

A Note on Indirect Postmodifiers in English

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Abstract

英語の後位修飾表現には、*the watch on the table* のように交差的 (intersective) な解釈を受けるものと、*a few days in Oxford* のように非交差的 (non-intersective) ないしは副詞的な解釈を受けるものが存在する。本稿の主たる目的は、事実と理論の両面で議論が十分にされてこなかったと思われる後者 (以下 IPMs) に焦点を当て、理論的な分析に先立つ包括的な事実観察を行うことである。IPMs の諸特性として、(i) 被修飾名詞が表す (またはそれにより喚起される) 出来事の参加者を描写する場合と、被修飾名詞が表す (またはそれにより喚起される) 出来事の「時」や「場所」などの状況について描写する場合があること、(ii) 分詞節、前置詞句、副詞節など様々な形式で現れること、(iii) *trip* や *arrival* などそれ自体が出来事を表す名詞と、*book* や *role* などそれ自体は出来事を表さないが、IPMs と結び付くことにより何らかの出来事を喚起し得る名詞の両方を修飾し得ることを指摘する。加えて、事実観察に基づき、認知文法の枠組みにおける IPMs の分析の概略を提示する。

Key Words: indirect postmodifiers, postmodification, indirect adjuncts, transferred epithets

1. Introduction

Jespersen (1913: Ch. 12) distinguishes two major types of prenominal adjectives in English:¹ direct adjuncts (e.g. *a young lady*), which receive an intersective interpretation,² and indirect adjuncts (e.g. *an early riser*), which receive a non-intersective or “adverbial” interpretation, e.g. *an early riser* means “a person who rises early.” While the former can be paraphrased with a relative pronoun and *be* (e.g. *a lady who is young*), some of the latter resist such paraphrases. Jespersen (1913: 283) notes that “it is quite impossible to turn [*an early riser*] into *a riser who is early*.”³

Postmodifiers in English also receive intersective and non-intersective interpretations, as exemplified in (1) and (2), respectively.^{4,5,6} (The symbols in parentheses indicate the acceptability judgments of Speakers A, B, C, D, and E.⁷) The non-intersective postmodifiers in (2) respectively describe a state of a person inferred from the context and specify a condition on which the price is

fixed at a certain amount. (The judgments in (2b) are for the reading where *if you pay now* modifies *price*.)

- (1) a. A *guy taller than me* came in as a guest. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
 b. John glanced at the *watch on the table*. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
- (2) a. Another two *weeks sick in bed* will surely make you bored. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
 b. The *price if you pay now* is quite high. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK) (Lasersohn 1996: 158)

We will henceforth refer to intersective postmodifiers such as those in (1) as direct postmodifiers (DPMs), and non-intersective postmodifiers such as those in (2) as indirect postmodifiers (IPMs). DPMs can be paraphrased with finite relative clauses of the form [*who/which/that be ...*] without essential change in meaning, as shown below.

- (3) a. A *guy who was taller than me* came in as a guest. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
 b. John glanced at the *watch {which/that} was on the table*. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)

By contrast, IPMs in general cannot readily be paraphrased that way. Consider the following:⁸

- (4) a. Another two weeks *{which/that} are sick in bed* will surely make you bored.
 (?*/??/*/?*)
 b. The *price {which/that} is if you pay now* is quite high. (?*/??/*/?*/?*)

Indirect adjuncts, some of them better known as transferred epithets, have been extensively discussed in the literature (Hall 1973; Kihara 2009; Kanazawa 2024; *inter alia*). Langacker (2008: 331ff.) accounts for transferred epithets from a Cognitive Grammar perspective. Kanazawa (2024: Ch. 7) provides an analysis within the framework of the Generative Lexicon (Pustejovsky 1995).⁹

To the best of my knowledge, no systematic investigation has been conducted into IPMs. Given that a better understanding of a linguistic phenomenon precedes theoretical considerations, it is crucial to examine the formal and semantic properties of IPMs including those treated in the literature. Therefore, this paper explores aspects of IPMs in terms of their semantic functions, categories, and the types of nouns they can modify.

2. Data

2.1 Semantic Functions of IPMs

IPMs can be divided into two sorts in terms of their semantic functions: Depictive IPMs and

Circumstantial IPMs. Let us consider each in turn.

