis of *as*
2. Explore the possibility for left-adjunction of relative clauses and other parenthetical material in English.
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What do we call them?

- The use of *as* illustrated in (1-3) has been called by Potts (2002a,b) *parenthetical-as*, and by the CGEL the *adjunct of comparison*.
- Because they are also *supplemental* (CGEL, ch.15) I will call them supplemental *as* clauses.
Introducing *as*, II

What do they look like?

**Example**

(1a) Secondly [as most reviewers say __ ], at the end of the book we still don’t fully understand where Bush is coming from.

There we saw a clausal (CP) gap. There are also predicate gaps

**Example**

(2a) The next day, although I sprayed the pests, [as I knew I must __ ], I stood at arm’s length from the compost heap and wore jeans and high-rise trainers.

(See (3) for predicate gaps along with subj-aux inversion)
Some basic properties

As-clauses are characterized syntactically and semantically by:

- A clause with a clausal or predicative gap, semantically identified with some part of the main clause.
- Flexible position within the main clause.
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A relativization analysis is proposed and evaluated with respect to a preposition analysis.
In their internal syntax, as-clauses are nearly indistinguishable from canonical relative clauses (Potts, 2002a,b).

- A “function” word appears initially.
- The clause has a gap.
- The gap in the as-clause cannot appear within syntactic islands (relative clauses, complex noun phrases, adjuncts, etc).

This is compatible with a relativizer analysis (5a), but also with a prepositional analysis (5b).

Competing analyses

(5a) This is BLS 34, [as_i she said __ i].
(5b) This is BLS 34, [as OP she said <OP>].
As never appears post-verbally (*... she said as), even though so, another predicate/sentential anaphor, can (so she said/she said so).

If as is a relativizer (while so is not), it should never appear post-verbally, regardless its semantic properties: *My friend, I met in high school who, . . . .

The analogous word in Thai is apparently a wh-word ‘how’. But if it is a relativizer, this would mean overt wh-movement in an otherwise wh-in-situ language.

Even a prepositional analysis requires positing overt movement—of a phonologically null element.
The sentences in (6-7) show partial anaphora: the antecedent is a syntactic non-constituent, but semantically a unit.

Example

- Or perhaps *she got the name of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance close but not quite right*, [as she had with the Arizona Historical Society’s library]?  
- VP $\rightarrow$ *get the name of . . . close but not quite right*  
- Yet, [just as Bruno claimed for an infinite universe], *this finite model has “no center nor edge”*.  
- “S” $\rightarrow$ *has no center nor edge*
If as is explicitly anaphoric, and picks up its meaning from semantic, not syntactic, structures, we get a handle on how it finds its antecedent.

In fact, this exact sort of partial anaphora is seen in one-replacement, the same thing, etc.

This also motivates a single “verbal-as” to cover both clausal and predicative cases, as opposed to Potts’ separate CP-as and Predicate-as.
A troubling mystery

The mystery

The distribution of supplemental *as*-clauses is unexpected, given that their internal syntax (not to mention semantics) indicates that they are relative clauses.

Example

- Article 118/3 of the social chapter opens the way, [as the Prime Minister said], to European-wide collective bargaining.
- To suggest, [as I do], that he is the greatest living painter is to remind a contemporary audience that, after all, permanence, grandeur, deliberation, lucidity and calm are paramount virtues of the art of painting. . . .
A troubling mystery II

- English relative clauses appear (almost) exclusively after the material they modify.

- Supplemental as-clauses exhibit syntactic niching (Ross, 1984), i.e., they have the distribution of parenthetical sentential adverbials: *Our project turned out to be, unfortunately, to my disappointment, if I may say so, not to be too harsh*, a complete failure.

- There seem to be conflicting motivations: can modification structure determine external syntax? Or is the relativization analysis misguided?
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Introducing *which*

- *Which* can relativize on predicates and propositions.
- But it can normally only appear after the modified sentence. For a relative clause, this is expected—but for a sentential modifier, it is unusual.

**Example**

(9a) He wondered whether I would give a dinner, [which I said I would].
(9b) These timings will hold so long as wait times exceed processing times, [which is often true].

- In fact, the free distribution of supplemental *as*-clauses is not what is to be explained.
- The rather narrow distribution of supplemental *which* is what requires specification.
The CGEL notes that “[a] supplementary relative with a coordinated clause as antecedent can precede it, following the coordinator” (p. 1066).

Example

(10c) Their apparently similar, sharply segmented body plan either arose more than once or—which is also more than possible—it is very primitive.

(10d) Nevertheless, it is now clear, as I hope to show, that the two opposite types of symptom do in fact appear in connection with the coming of agriculture and, which is more to the point for our present concerns], that this is a phenomenon not without relevance to the understanding of the modern world.
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The idiomatic phrase *what’s more* has the appearance of a relative clause.

It is in fact the central/prototypical variety of a family of *what be AP* constructions.

**Example**

(11b) In other words, at these two points the crystal is pretty well broken away. [What is even more important], the dislocation turns out to be movable.

(11d) How had that fancily-named high-hab brat come to be here at the garrison block? [Mingling, [what’s more], ___ Dorcas gang members, or so it seemed?]
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But wait...

- Taking stock: in some rather limited contexts, with certain (wh) relativizers, non-final position is possible.
- But couldn’t this just be about *as*? Maybe it’s just not a relativizer.
- Perhaps the distributional difference between *as* and *which* is “attributable to the fact that the *as* here is itself the comparative governor, rather than being selected by some superordinate governor that it must follow” (p.1147).
If freedom of distribution is due to the self-governance of *as*, we should expect a separate supplemental use, “name-as” to be equally free in distribution.

Example

The kha-nyou, [as it is known __ locally], was trapped by an expedition in May.

But name-as is essentially adnominal modification, and it must appear adjacent to the name it modifies.
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For relative clauses, possible positions within the sentence are mediated by details of the properties of the modified head, and not entirely determined by syntactic type of the modifier.

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What sense are we to make of this?

- Earlier work assumed that all (non-correlative) relative clauses should act like adnominal ones, and so as-clauses were somehow internally different.
- But separate constraints on sentential modifiers explains the niching properties of as.
- Then it is which that must be explained. It is a sentential modifier—but it is also historically adnominal.
- It can escape the distributional clutches of its adnominal-relative past in a very particular, construction-specific environment. That environment provides what we might call a “doorway to productivity.”
- Supplemental-what, far more idiomatic (and with a very limited adnominal use in standard varieties), is more like as than like which.
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The main points covered:

- Supplemental verbal-as is best analyzed as a relativizer.
- The distribution of relative clauses is not determined so much by the syntactic category of the relativizer, but that of the modified head.
- There is a variety of levels of generalization and productivity with respect to a single principle, i.e., syntactic placement of adverbials.
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