2.1.1 Depictive IPMs

Depictive IPMs like those in (5) describe a state or property of the participant(s) in the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun.¹⁰ For example, *together* in (5a) describes not the noun *life* but the participants engaged in the state of being together during a specific period of time.

- (5) a. After they left, I rocked in silence, thinking back on our *life together*.
(N. Sparks, *Dear John*)
- b. Memories of the *weekend with my old friend Keith*, at his place in Seattle, had left me feeling warm and satisfied. (P. Auster, *I Thought My Father Was God*)
- c. It took effort to plan menus, and after a long *day working with teenagers*, cooking was anything but fun. (C. Greenslate and K. Leonard, *On a Dollar a Day*)
- d. Almost all the dead, including Senhor de Mello, who died after *hours trapped in the rubble*, were in that section of the building at the time. (*The Times*, Aug. 23, 2003)
- e. He was planning something. She could see it in his *expression as if he were enjoying a private joke*. (M. Burns, *Pleasure Me*)

Note that the *as if*-clause in (5e) slightly differs from the other IPMs in (5) in that it can be taken as a description of the noun *expression* itself. Nonetheless, the *as if*-clause can also be interpreted, on a par with *together* in (5a), as describing the state of a participant such that he was behaving as if he were enjoying a private joke from another participant's point of view.¹¹

2.1.2 Circumstantial IPMs

Circumstantial IPMs describe circumstances of the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun. We illustrate their five major semantic functions: time, location, condition, reason, concession. Circumstantial IPMs of time are usually headed by temporal prepositions (e.g. *after*, *before*, *during*) or temporal subordinators (e.g. *when*, *as*, *while*) and refer to the time when the thing denoted by the modified noun is brought into existence, as in (6), or the time when the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun takes place, as in (7).^{12,13}

- (6) a. Contrary to *headlines* in the British press *a few years ago*, British pilots had nothing to do with the formation of Topgun. (D. Pedersen, *Topgun*)
- b. My last gift to him is complete *silence until the book is out and the first heated discussion dies down*. (Brown Corpus; Ikeuchi 1972: 97)

- c. A woman told me of her *surprise* when she was a member of a mixed group of students attending a basketball game at the University of Michigan.
(D. Tannen, *You Just Don't Understand*)
- (7) a. The *game* last night was a real barn burner, wasn't it? (M. Dayton, *The Love Hack*)
b. In *interviews* before the election, some Republicans said the party would have to show some fiscal discipline.
(*The New York Times*, Nov. 7, 2024)
c. But I could tell, [...], that they [=four sheep] were in fact standing quite still, aside from the small *movements* of their mouths as they ate the grass.
(K. Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*)

This class of IPMs can make reference to the entire event denoted by the modified noun. Consider example (8), where *the journey coming in* is semantically equivalent to “the inbound journey.”

- (8) We sat in the same positions as on the *journey* coming in. (K. Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*)

Circumstantial IPMs of location are generally introduced by locative prepositions (*in, at, on, etc.*) and denote the place where the thing expressed by the modified noun is observed, as in (9), or the place where the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun occurs, as in (10).

- (9) a. Last year saw *crime rates* in Japan swing upward for the first time in 20 years.
(*The Japan Times*, May 17, 2023)
b. The meteorologist's briefing on the *weather* in the operational zone for the previous twenty-four hours left no possibility of hurricane force winds.
(British National Corpus: BPA 253)
c. The *sky* from the bedroom rear window was far larger than the *gap* of sky at the store and capable of surprising variations.
(K. Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*)
- (10) a. *Weeks* at sea can wear out any man no matter how much he loves the smell of salt air and the ocean spray on his face.
(D. Pedersen, *Topgun*)
b. Now, in Somerville, we decided to videotape snippets of our *life* in that house.
(P. Auster, *I Thought My Father Was God*)
c. [...], and the American *defeat* in Vietnam delivered a grave blow to the United States' global prestige, from which many thought the country would never recover.
(*The New York Times*, Jul. 3, 2024)

Circumstantial IPMs of condition are headed by *if, when, unless, or in case of* and describe a

condition on which the thing denoted by the modified noun is brought into existence, as in (11), or the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun takes place, as in (12).

- (11) a. A new study paints a shocking picture of the *fate* of marine life if human contributions to climate change are not curbed. (CBS News, Aug. 23, 2022)
- b. Russian President Vladimir Putin has repeatedly warned of grave *consequences* should NATO and ally countries become directly involved in the war. (Newsweek, Mar. 8, 2022)
- c. The Security Council [...] is threatening Serbia [...] with an even tougher economic *embargo* unless the President of Serbia uses his influence with Bosnia's Serbs to make peace. (The New York Times, Mar. 1, 1993; Fukuchi 1997: 306)
- (12) a. The Bunions faced *eviction* if the coal was to be mined. (J. Conaway, *The Kingdom in the Country*; Fukuchi 1997: 301)
- b. The second property indicative of general Medieval Romance V2 is *verb-subject inversion* when a non-subject appears in preverbal position. (I. Roberts, *Diachronic Syntax*)
- c. A *delay* in his departure in case of (his) sudden illness was not taken into consideration. (Ikeuchi 1972: 99)

Circumstantial IPMs of reason are headed by *because (of)* or *due to* and state the reason the thing expressed by the modified noun is brought into existence, as in (13), or the reason the event denoted by the modified noun occurs, as in (14).

- (13) a. The *loss* in growth of sawtimber because of damage by destructive agencies in the United States in 1952 was estimated to be about 44 billion board feet. (Brown Corpus; Ikeuchi 1972: 99)
- b. ^{*/OK}I had heard of John's *despair* because he had lost his money. (*: Emonds 1976: 175; OK: Ikeuchi 1972: 100)
- (14) a. Resurrected after a three-month *shutdown* due to budget cuts and dwindling volunteers, it [=the Woodside Volunteer Ambulance Corps] managed to raise enough money to buy supplies and recruit 12 volunteers. (The New York Times, Jan. 7, 1996)
- b. The hate crimes legislation [...] mirrors sporadic efforts in Democratic states to crack down on firearms ownership by individuals convicted of *crimes* because of a victim's race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. (Newsweek, Feb. 5, 2020)

Circumstantial IPMs of concession are headed by *in spite of*, *despite*, or *although* and make the existence or occurrence of the modified noun’s referent seem surprising. The underlined portion of (15a), for example, receives a concessive interpretation such that some performance was achieved despite the frosts.

- (15) a. A star magnolia named Centennial won honors for a fine reputation for *performance in spite of spring frosts* and its cloud of blooms, which appear before the leaves.
(The New York Times, Feb. 9, 1997)
- b. *(%)/Tom’s *cooperation despite his previous mistreatment* was surprising.¹⁴
(*: Emonds 1976: 176; (%): Ikeuchi 1972: 100)
- c. His *attendance* at the meeting although he was ill surprised me. (Ikeuchi 1972: 98)

2.2 Categories of IPMs

IPMs can be realized in various forms such as VPs, PPs, and adverbial clauses. NPs, however, do not function as IPMs, as shown in (16a, b).¹⁵ (16b) is greatly improved if the NP is converted into a PP by the addition of *as*.

- (16) a. John talked about his *life about my age*. (*/?*/*/?*/?*)
- b. During his *years a Ph.D. student*, John published five papers. (?*/*/*/?*/?*)
- b'. During his *years as a Ph.D. student*, John published five papers. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)

2.2.1 VP (V-ing)

Gerundive participial (i.e. *V-ing*) clauses can function as depictive IPMs. The ones in (17) describe the participants in the events inferred from or denoted by the modified nouns.¹⁶

- (17) a. After failed attempts to reconcile with my fiancée and a couple of *years exploring the country by rail and thumb, staying in monasteries and so on*, I again found myself on the West Coast.
(P. Auster, *I Thought My Father Was God*)
- b. “You’re doing a good *job growing him*. I’m pretty sure you’re gonna grow the best baby any woman has ever grown.”
(C. Hoover, *Ugly Love*)
- c. The patient begins with an account of a *trip wearing sandals “that weren’t very supportive.”*
(J. Heritage and S. Clayman, *Talk in Action*)

Note that gerundive participial clauses like those in (17a, b) can be introduced by the preposition *of*. Compare (17a, b) with (18a, b).

- (18) a. After several years of exploring her fertility options, Asia Orr, a Chicago-based yoga instructor, was shocked to learn that her husband was infertile, possibly due to [...].
(*The Guardian*, Dec. 13, 2023)
- b. Mr Capaldi has done an accurate job of catching Josie’s outward appearance.
(K. Ishiguro, *Klara and the Sun*)

Given that the presence or absence of the preposition does not bring about any practical difference in meaning, and that the underlined portions of (18) are semantically similar to indefinite appositive constructions of the form [*a(n) N of NP*] like the ones in (19), one might be tempted to analyze the participial clauses in (17a, b) as “appositives.”¹⁷

- (19) a. Nome hit a record high Monday of 40—above zero.
(*Chicago Tribune*, Dec. 29, 1993; McCawley 1998: 487)
- b. Each compartment can be occupied by a maximum *(of) 6 persons.
(McCawley 1998: 487)
- c. Mr. Carter congratulated the younger Bush, [...], on his re-election, and praised his father for “a career of service to his country that is almost unmatched in history.”
(*The New York Times*, Nov. 19, 2004)

In fact, Quirk et al. (1985: 1271–1272) analyze the participial clauses in (20) as appositives.

- (20) a. I’m looking for a *job* driving cars. (Quirk et al. 1985: 1272)
- b. We can offer you a *career* counselling delinquents. (Quirk et al. 1985: 1272)
- c. There is plenty of *work* (for us) shovelling snow. (Quirk et al. 1985: 1272)

However, Tani (2021: 63, fn. 4) reports that *a job driving cars* in (19a) is best paraphrased as *a job that involves driving cars*, not as *a job of driving cars* (which his informant finds awkward). Also notice that, unlike the participial clauses in question, indefinite appositives, as shown in (19b), do not allow the omission of the preposition *of*.

These observations lead us to conclude that the participial clauses like the ones in (17a, b) (and perhaps the one in (8)) are semantically similar but not identical (differing in whether *of* can appear and whether it must) to indefinite appositives of the form [*a(n) N of X*] (where X is VP (18) or NP (19)). We leave a detailed discussion of this point for another occasion.

2.2.2 VP (V-en)

Passive participial (i.e. *V-en*) clauses can function as depictive IPMs.¹⁸ The ones in (21) describe the participants in the events inferred from the modified nouns.

- (21) a. After a *day* trapped in an unbroken chain of multi-tasking, even a short dip in the sea of meditative tranquility can be enormously rewarding.
(*The Japan Times*, Apr. 14, 2017)
- b. Adolescent obesity is an epidemic today. Huge food portions, fast foods, and sedentary *hours* parked in front of the television or computer are all contributing to this epidemic.
(D. B. Martin, *Burgers and Milkshakes*)
- c. They [=Guantánamo prosecutors] had also argued that as an “enemy combatant” he [=Mr. Hamdan] should not receive credit for his *time* detained there.
(*The New York Times*, Nov. 24, 2008)

2.2.3 PP

PPs employed as circumstantial IPMs serve a variety of semantic functions: depiction (22a), time (22b), location (22c), condition (22d), and concession (22e).

- (22) a. Although most of the soldiers were young and had very little or no *experience* in space suits, the civilians were [...].
(R. Preston, *The Hot Zone*)
- b. These videos included *patient interviews* and *photos* before operations, livestreams of procedures and photos taken in the operating room after surgery.
(*The New York Times*, Jul. 12, 2023)
- c. In one of my moments of despair following my husband’s death, I decided to go to a play, hoping that a *night* at the theater would lift my spirits.
(P. Auster, *I Thought My Father Was God*)
- d. A *delay* in his departure in case of (his) sudden illness was not taken into consideration.
(=(12c))
- e. John’s *arrival* on time in spite of the heavy traffic surprised me. (Ikeuchi 1972: 99)

2.2.4 AP

APs can function as depictive IPMs and describe the participants in the events inferred from the modified nouns, as shown below.

- (23) a. Two *weeks* sick in bed gave him a chance to think the matter over still further and [...].
(D. McDonald, *Lord Strathcona*)

- b. After six *months* unemployed he's applying for anything he can find, still without success. (*The Guardian*, Apr. 21, 2021)
- c. For the measure of fidelity and monogamy, recall that *years* married to one particular spouse is a measure used to reflect our belief that the presumption of permanence (i.e., monogamy) grows with every passing year. (S. L. Nock, *Marriage in Men's Lives*)

It seems that the acceptability of such APs depends largely on the properties of modified nouns. Consider the following:

- (24) a. Yesterday's *discussion* of the issue stoned didn't clarify matters.
 - b. ?Yesterday's *arrival* drunk compromised Mary's credibility.
 - c. ??Yesterday's *treatment* of the patients drunk was a disgrace to the profession.
- (Safir 1987: 584)

2.2.5 Adverbial Clauses

Adverbial clauses can be employed as circumstantial IPMs of time (25a), condition (25b), reason (25c), and concession (25d):

- (25) a. My dad said nothing, but to this day I'll never forget his pained *expression* when at last he turned and trudged back to his den. (N. Sparks, *Dear John*)
- b. Slides and blood tubes were the only glass objects allowed in a hot zone, because of the danger of *glass splinters* if something broke. (R. Preston, *The Hot Zone*)
- c. One consequence is the *occurrence* of occasional conflicts because private owners of some inholdings object to public programs of use on neighboring National Forest or other federal land, or because such ownership are developed for uses that are not compatible with use for the public of neighboring National Forest [...]. (Brown Corpus; Ikeuchi 1972: 98)
- d. His *attendance* at the meeting although he was ill surprised me. (=16c))

2.2.6 AdvP

AdvPs can function as circumstantial IPMs of time (26a), location (26b), position (26c), and manner (26d).¹⁹

- (26) a. I'm amazed at the *weather* today. (McCawley 1998: 207)
- b. *Occurrences* of malaria here are quite rare. (McCawley 1998: 420)

- c. Particular characteristics of CGB are the conspicuous use of the vowel /ɪ/ finally in words like [...] and of a very often word-final /ə/ (and where [ə] forms part of /ɪə/ and /ʊə/) in words like [...].

(A. Cruttenden, *Gimson's Pronunciation of English*; Tani 2019: 149)

- d. His *explanation* of the accident thoroughly (did not help him). (Fu et al. 2001: 555)

2.2.7 alone/together/apart

The depictive IPMs *alone*, *apart*, and *together* are grouped separately because they are ambiguous between adjectives and adverbs.

- (27) a. Christmas that year was a dismal affair, but it's always dismal when you're far from home. It wasn't my first *Christmas* alone during my years in the service.

(N. Sparks, *Dear John*)

- b. During our *dinner* together, I asked her how her fundraising was going for her summer mission trip. (J. Kendall, *Raising a Lady in Waiting*)

- c. Like magic, it seemed, their *years* apart didn't matter anymore.

(N. Sparks, *The Notebook*)

2.2.8 Categorical Differences

The examples in (28)–(31) show that some categories, even when attached to the same noun, are more likely to be interpreted as IPMs than others.²⁰ (Each example was presented to my informants with a context that mentions someone who likes to drink or read in a specific situation.)

- (28) a. There is nothing like a *beer* after working out hard. (OK/OK/?/OK/OK)

- b. There is nothing like a *book* after working out hard. (OK/OK/?/?/OK)

- (29) a. There is nothing like a *beer* on the beach. (OK/OK/?/OK/OK)

- b. There is nothing like a *book* on the beach. (OK/OK/?/OK/OK)

- (30) a. There is nothing like a *beer* alone. (OK/OK/?/?/?)

- b. There is nothing like a *book* alone. (OK/?/?/?/?)

- (31) a. There is nothing like a *beer* watching a movie. (??/?*/*/*/?*)

- b. There is nothing like a *book* drinking coffee in the park. (??/?*/*/*/?*)

2.3 Types of Nouns Modified by IPMs

Nouns that can be modified by IPMs denote either events (e.g. *day*, *trip*, *arrival*) as in (32) or things that evoke specific events (e.g. *book*, *experience*, *role*) as in (33).^{21,22}

- (32) a. After a few *days in Oxford*, I always returned to Exeter feeling a bit low and ready to leave. (D. Alderton, *Everything I Know About Love*)
- b. She was doing a hot necropsy in Level 4, perhaps the most dangerous *work in a space suit*. (R. Preston, *The Hot Zone*)
- c. Immediately after his *arrival around midnight*, he'd sought out the C&C tent to warn the U.N. commanders. (G. E. Miller, *A Matter of Timing*)
- (33) a. Our *life expectancy in the freezing water* was five minutes. (D. Pedersen, *Topgun*)
- b. Although most of the soldiers were young and had very little or no *experience in space suits*, the civilians were [...]. (R. Preston, *The Hot Zone*)
- c. There have been few voices in American politics who urged a wider American *role if the peace of the world is threatened*.
(*The New York Times*, Apr. 6, 1995; Fukuchi 1997: 301)

It is interesting to note that nouns denoting events seem to be more compatible with IPMs than those denoting things. Ross (2004: 417, fn. 117) notes that “[34a)], for me, is far superior to [(34b)], especially when *criticism* has the reading not of an event, but of something that has been written.”²³

- (34) a. ?? His *destruction* of the fortune cookie before he read the fortune is to be regretted.
(Ross 2004: 417)
- b. * his *criticism* of the book before he read it (because of its failure to go deeply into the matter, etc.)
(Chomsky 1970: 193)

3. Toward a Cognitive Grammar Analysis of IPMs

A promising approach to modification by IPMs involves the notion of profile/active-zone discrepancy in Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 1987: 271–274; 1995: 25ff., 2008: 331–334; cf. Yamanashi 2000: 87ff.).²⁴ Depictive IPMs, which describe the participant(s) in the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun (e.g. *our life together*; *two weeks sick in bed*), are analyzed as a case of profile/active-zone discrepancy. The active-zone of *life* with respect to its integration with *together*, for example, is the individuals engaged in the profiled event.²⁵

Circumstantial IPMs are analyzed as specifying a setting (Langacker 1999). When they are attached to a noun denoting an event (e.g. *interviews before the election*; *eviction if the coal was to be mined*), profile/active-zone discrepancy is absent and the modifier specifies the setting of the event. However, when circumstantial IPMs modify a noun denoting a thing that evokes a specific event (e.g. *a beer on the beach*), a profile/active-zone discrepancy occurs: the evoked event (e.g. *drink a beer*) serves as an active-zone in relation to its integration with the modifier.

Under this analysis, the facts in (34) can be accounted for if a profile/active-zone discrepancy does not arise for some speakers (among them Noam Chomsky and John R. Ross) when *criticism* is interpreted as denoting a thing. This suggests that whether a noun denoting/profiling a thing can be modified by an IPM depends in part on whether the nominal referent evokes any specific event to serve as an active-zone with respect to its combination with the modifier (cf. n. 20), which is contingent in part on the speaker's knowledge of the modified noun and the meaning of the modifier.

However, the categorial differences in acceptability among IPMs, observed in (28)–(31), remain unaccounted for under the current analysis. Given that a noun denoting an event can be modified by a non-intersective gerundive participial clause (e.g. (17)), the ill-formedness of (31) would be due to the combination of nouns denoting things and gerundive participial clauses. Also, as pointed out by Takeru Suzuki (p.c.) and Eijiro Tsuboi (p.c.), it remains unclear under what circumstances a profile/active-zone discrepancy of the kind discussed above can occur. We hope to be able to clarify these points in future work.²⁶

4. Conclusion

This paper has explored aspects of IPMs in English. It has been shown that IPMs fall into two categories: depictive IPMs, which describe the participant(s) in the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun; and circumstantial IPMs, which describe circumstances of the event denoted by or inferred from the modified noun. It has also been shown that IPMs can be realized in a variety of categories, and can modify both nouns denoting events and those denoting things. Beyond its contribution to our better understanding of the properties of IPMs, this paper has provided a sketch of a Cognitive Grammar analysis, where IPMs are treated as involving a profile/active-zone discrepancy and/or specifying a setting.

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Notes

- ¹ I thank Tadao Nomura (p.c.) for drawing my attention to Jespersen's work.
- ² Prenominal adjectives receive an intersective interpretation when the denotation of a noun phrase of the form [Adj N] corresponds to a set-theoretic intersection of the set of things denoted by the noun and the set of things denoted by the adjective. The denotation of "young lady," for example, is an intersection of the set of things that are ladies and the set of things that are young, i.e. "young lady" is a member of both sets (Kishimoto and Kikuchi 2008: 93ff.). In contrast, the denotation of "early riser" is clearly not an intersection of the set of things that are risers and the set of things that are early. See also Heim and Kratzer (1998: 65–66, 68–71); Cinque (2010). I thank Takao Yagi (p.c.) for drawing my attention to Cinque's work.
- ³ Compare also (i) with (ii):
- (i) a. ?? The *agreement* was reluctant. (cf. reluctant agreement)
b. ?* The *consent* was informed. (cf. informed consent)
c. *The *awareness* is conscious. (cf. conscious awareness) (Langacker 2008: 331, fn. 22)
- (ii) a. That *car* is fast. (cf. fast car)
b. The *parrot* is very loud. (cf. loud parrot)
c. His *diet* is unhealthy. (cf. unhealthy diet) (Langacker 2008: 332, fn. 23)
- ⁴ The observation that postmodifiers in English can receive a non-intersective interpretation is not entirely novel; see, for example, Chomsky (1970); Ikeuchi (1972); Fukuchi (1997); Yagi (2008); Kanetani (2012); Shizawa (2010, 2014).
- ⁵ We will not be concerned in this paper with finite relative clauses, because they are always intersective.
- ⁶ Examples from other authors and naturally occurring examples are marked with source references in parentheses. Unmarked examples were constructed by the author and checked with native speakers.
- ⁷ All informants are native speakers of English from different English-speaking countries. I asked them to rate the acceptability of examples on a scale from 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (acceptable).
- ⁸ It should be noted that there are cases where relative clauses of the form [*who/which/that be ...*] converted from IPMs are subject to quite a bit of idiolectal variation. Consider the following:
- (i) a. This will be my last *Christmas* with John. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
b. The *peace* after World War II was well managed. (OK/OK/OK/OK/OK)
(*The New York Times*, Oct. 27, 1999)
- (ii) a. This will be my last *Christmas* {which/that} is with John. (OK/?/?/*/?/?)
b. The *peace* {which/that} was after World War II was well managed. (?/?/?/?/?/OK)
- This suggests that receiving a non-intersective interpretation is a necessary but not sufficient condition for a postmodifier to resist a paraphrase with a relative pronoun and *be*. Consider also the following ((iia) is due to Takao Yagi):

(iii) a. And they spent all their time together. Every night *dinner* was together at the restaurant.
(S. Arden, *Return to Glory*)

b. “I was wondering if Lydia Wallace could have been the one calling. But according to the M.E., she died around eleven thirty. You’re sure the *call* was after that?”
(D. Davis, *Dancing in the Dark*)

Note that we cannot guarantee that the naturally occurring examples of IPMs cited in this paper, although receiving a non-intersective interpretation, resist such paraphrases, since judgments on these examples can, as shown above, vary among speakers.

⁹ For reasons of space, we cannot go into the detail of the analyses.

¹⁰ We find examples where multiple IPMs with different meanings are stacked and modify the same noun, as illustrated below. (The second IPMs are marked with double lines.)

(i) a. The men could sit at the bar and drink Tuskers or lean on the great mantel by the fire and tell stories after a hard *day in the cave* wearing a space suit. (R. Preston, *The Hot Zone*)

b. This was our last Christmas in this building with these friends.
(B. A. Martin, *The Last Decade*)

For reasons of space, we will not go into the internal constituency of the sequence [N IPM₁ IPM₂] (Yagi 2008: 50; cf. Langacker 2008: 323ff.).

¹¹ Perhaps this interpretive ambiguity accounts for the fact that some speakers reject the *as if*-clause in (ia), which is directly attached to the preceding noun, and accept the one in (ib), which appears in post-copular position within a relative clause.

(i) a. I’ll never forget her (stunned) *expression as if I was crazy*. (?/?/?/?^{OK}/?)

b. I’ll never forget her (stunned) *expression {which/that} was as if I was crazy*. (^{OK}/^{OK}/^{OK}/^{OK}/?/?)

Given that DPMs, but not IPMs, can readily be paraphrased with a relative pronoun and *be* (cf. (1)), it seems reasonable to assume that the *as if*-clause in (ia) functions as a DPM for Speakers A, B, and C, and as an IPM for Speaker D. The difference between the two interpretations is subtle, however, so it should not be surprising if some speakers waver between them, as suggested by Speaker E’s judgments.

¹² Note that, as pointed out by Takao Yagi (p.c.), a temporal modifier positioned immediately after a noun as in (i) can be ambiguous between adnominal and adverbial readings ((i) is due to Takao Yagi).

(i) As discussed in chapter eight, there was a decline in real wages after the crisis and there is a legitimate argument that [...]. (V. Cable, *After the Storm*)

¹³ We follow the traditional distinction between prepositional phrases (e.g. *after* NP) and adverbial clauses (e.g. *after* NP VP) for present purposes. It is generally assumed in the generative tradition (e.g. Emonds 1976; McCawley 1998) that adverbial clauses are clausal PPs.

¹⁴ We use the symbol “%” to indicate dialectal or idiolectal variation in acceptability.

- ¹⁵ Note that a limited class of NPs serve as DPMs (Yagi 1987: 35–36; Tani 1997; among others). Consider the following:
- (i) a. A *man* the size of a giant came up to me. (Quirk et al. 1985: 1293)
 b. None of our friends lived there; in fact no *one* our age lived there.
 (D. Alderton, *Everything I Know About Love*)
- ¹⁶ (17c) describes a conversation between a doctor and a patient.
- ¹⁷ It should be noted that whether the participial clauses in question can be regarded as appositives depends on how the notion of “apposition” is defined. A more detailed discussion on this matter is, however, beyond the scope of this paper. See, for example, McCawley (1998: 467ff.).
- ¹⁸ I thank Tatsunari Yamazaki (p.c.) for bringing this fact to my attention.
- ¹⁹ We analyze *today*, *yesterday*, etc. as AdvPs for present purposes. See McCawley (1998: 206–208) for a PP analysis of such adverbs.
- ²⁰ Speaker A notes that (33a) sounds as if the beer is watching the movie and (33b) as if the book is drinking coffee. Speaker D, who rates (33a) as unacceptable, notes that it becomes acceptable if *while* is added as in (i). Speaker C, who rejects (33a), finds (i) to be still marginal, marking it with a “??”.
- (i) There is nothing like a *beer* while watching a movie.
- ²¹ An anonymous referee points out that nouns directly denoting a point or period of time (e.g. *day*, *night*, *week*) do not inherently denote events (unlike *trip*, *arrival*, etc.), but rather specific events (e.g. *spend a few days in Oxford*) are inferred from their referents.
- ²² Note that nouns not involving the notion of time (e.g. *beer*, *book*, *role*) can be modified by IPMs. It seems that, as pointed out by Eijiro Tsuboi (p.c.), the key point is that they evoke specific events (e.g. *drink a beer*, *read a book*, *play a role*) (cf. Fukuchi 1997).
- ²³ Kanetani (2012: 126–127) accounts for this observation by arguing that *destruction* is interpreted exclusively as denoting an event, whereas *criticism* can be interpreted as denoting either an event or a thing. Note that, as pointed out by an anonymous referee, Ikeuchi (1972) observes that some speakers find examples like (34b) acceptable.
- ²⁴ We assume familiarity on the part of the reader with the basic concepts of Cognitive Grammar (Langacker 1987, 1991, 2008).
- ²⁵ Transferred epithets like the ones in (i) would be analyzed on a par with IPMs in terms of profile/active-zone discrepancy (cf. Langacker 2008: 331–334).
- (i) a. All attempts to contact Peter failed. After a restless night, she tried again next morning, but with no more success. (British National Corpus: JXU 2330)
 b. That said, what harm could there be in two adults having a quick dinner after spending most of a day working together? (I. Cooper, *A Woman Like Annie*)

²⁶ One might be tempted to assume that IPMs make reference to the modified noun's TELIC or AGENTIVE quale in the sense of Pustejovsky (1995) (Kishimoto and Kikuchi 2008: 110–112; Kanazawa 2024: Ch. 7). However, this analysis is unsatisfactory at least in two respects. First, it incorrectly predicts that the examples in (34) can be well-formed; given that the IPMs in (34a) and (34b) can in theory make reference to [AGENTIVE= *destroying*] of *destruction* and [AGENTIVE= *writing*] of *criticism* respectively, the somewhat greater acceptability of (34a) than (34b) remains unaccounted for. Also, assuming [TELIC= *drinking*] for *beer* and [TELIC= *reading*] for *book* is not sufficient to give an accurate account of the data in (28)–(31), since the IPMs on *the beach* and *watching a movie*, for example, can in principle refer to [TELIC= *drinking*] of *beer*.

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